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Homiletics: Outlines on the Nitsch Epistles

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HOMILETICS

Outlines on the Nitsch Epistles

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

1 COR. 3:10-17

(Special accent or purpose: The church of God is presented variously in Scripture: in terms of living organisms (body, tree, or vine) and in building terms (temple of God, house). The church is a fellowship of people, not a paper organization. What can be said of the church can frequently, but not always, be said of the individual Christians, who make up the church. Today's text speaks of both the church and the individual in terms of a building or the temple of God. The Lord Christ is the Foundation for the life and growth of both the individual and the fellowship. It is our concern in this season of growth and building that each Christian should understand that God has equipped him to be a builder in the fellowship of the church and in his own life.)

We are in the midst of the biggest building boom the world has ever seen. Homes by the thousands, mammoth hotels and shopping centers, office buildings, bridges, highways, schools, and churches. While some builders complain of "green lumber" and inferior workmanship, others praise engineering skill and new building materials which admit of fast and efficient building operations. Another kind of building is going on—the building of the church of God in lives of individuals (vv.16,17) and in the fellowship of the church (vv.10-15). This is always the important type of building, and St. Paul says particularly of this operation,

Take Care How You Build

I. *Take care that you use the right foundation*

A. "Other Foundation can no man lay than that is laid."

While it is possible to lay other foundations than Christ, it is not possible to lay a successful one. Religious systems based on natural integrity, human philosophy, or personal popularity cannot support the life of the individual or the life of the fellowship. Corinthians discovered that when they tried to build on the personality of Peter, Paul, or Apollos their congregation was divided and weak. Peter would agree that he is not the foundation (1 Peter 2:4-8). Individuals and congregations today must beware of making a man or a man's ideas their foundation. Sin is the ingredient in concrete which causes man's foundations to crumble and which destroys even his best work.

B. Jesus Christ is the Foundation for victorious and successful building of both the individual and the church.

1. In the lives of individuals God must provide the foundation, and He has done so in Jesus Christ, His Son. He sent His Son, who claimed to be the true Foundation (cf. the close of Sermon on Mount). . . . Personal philosophy of life must be centered in Christ. This is fundamental.

2. As for Christians individually, so Christ is the Foundation for Christians collectively. He and His Gospel are basic to all doctrines, programs, practices of the church. We emphasize this in our hymnody—460, 466, 467, 473. Only foundation which can and does support in time of trouble. The life, death, resurrection, and session of our Lord demonstrate that there are no destructive forces in His foundation, but that it is solid and eternal, the Rock of Ages.

II. Take care that you erect a superstructure that gives God glory and reflects the abilities He has placed in you

A. The foundation determines fundamental features of the building, such as size, shape, and the like.

1. God has a plan for His church which is reflected in Christ and His teachings. He talks in terms of evangelizing the *world*—all people—every stratum of society (Matt. 28:19). He says it should be a glorious church (Eph. 5:27), a united church (Eph. 4:15, 16; 1 Cor. 12:12), etc. This is God's plan and design. It is the kind of building He envisions on the foundation He supplies. Failures and successes in building the church could be enumerated.

2. Likewise God has envisioned the kind of temple you and I are to be. Not all the same (today's Epistle), but all holy (v. 17). The Christian person is to grow up to the fullness of the stature of Christ (Eph. 4:11-13). Again successes and failures in this building can be demonstrated.

B. Building on the foundation is the work of people in whom the Spirit dwells.

1. As people of God we build on the foundation by God's grace and commission. The Spirit of God empowers us to build well (vv. 16, 17). There are those who are capable of building well but do not, because they are lazy or careless or selfish. Today's collect prays for God's grace so that we might do well. We are incapable of building sanctified lives by our own power. The Holy Spirit sanctifies. When we do not use His power, we are capable only of destroying.

2. Similarly, in the fellowship of Christians, God has given through His Spirit the equipment and ability to build strongly and beautifully.

Story of the elderly man who employed a carpenter to build a house. Gave him \$40,000 for time and materials. The carpenter put shoddy material wherever it did not show, thinking that the old man would die before the material would give way, and so he pocketed \$5,000. When the old man returned, he gave the carpenter the house as a gift. The destruction and punishment was his own. The "hay and straw" he had used were his own great penalty. He suffered dishonor instead of honor, loss instead of gain, even though he himself was not destroyed. Man-made teachings, practices, and programs often fall, and those who once espoused them suffer dishonor. Poor building because of poor stewardship, shoddy Bible study, dull evangelistic missionary effort. Those who have given God glory, and have sought to build in the fashion He had prescribed and with the materials He had given, receive honor for what God has done through them.

Concl.—God has laid out great plans for us, as His people, individually and collectively. (Review some personal goals, congregational goals, and goals of the Christian Church.) All these are based upon a foundation which can support and shape them. Through His Spirit He has supplied us with motivation and understanding, power and strength, to be His workmen. We will not despise this power, but will use it, and it alone, to build His temple, the church, in us and with us. (Hymn 267:2)

Wheat Ridge, Colo.

EDWARD MAY

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

1 THESS. 5:14-24

When we announce our plans for the future, we add, "I hope . . ." because our plans don't always come true. Sometimes simply because we don't get around to carrying out our intentions. Not so with God. He always does what He plans. Yet we can keep our part in His plans from coming true. This text speaks of His plan for us in Christ. God began making it come true when He sent Christ to redeem us. He will bring this plan for our salvation to perfection when Christ comes again. *Now, God's plan comes true in our lives as we day after day express His plan in our actions toward other Christians, toward God, and toward ourselves.*

I. God's plan for us has begun to become real in Christ's atonement

Text: "This is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." **Definition:** Will of God not simply the Ten Commandments but His plan for your final salvation. Plan was formulated before all worlds. For centuries God worked in history to ready the world for the coming true of His plan. Through prophets He announced the plan and "put it on paper." Then, at Bethlehem, Christ was born, and there, in a few pounds of human flesh, God's plan was coming true. Jesus fulfilled the plan perfectly. In word and action He did all it required. Went to the cross to bear God's wrath and to die for sin in our place. Rose again. Thus He did everything to make God's plan of salvation available to us. Christ is the "Foundation and Cornerstone" of God's plan for us. (V.9)

II. God's plan will be completed when Christ comes again

A. God's plan for us will be brought to completion when Christ comes again (vv. 23, 24). Goal of the plan of salvation is not simply that we should be everlastingly happy but that we should have perfect wholeness and sanctification and blamelessness. Eph. 2:9: "Created for good works . . ." will be achieved perfectly in us when Christ comes again at the end of time. This is what we're waiting for. (Ch. 1:10)

B. Because God is faithful we can count on Him to bring His plan to completion (v. 24). But will Christ really come? Or is it all only fable? Some Thessalonians were so convinced that He was near that they quit jobs and sat around waiting. The spirit of the entire N.T. is one of suspense, waiting for Christ, who is about to come. Twenty centuries have passed since then, and He hasn't appeared. But God is "faithful." That means He will make His plan concrete. He never fails to do so. You can count on Him.

III. God's plan for us is now being made real in the way we live

A. God's plan for us is now being made real in our lives (v. 18b). "This is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." God's plan of salvation for us means that now He is enabling us to live the lives of new creatures. Our whole life must be conditioned by a sense of expectancy, by waiting for Christ and perfect wholeness. **Illustration:** Men working on huge skyscraper. Walk on girders high above sidewalk. We wonder how they can be comfortable, eat, walk, keep minds on work. Probably never completely comfortable. Always conscious of hard cement down below, of the fact that they belong on ground.

We're suspended between comings of Christ—always conscious that we belong to Him and our true destiny is tied up with His coming again. Lives will show this.

B. God's plan for us is made real in our lives when we behave properly toward one another in the church.

1. Practicing mutual admonition and encouragement (v. 14: "admonish idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak"). Before we receive our perfect wholeness in Christ, there are shortcomings. God has put us Christians together in churches to help and encourage one another. Illustration: People hiking, scaling cliff, roped together so that if one slips the others save him.

2. Behavior toward one another means practicing patience (v. 14: "patient with them all"). The chief problem of a Christian church is that people lose patience with one another. Pastor thinks people are slacking up; people criticize other members for failure to be friendly or to work hard enough. God's plan for us means patience, that is (literally), putting up with one another in the church.

3. Behavior toward one another includes doing good to one another and absorbing evil without reflecting it (v. 15: "See that none of you repays evil for evil, but . . . good"). God conquered evil in Christ. His technique was to absorb all evil could do to Him without reflecting it. This "blotting paper" technique is God's plan for us Christians too. Best way to defeat evil is to absorb it as Christ did and to reflect only the good.

C. God's plan for us is made real in our lives when we behave properly toward God. Spelled out, this means:

1. Abiding joy (v. 16: "Rejoice always"). A Christian, whose feet are planted "where true joys are to be found" has a joy which many changes of this world cannot disturb—joy in God and the sureness of His promised plan.

2. Prayer and thanksgiving (vv. 17, 18: "Pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances"). The collect for today shows how God's giving is full and free, not based on our prayers but on His "readiness." So we should remember Him from whom all good things do come. Thanksgiving has the same purpose: to keep us remembering where this rich stream of good things is coming from.

D. God's plan for us is made real in our lives when we behave properly toward ourselves. This includes:

1. Keeping the Spirit (v. 19: "Do not quench the Spirit"). The

Spirit within you is the "down payment" and "guarantee" that you will inherit the final perfection of God's plan when Christ comes (Eph. 4:30; 1:13, 14). A frightening fact is that we can "quench the Spirit," frustrate God's plan and its coming true in our lives.

2. Abstaining from evil (v. 22: "Abstain from every form of evil"). Reason: indulging in evil quenches the Spirit, makes us feel at home on the steel girder, and forget we belong on the ground.

3. Attending to preaching (v. 20: "Do not despise prophesying"). The Gospel is the powerful message by which the Spirit is kept dwelling in us. As we keep hearing it, we continue to be saved (Epistle for today), to get help for living according to God's plan for us now, and to keep our hope pointed in the right direction toward Christ's coming again.

Pleasant Hill, Calif.

D. WILLIAM BACKUS

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

1 PETER 3:15-18

Remember when you were a child and were punished for something that you did not do? This was the height of injustice. What was your reaction? Did you argue? Throw a tantrum? Pout? Secretly resolve to get even, sooner or later, with your parents, tormentors, brothers and sisters, the mean world? Or did you wear a serene smile because your conscience was clear, because you trusted in a just God, because you felt kindly disposed toward, and understanding about, those who had wronged you? In brief, how did you stand up against injustice?

Now that you are an adult, how do you handle your problems of personal affronts, injustices, small tyrannies? Have you outgrown childish resentment? Have you become philosophic, shrugging off unfairness, saying, "We all make mistakes"? Do you try to understand the motives and compulsions of those who are unfair to you? Do you "consider the source"? Or do you cherish a sense of persecution, vow to get even, or constantly complain and harp about injustice?

As a Christian, how do you handle the problem? This involves more than emotional maturity and social adjustment. We can make our peace with the world, adopt its standards, get people to like us, avoid difficulties, win friends and influence people, adjust to an imperfect society, and become free from resentment—all without being a Christian.

But being a Christian presents its own problems. It invites injustice, the retaliation of those in the world with guilty consciences, mean streaks, standards less than moral. Innocence arouses guilty feelings and enmity by its mere presence. Innocence and holiness are an accusing presence. God has enemies simply because His holiness accuses unregenerate sinners. Christ's goodness irritated the self-satisfied Pharisees.

Dostoyevsky wrote the book *The Idiot* on just this theme of how innocence arouses antagonism. Nice children do get picked on. Businessmen adhering to strict Christian principles do lose sales (at least to those who offer "call girls" to prospective customers, and other questionable inducements). Those who do not conform to gang or social mores are discriminated against. The standards of Christ and the standards of the world are in conflict.

The Christian history is a tale of martyrs, not a happy story about people who found the secret of success and the elimination of pain and conflict. This thesis has been repeated most recently in the stunning Russian novel *Dr. Zhivago*, by Boris Pasternak, called by *Time Magazine* "The Passion of Yuri Zhivago" — a major restatement of the Christian faith in the context of a life thrust amid turbulent upheaval, demonic persecution, and quiet despair.

When You're on the Spot

How does a Christian live when he is "on the spot" for being a Christian? How does he maintain an authentic Christian witness without succumbing to resentment over personal injustice? What kind of faith is "A Faith for Tough Times"? (Fosdick's title)

I. *In your hearts reverence Christ as Lord* (v. 15)

A. The centered life is not upset by disturbances on the circumference.

B. Where your heart is, there is your treasure. All a man's dispositions, attitudes, actions, emanate from the heart.

C. The Christian reverences Christ in his heart (Christianity is more than skin deep or an outward identification only), bears Him within by faith, shows Him forth by the witness of the Christian life, "projects" Christ into the world from the launching platform of the consecrated heart. Luther's coat of arms:

The Christian's heart is resting on roses
E'en while beneath the cross it reposes.

II. *A defense without apology*

A. *Always be ready to make a "defense" (v.15)*, but do not be defensive in attitude. The Greek ἀπολογία does not mean "apology" in its current understanding as "excuse." It is "apologetics" in theology and "the case for the defense" in law, not argumentation in debate or disputatiousness. Christians do not have the practice (ideally speaking) of "contention," as do the philosophers (1 Cor. 11:16). Yet church history has been marked by contention, doctrinal debates, and controversies. Apologetics are necessary to rebuke falsehood and slander (Titus 1:9-11). E. g., Apology to (not for) the Augsburg Confession.

B. *To any who call you to account for the hope in you (v.15)*. Why are you a Christian? What do you believe? You must know the questions, and you must know the answers. You can't shunt it back and say: "I believe what my church teaches." You must know what you believe, give an account for the hope that is in you. This must be Scripturally substantiated and bear central witness to Jesus Christ, "our Hope of glory."

C. Yet do it with gentleness (πραΰτητος, meekness) and with reverence (φόβου, fear). The Christian must not be an offensive polemicist or a defensive rationalist but a reverential, convinced, winsome, gentle, understanding witness.

III. *A defense with a clear conscience (v.16)*

A. Keep your conscience clear—not by rationalizing bad acts but by leading a Christian life and acknowledging your sins.

B. When you are abused your good behavior will then shame your oppressors. The witness of the Christian life tells its own story eloquently. Everyone recognizes and acknowledges genuine goodness.

IV. *How to accept suffering if you must*

A. It is better to suffer for doing right. It silences calumny (v.17), is Christlike (v.18), and has its own virtue (v.17). (Robertson)

B. If it is God's will. Martyrdom and persecution and suffering must not be sought. Early Christian leaders had to dissuade overanxious would-be martyrs, reminding them that it is as important to live for Christ as to die for Him. An unhealthy streak of asceticism and self-flagellation runs through the church. The cross comes; you do not choose it. Christian suffering is salutary. Beware of its counterfeits: masochism and paranoia. Some modern theologians see a relationship between "salvation"—"wholeness"—"health." God's will is a "good

and gracious will," according to Luther — not a capricious, crushing, enigmatic, fatalistic one. Cf. the current discussions about Archibald McLeish's play *J. B.* (Job)

C. Than for doing wrong. (Cf. 2:20; the word of one thief on the cross to another, Luke 23:40, 41)

D. For Christ also died for sins once for all (v. 18). The Righteous One died for us unrighteous ones. He suffered injustice, absorbed it, permitted it, accepted it, conquered it. His suffering was not self-centered (no stream-of-consciousness ruminations in the Gospel accounts) but redemptive. There was purpose in His suffering: that He might bring us to God.

E. He was put to death in the flesh (σάρξ) but made alive in the spirit (πνεῦμα). Ours should be no mere psychological revival but a revivification of spirit by the Spirit of God (Rom. 8:11). We come alive through the Gospel's rebirth, renewal. No psychic, extrasensory perception, developed by mystical exercise, but a spiritual rebirth by the seed (sperm) of God's Word (1 Peter 1:23). We have this new spiritual life even now in Christ. (Rom. 8:10)

Concl. — 1 Peter 2:21-24.

WAYNE SAFFEN

Oberlin, Ohio

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

ROM. 8:31-39

(It is with more than the usual fear and trembling that the preacher ought to approach the great passages of Scripture which have spoken so eloquently to Christians down through the ages. These passages not only are statements of the most sublime truths but are gems of literary beauty and power as well. Such selections beggar comment, and the preacher knows that his exposition cannot do them justice. Yet truth must be set forth for our time in the here and now by the *viva vox*. That is our task. Hence we pray with Luther as we confront this text: "But since Thou hast appointed me to be pastor and teacher, and the people are in need of the teachings and instructions, Oh, be Thou my helper, and let Thy holy angels attend me." The special purpose of this sermon will be to deepen the faith of the hearer so that he is equipped to withstand any crisis.)

In the Augsburg Confession, the principal statement of faith of the Lutheran Church, there is one intriguing sentence under Article XXI: "Of the worship of saints they teach that the memory of saints may be set before us, that we may follow their faith and good works. . . ." Our fathers at Augsburg were thinking of some of the great men and women of God in the history of the church when they spoke of

"saints." They saw a great value in the remembrance of these people as an incentive to deeper faith and a more godly life. The judgment of our fathers was certainly correct in the case of the man who was a great gift of God to His church—St. Paul. By the study of St. Paul's life and works we are to receive inspiration for our faith and a new zeal for the life of God. Today we want to keep the example of St. Paul before us as we seek

A Victorious Faith

I. *St. Paul is an amazing example of victorious faith*

A. The life of Paul is familiar to most Christians. We have had stories about him in Christian day school or Sunday school. We have heard many a sermon based on his letters. Yet the fascination which he exercises never palls. Suffering innumerable hardships and even persecution, he carried the Gospel into every corner of the Roman Empire. What was the secret for his incredible accomplishments? His victorious faith. Our text is an eloquent statement of St. Paul's faith in every circumstance: "If God is for us, who is against us . . . We are more than conquerors. . . . [Nothing] will be able to separate us from the love of God in Jesus, our Lord."

B. This is the kind of faith we must seek. Paul wrote these words in the Spirit of God, and God preserved them in order that they might point us to the same faith. The life of the Christian must be lived out of such a victorious, all-conquering faith. Yes, God calls us to the perfect faith "that shines more bright and clear when tempests rage without." This is the highest reach of faith—to be fully confident of God even in the midst of evil days.

II. *Christians are often conscious of a deficiency of faith*

A. What we ought to exemplify and what we are often are two different things. We know this to be true. Instead of this victorious, joyful, ail-conquering faith, we often express hesitancy, doubt, fear, faintheartedness. These affect our whole spiritual lives.

B. We are aware of a deficiency of faith most acutely in moments of crisis. Such moments may occur at the time when we are harassed by feelings of guilt after having fallen into sin or when we are beset by problems and difficulties (cf. vv. 35-39). This is most true when we face the last and greatest enemy—death itself, first in the list of powers cited by Paul as threatening us. (V. 38)

III. *St. Paul reminds us of the basis for victorious faith*

A. In such moments it is a joy to hear again the message of the great apostle. Paul points us to the source of his faith. The source of his faith was God's deed in Christ when He delivered Christ up for us all. The Greek word for deliver is loaded with associations with the Passion narrative (cf. a concordance *s. v.*). God did this while we were yet sinners and while we were liable to His wrath (5:6-11). The result was atonement for our sins. (3:21 ff.)

B. The event of the cross says to us in moments when we feel our sense of guilt, "Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies . . ." (vv. 33, 34). The penitent and believing sinner has a Lord who intercedes for him. He never need doubt the love of God.

C. The event of the cross says to us in moments of great difficulty, "These do not and cannot mean that you have been separated from the love of God" (vv. 38, 39). As bitter as these experiences may be, they do not cancel out the love of God or testify to its absence. Faith asserts against experience that God is for us, because it sees the love of God in the cross and produces the argument contained in v. 32.

D. The event of the cross, finally, has meaning for us in a positive way. It not only says that God's love is with us in the midst of trials, but it turns those trials into blessings. "Will He not also give us all things with Him?" Whatever we experience, we know that God is giving us those good things which we need. Faith as *fiducia* can go no higher.

Therefore we can be more than conquerors, facing life unafraid, filled with victorious and joyful confidence in God. We can share St. Paul's heroic faith because we stand on the same foundation on which he stood—God's action on our behalf in Jesus Christ. With this and what it means we have a faith that is all-victorious.

(It is suggested that the hymn before the sermon be "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," a hymn which expresses in text and music the fervor of Paul's utterance.)

Yonkers, N. Y.

RICHARD KOENIG

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

EPH. 6:1-9

(Special Purpose: The line of demarcation between the child of God and the child of this world is frequently very narrow and difficult to detect. An offense. The world desperately needs to see a demonstration of what it means to have Christ alive in us so that they will be made curious and will examine our faith and thus be captured for Christ. "Ye are our epistle" 2 Cor. 3:2f. The Epistle for today is an exhortation to "walk in the Spirit." This "walk" should show unmistakably what it means to be a Christian, in spite of the difficulties and internal struggles.)

Paul, God's prisoner, urged the Ephesian Christians to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." No matter what your station in life, you have a calling of God. As you accept this, there is an important area in your life in which you are going to be different from the children of the world among whom you live. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (2 Cor. 5:17). This is vividly illustrated in our text.

How Christ in Our Hearts Will Influence Our Vocation

I. *As children*

A. Our aim: obedience—a listening to and a following of. This is a "new obedience," not by constraint of the Law or fear of its punishment but "in the Lord." Christ is alive in me, and He acts through me. Cf. Isaac. (Gen. 22:7 ff.)

Honor—recognizing the God-given relationship, and respecting it as such, regardless of short-comings and frailties of the parents. Cf. Joseph. (Gen. 47:1, 7)

Love—esteeming parents as precious gifts of God. Next to God we owe them our lives—and generally much more. Cf. Ruth. (1:16, 17)

B. Our motive: The love which God has shown us in redeeming us through Christ Jesus as well as in giving us our parents.—"This is right." We need more people who give greater concern for what is right, regardless of whether it happens to be convenient or even expedient. "I would rather be right than president."—We are inspired by the example of Christ, the 12-year-old boy in the temple. (Luke 2:51)

C. Our encouragement: V. 3. Length of life in Christ's kingdom is not measured by calendar years but by the degree to which we have fulfilled God's purpose for us.—A look into our prisons will show by contrast the blessings of Christian obedience.

II. *Parents*

A. Our aim: To rear our children to become God-fearing Christians. This requires nurture, which is training, upbringing "attained by discipline and correction," as well as admonition, exhortation, warning (Deut. 6:7). Not always pleasant, nor will children always be immediately grateful, but an essential part of our duty (1 Tim. 3:4). Woe unto us if we fail! Cf. Eli. (1 Sam. 2:12, 23, 25)

We must strive not to provoke them to wrath by unreasonable demands, harshness, lack of consideration, lest we discourage them (Col. 3:21). Authority abused becomes tyranny.

B. Our motive: Christ living in me. He is my Source of strength to do my duty. He is my Example as a loving, heavenly Father, even in discipline. (Heb. 12:5-7)

Our love to our children: a genuine, unselfish concern for their welfare and eternal happiness and salvation. (Prov. 13:24)

III. *As servants*

A. Our aim: Obedience, acknowledging this relationship as God's orderly arrangement. (V. 5)

Doing service: not only going so far as commanded, but also the "extra mile," doing service "as to the Lord." (V. 7)

B. Our motive: "Christ liveth in me." He is the Source of my strength. His example is my inspiration. He is the great "Servant of the Lord." (Is. 52:13—53:12; Matt. 20:28)

C. Our spirit: "With fear and trembling" (v. 5), not slavish or cowardly fear but "fear of falling short in matters of duty and proper service."—"In singleness of heart," without duplicity or ulterior motive.—"Not with eyeservice as men-pleasers" (v. 6), working only so long as we are being watched or only in order "to pass inspection."—"From the heart," with sincerity and genuineness of heart, consecration, devotion, and enthusiasm.—"With good will" (v. 7), with cheerful readiness and without murmur and complaint.

D. Our encouragement: V. 8. Reward (1 Tim. 5:18; Matt. 20:1-8). Our labor is never in vain. (1 Cor. 15:58)

IV. *As masters*

A. Our aim: "The same things" (v. 9) as those which govern the heart of the Christian servant: living "with fear and trembling"; "in singleness of heart"; "with good will."

In addition to the above: "forbearing threatening," a special temptation to those in authority.

B. Our motive: "Christ liveth in me," He gives me strength.— I am accountable to Him: "Knowing that your Master also is in heaven" (v.9).—"There is no respect of persons with Him." No matter how high my position on earth as a master, when I come before the throne of God my servants are not only my equals but also my brethren in Christ. There was a time when the word of a slave would never be admitted in court, whereas the word of the master would always be admitted. Not so before the court of God.

Christ is my Inspiration. He as our Master makes it a pleasure, a delight, a boundless blessing to be His servants.

Concl.— We strive to fulfill our vocation so that God in all things may be glorified (1 Peter 4:11b; 1 Cor. 10:31) and that men may be led to glorify Him with us. (Matt. 5:16)

Milwaukee, Wis.

HERBERT BERNER