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Substance of Two Sermons preached by our Pastor

on Sunday, October 12. 1980.

Morning Lesson. Matthew 11.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Matthew 11. vv. 28-30.

One of the most ^{amazing} words of divine grace recorded in the Scriptures this is. This is the precious, divine, omnipotent Person who is so filled with everlasting, immutable love He freely calls to Himself for relief, rest, comfort and peace all whose cases as in His sight respond to the description given by the Holy Ghost as being in labour and heavy laden. The preacher is consequently ~~certain~~ the divine language, the precious words that flowed from the loving heart and lips of our blessed Redeemer are highly relevant to the cases of the friends over a wide range and the complete spectrum of His Church below. In divers forms, manners, degrees, volumes the words will perfectly express your state before God ^{for} you know what it is to labour. Where there is the new principle of grace there will be labour, for the old man of sin, the body of sin and death the Lord has interfered with. There is One now who conquers and subdues him and is invincible, and consequently the continuing heavenly efficacy flows through Jehovah Jesus. Divine grace that saves sinners will conduct a warfare and be concerned in their labour. I say to you, whatever is of the Holy Ghost in your souls or lives will manifest itself in spiritual labour. A synonymous term is spiritual travail, and in whatever is of God in the soul there will be by the Holy Ghost spiritual travail. And what is the object of travail? A bringing forth, a holy issue, and it is wonderful that there is before us continually a manifestation of the Lord bringing to the birth, a blessed issue and bringing forth His own sacred, vital work. So much of the spiritual life of every child of God is known in spiritual travail, the whole gamut of it, - the conflict against sin and corruption and the microcosm of the world in you and the subtle

onslaughts of Satan, and you will labour. Your own ill manners, the many powers that are evil and that strive in you constitute travail. You labour against self, that things that are foul, vile, God-dishonouring, soul-destroying do not ~~disturb~~ ^{control} you or come into public manifestation. And for all things that are of God, blessed, living, vital, spiritual, holy, the exercise always attendant on them is of the Spirit in you the vital secret of godliness, and the exercise relates to the fulfilling of the purposes of Jehovah. There will be this attends it by grace and it is pleasant pain. The pain of travail is pleasant, for nothing will agonise your spirit more than to be in a lukewarm state, no activity of the Spirit in you. To find coming over you in waves by the power of the Spirit in your soul is that which will be altogether pleasant because of the purpose of it. It will be expulsive; there will be something brought to pass; a coming to the light and development. So God gives to His people travail.

I am reminded in my spirit of a wonderful letter sent by a poor woman from Chiddingly to the friends at Chippenham concerning the late dear William Vine. For their mind was set on the new, good minister from Sussex, and this greatly perturbed and distressed the godly woman. She wrote several pages of spiritual experience and set before the deacons at Chippenham.—"Sirs, how we have travailed in truth for that good man, William Vine! Sirs, the Lord send you a minister like him; give you the same exercise. When you read this letter you will never be able to take the minister we have travailed for" There is not much activity in your hearts if you are not in spiritual travail for something. It may be dormant, and the Lord has His own method of resurrection power to give you blessed travail. Obviously a prolonged period of spiritual travail is exhausting to the limit. This is an aside word of observation to you as an intelligent people. Do you consider the travail of His ministers and pastors? Because if there is something to be wrought there is travail that is overwhelming. So you may see the wealth, beauty and fulness of such a word as this: labour, and there are many facets of it.

Another part of labour to the people of God is that they have blessed things they are pleading for and seeking to be accomplished. They love truth, peace and their Master and His work: they delight in His work. Another aspect is, we have a nature that is full of sinful aversion to

it. Sinful, fallen, guilty, vile, polluted, wretched nature is averse to all things of the Spirit: it will not go along with them; it fights against them; will not have them. This makes it labour. A poor preacher reading the Scriptures, meditating, doing what is right, in a right spirit and motive, it is all labour because the flesh is opposed to it: there is a sinful aversion to prayer. O this labour! You will find nothing is easy in things of the Spirit. Let the love of God flow and it is easy. As you feel the belligerence, the antagonism of fallen nature it is labour. You would rather pick up a journal to do with nature or the stars or relating to a trade or profession than the Bible. All through there is constant labour. Our wicked mind opposes the things of God and it is not easy; preaching is not. In the first days of the first crest when there is an inflowing and a great measure of prosperity and popularity among those who fear God it is easy. It is when one settles ~~down~~ and goes down to the trough that opposition to it rises, and it makes it labour. You men of prayer know this, and women of travail know it is not easy. If we may so speak, there are easy births and very hard ones. It may well be to you with those you are in travail for spiritually it will be a hard birth,- some are easy. It will be a blessing to have a living child if it has been a hard birth and you nearly lost your life in the process. You will come to an understanding of the principle that there is nothing of value, importance or blessedness only in relation to labour. You do not want anything unless it is associated with labour. Do you want an honour you never laboured for? So in the things of God, and this applies to His people relatively, personally and in the Church of God you only ~~can~~ know what is true labour. It was sweet to Hannah when she could say, "For this child I prayed." Things are not easy, my friends. There are those in labour. I hope you are in it, sincerely. Whatever it means to you,- the will of God, following the dear Lord in holy baptism,- if the Lord has well laid it in your heart, done so much for you, there will be much labour, and what a blessing it is when it comes on you and it becomes spontaneous and irresistible! You cannot control it: it is altogether spontaneous. What a blessing to be in spiritual labour so there is one thing in view! If it is of the Spirit, presently you will be in ~~the~~ His Church, and if not you will lose your life in it. "If I perish, I perish."

but you must go. There is labour. It is blessed if some of you are in it. "So will I go in unto the king...and if I perish, I'll perish. I'll perish there." You will never perish.

I am to speak of what is relevant in my spirit and on me especially because of the past day. It is before me, us, God. On the gallery, in the Sanctuary we have a large number of dear younger friends, and obviously there is the potential of your nature. It is a natural thing, this instinct God has given you. It is nothing to be ashamed of: it is a right instinct, and you seek the fulfilling ~~of it~~ if it is the Lord's will, of His own word. "It is not good that the man should be alone." You seek a friend or companion and conjugal love. It is an exercise and there is labour, travail to those who fear God. Pray about it: there is real travail in your soul concerning the matter. You wish the dear Lord to find one, and for it to be His choice, will, pleasure, and that it be made plain to both. Often there is a path of trouble to walk in: there may be hurdles, difficulties, disappointments. It becomes real travail of soul, especially if the affections are set, and as you hope and believe, they are set on one. What a travail of soul it is! Godly parents know the meaning and weight of it. They know what they pass through with their children in it, and what they plead for for their children. I may be speaking to dear young people with spiritual travail of soul in them. They wish the Lord to do for them what He did for Abraham and his servant seeking a wife for his son Isaac. By divine direction presently he said, if the Lord will do this and that, and he knelt down and the camels and was in prayer that the woman who should be the one would come forth and provide water for the camels and be so attentive and loving. And she came forth, and he had the earrings and bracelets with him, and it was not long before Rebekah had the evidences of being claimed. "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?" and, "Wilt thou go go with this man? And she said, I will go." There is the issue. This is heartfelt, for as we look back over the days we know the Lord found the dear partners of our blood. Obviously there are many only waiting in the wings to lead you astray. Another thing is, some may be plausible, making inquiry of you as to your religion and place of worship and appearing to be willing to attend the Sanctuary services, but they know what their plan

is. If the fish is in the net all this will evaporate. It is not always so: the Lord manifests His goodness and calls one out of the world. It is what the Lord may be pleased to give you in it: what you have from the lips of God. Spare a thought, and pray for the dear young people... You know spiritual labour concerning who the Lord has appointed for you. Wonderful it is to come to the language of the Text on Thursday: it is highly relevant to the occasion. "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes." So I have a word for you: it is, be patient; wait at His dear feet; watch for His appearing. Do not be too discouraged by rebuffs if it leads you to greater vehemence at the Throne of grace. The Lord help you to cast all your care on Him and see His infinitely wise provision. This is a beautiful thing: it is as we have said, highly relevant to the congregation with so many dear younger ones. You will never want to come home ashamed, to feel you have betrayed the religion of your fathers and your own faith and all the prayer that has ascended to Heaven for you. There is another word. If you are initially disappointed and if for the truth's sake you make sacrifices, God will abundantly reward you. He has put a mark of honour on you. "This is a soul who has forsaken all for My sake." You will have reward, a most blessed reward. You weighed the matter up before God, - would it be for God or man? and by the strength of grace you made a sacrifice for the Lord and He put a mark in your forehead. So "Tarry His leisure, then;

Wait the appointed hour;
Wait till the Bridegroom of your souls
Reveal His love with power."

He has provided some better thing for you. So what a dilation on labour, travail! I did not think I should jump into the middle of it, but I have, and all you dear friends whatever your age or case, if the Lord is with you ~~have~~ are in travail, some of you concerning your dear children, and your travail may be extended over a long period, that they may be brought out, made manifest as the Lord's dear, chosen, redeemed people. I have a word for you: none of this labour is lost. "In all labour there is profit. If I went to a place to preach, and all day or all the night before, and in the vestry and the Sanctuary there was no labour I should be so miserable and dejected: there would be nothing to be brought forth. Are you not thankful you have been in the travail you have? seasons of real travail? "In all labour there is profit." A wonderful favour this is.

You would not know the value of a thing if there were no labour. If you have been in it in your soul,- and you will need grace at the wheel, in the House of God, on your bed,- and you get sweet children, a bringing forth, how sweet and precious. It is indescribable. We have referred to Hannah,- "For this child I prayed." Wonderful to get relief, the gift and blessing you travailed for. The Lord knows all who labour and are heavy laden. You go on, by the grace of God, with your labour in prayer, on your bed, at your work, anathe day and night. You go on with it for specific blessings, divine favours, heavenly grants. Go on with your travail. Satan will have much to say. He will tell you it is all in vain. That is an absolute lie: he knows the principle; he knows Christ sees the travail of His soul and is satisfied. Is there any disappointment there? There can't be. "Shall the foretaste Thou hast wrought,
Be to disappointment brought,
(Though Thy promise calls it sure),
Of the life that shall endure?"

That is a good couplet to remember: "Shall the foretaste Thou hast wrought, Be to disappointment brought?" I will pause: how many of you middle aged friends are in travail of soul for specific things? The Lord knows. Are you thankful to find you have travail, or would you rather be easy, dead, unconcerned, callous, indifferent? Thank God for travail! It wears you out: you will lose your life in it. If you do it is a blessed way of losing your life. How do I know? From the word of God. "And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her Fear not; for thou shalt have this son also. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin." Blessed be God.