



The Mission Trail

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"LIFT UP YOUR EYES, AND LOOK ON THE FIELDS; FOR THEY ARE WHITE ALREADY TO HARVEST." — JOHN 4:35

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"This Man's Religion Is Vain"

(Radio broadcast on Sunday, September 17, 1967.)

. . . It is a real pleasure to bring this gospel message to the listeners of radio station KCKW. We hope that each of you are keeping the victory over sin by the help of God. If you have problems or needs, I want to recommend to you that the God whom we serve is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think. Of course, this is only true when we allow his power to work within us. Let me remind all of our listeners that we print these weekly messages and mail them free of charge to those who request them. If you are not receiving them already, send us your name and address and let us mail them to you each week. If we may join with you in prayer concerning your problems, needs, or sickness, please let us know. If you desire to write us you may do so by addressing your letter to us in this way: THE MISSION TRAIL, Guthrie, Oklahoma. This is Willie Murphey speaking to you. Listen to this poem:

A PILGRIM SONG

So deep the dust, so thick the fog, so dark the
day and long,
But somewhere on the pilgrim's way my heart
has heard a song,
A song of hope and happiness for through the
mists I see,
The way I tread is but a thread in God's tapestry.

Above the dust and past the fog, beyond the
world we see,
The single threads are woven safe within the
tapestry;
And some are gold and some are gray but
everyone is blest,
Enough to weave and just believe the Master-
mind knows best.

So through the dust, amid the fog, however
long the day,
With smiling eyes I'll follow on nor doubt it is
the way;
Content to know I have a part in God's eternal
plan,
That He designed, that Master-mind, and left
the threads to man.

Here is a scripture text now which may seem a little unusual, but it is Bible, nevertheless, and I believe a verse from which we can learn some good lessons. It is found in the book of James, the first chapter and verse 26. "If any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain."

Briefly now let us consider the difference between a vain religion and pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father. Vain religion may be had quite cheaply. It is plentiful, and there is enough of it to go around to everyone seeking something to ease their conscience.

Before we go any further, let me give you a definition of the word "vain" from Webster's dictionary. Vain: without real worth or value; empty; worthless; as, vain promises. Without success; futile; as, a vain attempt.

Proud of one's looks, etc.; conceited.

In some fields of endeavor, one may well afford to make a vain attempt to achieve certain goals. However to have a "vain religion" is the greatest mistake which one could make in life. Nevertheless, James wrote those words, and he said under certain conditions that "this man's religion is vain". Any pretense of one's being a Christian is a failure if it does not cause them to have a supreme love for God. In Matthew 22:37 we read, "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." This, of course, is the first and greatest commandment of all.

In the second place, religion is vain if it does not cause one to love his fellow man. In I John 3:10 we read, "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." But let us go one step further. I will say any and all religion which does not cause one to love his enemy is vain. Here is proof of it in Matthew 5:44. Jesus said, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

Another indication of a worthless and vain religion applies to those who have not received a new heart. The prophet Ezekiel told of this in Ezekiel 36 and 26. He said, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." Now the new heart does not operate like the

old heart of flesh. It causes one to act in accordance with the divine leadings of God's spirit.

Again religion is vain if it does not cause one to live a pure and holy life. Listen now to the 11th and 12th verses of the 2nd chapter of Titus. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world."

Let us sum it up then in this way. It is indeed a vain and worthless religion which does not provide peace of mind and heart with one's own self and with God. Pure religion will cause one to be peaceful with others. Pure religion removes the sting of death and the fear of the judgment. Pure religion makes one a good neighbor and a good citizen and is not ill tempered, hateful, envious, covetous, proud, self-willed, haughty, worldly minded, dishonest, sinful, etc.

Friends, let us be honest and open with ourselves and before God. Are you playing with this matter of religion? Are you endeavoring to fool God or to deceive your friends and neighbors? God knows our hearts. We may deceive others, but we cannot deceive God. He knows the thoughts, motives, and intentions of every heart.

Let me show you something. In Romans 5:1 we read, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Again we read in Ephesians 2:1, "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin."

Here is another thing that I like about pure religion. In I Timothy 1:5 we read, "Now the end of the command-

ment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." You see, there is nothing quite like a good conscience. Your conscience is something which lives with you all the time. There is no way to leave it behind, and, of course, still live in this world. If you have an evil conscience, you are reminded continually of it. On the other hand, a good conscience is worth more than all the vain religion in the world. Listen now to this poem.

MYSELF

I have to live with myself, and so
I want to be fit for myself to know,
I want to be able, as days go by,
Always to look myself straight in the eye.

I don't want to stand with the setting sun
And hate myself for the things I've done.
I want to go out with my life erect,
I want to deserve all men's respect.

I don't want to look at myself and know
That I'm bluster and bluff and empty
show.
I never can hide myself from me;
I see what others may never see.

I know what others may never know;
I never can fool myself, and so
What ever happens, I want to be
Self respecting and conscience free.

Yes, friends, I think that is worth more than all the world, to have a good conscience and live peaceably with God, with ourselves, and with others in the world around us. Let us not fool ourselves and endeavor to make ourselves believe we are pleasing God if we are only serving Him in vain. If we have a vain religion, it will not profit us in the last day. Certainly I believe it is the desire of the hearts of those who

listen to this broadcast to have pure religion and undefiled. We do hope that the Lord will help you to so live before God and man that you will have the assurance within your heart that your religion is not a vain and empty show, but one in which God will be pleased with you and your life. Let us pray.

Our Father,

Help us to know what it means to continually have more than a vain religion. Bless those who hear the words of the broadcast today and cause the message to find a place in every good and honest heart that pure religion and undefiled may abound in their lives and to thee we will give the praise through Christ our Lord. Amen

Here now is a song, "Are You Adorning the Doctrine?". We hope you will enjoy it as it is sung by Lynn and Alma Carver, Manuel and Marie Mitchell.

This message has been brought to you by THE MISSION TRAIL of Guthrie, Oklahoma. If you would like a printed copy free of charge, you may have one by simply sending us your request. Now until next Sunday morning at 7:30 this is Willie Murphey saying a very pleasant good-bye!

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GEMS OF THOUGHT

"I know that the Lord is always on the side of right. But it is my constant anxiety and prayer that I and this nation should be on the Lord's side."

"I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom, and that of all about me, seemed insufficient for that day."

--Abraham Lincoln

"The Lord is King for ever and ever . . ."

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." Isaiah 54:17

HE GIVETH MORE

He giveth more grace when the burdens grow
greater,
He sendeth more strength when the labors
increase;
To added affliction, He addeth His mercy,
To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.

When we have exhausted our store of endurance,
When our strength has failed ere the day is half
done,
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,
Our Father's full giving is only begun.

His love has no limit, His grace has no measure,
His power, no boundary known unto men;
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus
He giveth and giveth and giveth again.

--Annie J. Flint; Sel. by Florence Squire

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From Missouri: "Dear Bro. Willie, Sis. Frances, Greetings in the name of our Lord. We are so happy to still be saved and trusting in the Lord. There's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey. I am so thankful for God's eternal truth that leads us all to Heaven and makes us happy here in this life. . . We want His will to be done in our lives. We have trials and problems that we can't work out, but we are trusting the Lord to work in a mighty way in our behalf, so we need your prayers. We must tell you how much we enjoy the little Mission Trail. Surely it's food for our souls, and its coming each week is lots of help. We pray the Lord to bless you all and your efforts for him. . . Remember us as we do you. Love,"

--Asa and Katie Gibson

From Oklahoma: "Dear Bro. Willie, Enclosed is \$10.00 for the Lord's work. The Lord had burdened me through a brother's testimony. He told me to give this to the Mission Trail broadcast. This was part of a wrong that I could not make right. I had taken \$20.00 from a man one time in northern Kansas, and the Lord told me to make it right by giving it to His work. I am sure willing to do this, Bro. Willie, because it's a blessing to my soul, and I love the Lord with all my heart and soul. I pray that the Lord will bless in your work for Him and your family too and all His saints everywhere. The Lord told me to send the other \$10.00 to the Faith Publishing House which I did. Christian love to you and all the saints. Your Bro. in the Lord," --James Ingerly

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From Texas: ". . . I am still a cripple shut-in, but very happy. Here is my testimony:

I have no time to gossip
And fool my time away.

I have work to do for the Master
And today might be the last day.

. . . My prayer is for God to guide your feet and hold your hand. . ."

--Mrs. Maudie Jones

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From Oklahoma: ". . . I was impressed with the radio sermon, 'Look on Us'. I know God will heal. I've been trusting in Him a long time. . ."

--Ora Allen

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From Michigan: ". . . I had a copy of The Mission Trail given to me. I sure did enjoy every bit of it. . ."

--Forrest Kemp

From Louisiana: "Dear Bro. Willie and family, Greetings in the name of our dear Lord. We heard your program Sunday, Sept. 3rd on KCKW in Jena. We enjoyed it so much and are so happy to have it on this station. We do trust the Lord will bless you in this work and supply all your needs. I'm enclosing a small offering for the work.

"I'm thankful for the blessings of the Lord. I felt so much better after I was anointed at Monark for two or three weeks. However I've been much worse again the last week and desire prayer. Above all else I want to know I'm in the center of the Lord's will. If it's His will to heal me, I want to have wisdom and faith to know how to receive it. But if He intends to take me on, I just say amen to His will. I've been suffering quite a bit and do need prayer that the Lord will ease the pain. My full trust is in Him, and I'm depending on Him alone. It's a real privilege to trust in our Lord. Praise His name! . . . A sister in Christ," --Viva LaCroix

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From California: ". . . I wish to thank you for your messages from The Mission Trail. They are a blessing to my soul. I . . . pray God's richest blessings upon you and all your efforts for the salvation of souls. . ."

--Ruth Turner

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From Missouri: "Dear Bro. and Sister Murphey and family, Greetings in the Lord this morning. I feel impressed to write a few lines this morning. This finds me encouraged in the Lord and by his help and grace I mean to follow on for the Lord. He is so good to us all. We do enjoy reading the paper. May the Lord continue to bless the work you all are doing for Him. You have our prayers. Pray for us. I say bye for now. Yours in Christ,"

--Myrtle Glass

From Tennessee: "Dear Bro. and Sis. Murphey, We send greetings of love again in Jesus' name. Trust this finds all well in soul and body. In John 3, verse 2, the word says, 'Beloved I wish above all things, that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.' The Lord has been good and mindful of our needs. Our son fell from a rope swing not long ago, and it looked for a while like he had broken his arm above the wrist. I asked God to care for it and have mercy, and it turned out he only cracked the bone and maybe burred it up a little. He's all right now and using the arm as before. We're thankful that God hears and answers prayer. . . We know you're still encouraged in the gospel work and the Mission Trail, and we want to help every bit we can. I enjoy the paper and save them so when we go to our daughter's in Georgia we leave the papers and tracts at various places trusting someone will read them.

"I must close, meant to write sooner but time got away from me. Remember us in prayers, also our grandson. He's back in the cast again and unable to attend school this quarter. The bone is still soft and the Dr. said it might collapse under his weight, so pray that God will completely heal, if its his will. We know he has a purpose in all things. Remember our unsaved loved ones. Christian love and prayers, Sue and J. B. Shell. P. S. So happy we had the privilege of having Bro. & Sis. Carver in our house this year. She left a sweet memory to me, to see someone so true and faithful to God to the very end."

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From Arkansas: ". . . I do appreciate God's dear children and praise Him for letting me be called his child, a child of the King! What more could we ask for?"

--Lou Bray

AT PRESS TIME WE UNDERSTAND:

Edward Joe and Estalene Cramer who live only a few blocks from us here in Guthrie had a very shocking and trying experience last week when their house caught fire. Considerable damage was done to two bedrooms. The furniture in those two rooms was ruined, and most of their clothing was destroyed. Both Edward Joe and Estalene had a testimony in prayer meeting after the fire and told how the Lord was encouraging and blessing them. They have five small children.

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From California: ". . . The Lord gave me a soul Saturday as I was traveling to Mexico--a man 30 years old from Tennessee. He really prayed--then said, 'I know I'm saved'. . ."

--Harland Smith

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Our love and prayers are extended to the loved ones of Paul Gibson who died last week. His funeral was Saturday, September 16th.

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The Guthrie congregation had an increase in number when Gene and Dora Lela Beisly with their two children recently moved from Coffeyville, Kan.

Don't forget the gospel singing at Webb City, Missouri on Friday night, Sept. 29th. The starting time is set to begin at 7:30 in the Church of God chapel. Those who enjoy good spiritual singing both quartet and congregational are urged to attend.

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From Missouri: ". . . Hope you all are enjoying many blessings from the Lord. We have so much to be thankful for. . . Gordon and Sybilla were with us for four nights' meeting. Love and prayers,"

--Evodna Marler

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Bro. John Sisk of Enid, Oklahoma is thankful for the protecting hand of God which was over him Sunday, Sept. 10th, when he was on his way to Dover camp meeting. His panel truck turned over and was greatly damaged. Bro. John received cuts and bruises which are now healing very nicely.

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From Colorado: "Dear Bro. Willie & family, May the Lord bless you is my prayer. Just a note to let you know that we had a good trip home, and also that we enjoyed the services there. . ."

--Reinhart Wollert

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