

THE SOWER

By Rev. James A. Turner
Pastor Methodist Church

GOING HOME.

Some day we shall say to ourselves "This is not our life; we will arise and go unto our Father and say unto Him, 'We have sinned against Heaven, and in Thy sight, and we are no more worthy to be called Thy sons.'"

We shall see as did the prodigal that we have been sinning in three directions: against heaven—the impersonal moral law; against the personal love of the Father—in Thy sight; and against ourselves—we are no more worthy to be called Thy sons.

We have been sinning against those three facts: (1) the impersonal moral law—we have sinned against the moral structure of the universe, breaking ourselves in our attempt to sin against the moral facts and to get away with it. It is a hurt humanity—hurt through our own follies and selfishness.

(2) We have sinned against the personal love of God who is hungry and crushed in the exploited, and hurt in every hurt of man.

(3) We have sinned against ourselves. Man's worst enemy has not been nature, but himself. Humanity is suffering from more self-inflicted wounds than from any other kind. In exploiting each other we sell ourselves into slavery. Every lash upon the slave's back returns in time upon our own backs.

We gain a temporary advantage only to reap a prolonged disadvantage. Our selfish, unbrotherly order makes for the misery of those who are wedded to it. And the exploited are not the only ones hurt—the exploiters are often more miserable than the exploited. Most of our misery is so needless, so unnecessary. We are sinning against ourselves, against our heritage, against our possibilities. What could it be if we only co-operated with the Father!

Repentance from "metanoia" is literally a change of mind. At first sight this does not seem deep enough, for repentance should be a change of act. And yet there can be no real change of act until there is a change of mind. For the change of mind sustains the change of act. The first thing we must do in regard to our social and economic order is to change our minds. Inwardly we must repudiate it. With that basic and fundamental change in attitude then anything can happen. But as long as we mentally cling to it then our reforms of it will be halting and sporadic and inadequate. We must change our minds—repent. That is our part and the whole situation awaits our doing it.

The moment we would do it, the whole of God's resources will be at our disposal. The moment the prodigal decided to cooperate with his father then the father threw open everything he had to him—his own home (housing), the fatted calf (food), the best robe (clothing), and the ring (symbol of a pledged fellowship). I am persuaded that the same thing would happen to us. We would be astonished at the bounty of God when we began to cooperate with Him. The Father would give us His House, this world, as our very own. Now He cannot, for if He gave it to us as long as we were in a competitive order, the cleverer would take it from the others and exploit it as their very own, which in fact, is what is really happening now.

God therefore must withhold, the toll of man must be hard and precarious, the earth must be unresponsive. Everything must await a new spirit on the part of man, a co-operative spirit. Then God can give, and give bountifully, for in the giving He gives to all, since man is now set to divide with all.

We have tied God's hands. The co-operative spirit would untie them. Then the world, the Father's house, would be ours. Now it does not belong to us, because we do not belong to God.—Dr. E. Stanley Jones.

PATTON METHODIST CHURCH

James A. Turner, pastor.
Church school at 10 a. m. Worship services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Epworth League at 6:30 p. m. Mid-week Bible Class Wednesday at 7:30 p. m.

In a spirit, or mood of rapt devotion on the Sabbath Day, John heard the voice that proclaimed the message of comfort so sadly needed by the suffering children of God. In a garden in the cool of the day, while over the earth a solemn stillness lay, Adam and Eve communed directly with God. After the people had prepared themselves for it, Moses received the revelation of God's law, alone with God in reverend converse upon the mountain. Jesus retired to the desert and received fresh courage while alone with the Father. In the great crisis of his life Paul withdrew to the sandy wastes of Arabia to find a clearer knowledge of God and of His will. There is such a thing as receiving a direct and distinct communication from God, if in a rapt and sincere spirit, we go to Church to meet Him under true and holy impulses.

Taking time to be holy, being wrapped in the spirit amid sacred associations, is never without its solid effect in giving eternal strength and beauty, says Dr. Geo. R. McKee.

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and heard . . . a great voice." There is a voice waiting to speak to you, dear friend, if you will come and listen to it. You will never hear it unless you intentionally open your ears to it. At church is where you will hear it.

—Whose Press-Courier do you read?

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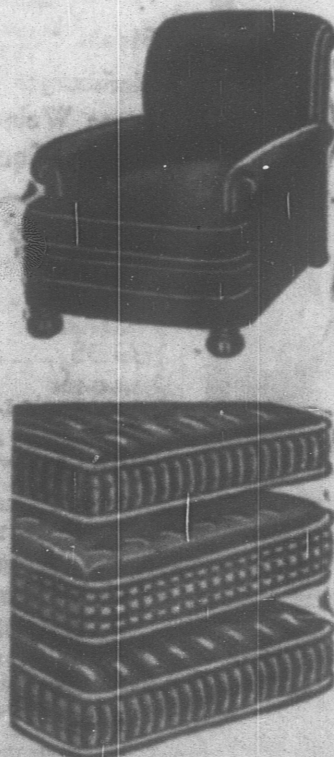
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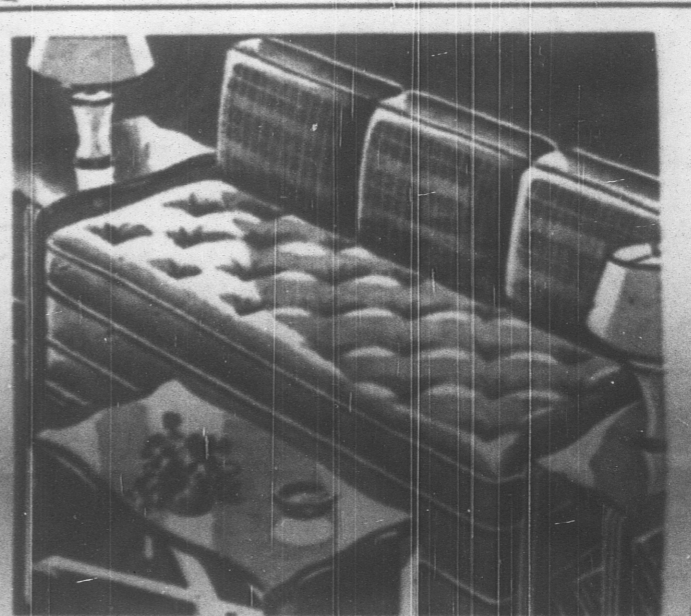
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