

# Africo-American Presbyterian

AND YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE.—John viii:32.

VOL. LVI.

CHARLOTTE, N. C., THURSDAY, JULY 4, 1935.

NO. 26.

## HOW TO OVERCOME THAT INFERIORITY COMPLEX

By Ernest C. Durham,  
In The Charlotte Sunday Observer

I do not mean to say that I am, or ever have been, afflicted with an inferiority complex. If it were something generally regarded as an attainment, or accomplishment, of which one should be proud, I might be glad to undertake proving that I have had, at least, slight symptoms, especially at certain intervals and on various occasions. But since I have a sneaking notion that the thing is regarded almost entirely as a handicap, I am trying to believe (if not to prove) that I have had nothing very closely resembling a symptom.

And yet I undertake to write about mastering such an ailment. Let no one be too quick to become the least bit suspicious for there is many a doctor who prescribes a remedy or treatment of ailments he has never known anything about from the standpoint of experience. He has not had the diseases; he has only made a thorough study of them. He thinks he knows the cure. He, with a great deal of confidence in his diagnosis and his knowledge, prescribes medicines or treatments that will cure.

So, sticking right to the subject, the doctor himself, as his very self-confidence seems to prove, is a person who is not afflicted with an inferiority complex.

It is safe to say that anyone who has lived in anything approximating mature life through the past ten years knows something of the prevalence of the trouble known as inferiority complex. The word, or term, has been used by every public speaker. It is seen, and has been seen for a spell—in every newspaper—perhaps in every edition of every newspaper. Certainly it has been true that a book could scarcely be written without the use of the term. You have even heard high school boys and girls talk about having a good case of it. It has even been heard escaping the lips of one, or both, of two lovers, out beneath the shade trees in the summer time, when everything was conducive to romance of the finest kind and when there was nothing, as the observer might suppose, to cause either of the two to think of anything akin to inferiority. (Perhaps, however, in a situation like that there might be this particular sort of feeling: Where one or the other, if not both, is so infatuated with the other that words can not be found with which to express the inner feeling, and that one gives up and shouts: "What's the use? How can I ever master this inferiority complex?")

People you would suppose have no reason in the world for feeling afflicted with the ailment often speak as though they had a genuine case of it. A few years ago a young man of perfect body and whose mind had been trained in some of the leading colleges and universities of the South, spent two weeks with me as an assistant in some work, the most of which time he spent nights and odd hours in my home. And if he used that term once he used it dozens of times—"inferiority complex." He claimed that he had acute cases of it on all public occasions, so intense that when alone and meditating upon the severe public attacks he would develop even worse cases.

I said to him one day: "Why don't you throw away some of those detailed notes and give us a talk some day right out of your mind and heart—something that the people will really appreciate?"

And that's when he made

hold the assertion to me that he was so prone to have a case of what I am writing about in this piece.

"At once," he said, "the very minute I take my eyes on my notes, as if I would not look at them anymore, I see nothing in the world but a *Dial*, *Wall*, and I can't think of a sensible word to say. I am worried to death with myself for having such attacks of inferiority complex."

At first we declare that it is simply terrible for a young man—a young man strong in body and mind—to be so afflicted, and yet I have seen college professors and speakers of experience and renown develop the very same trouble. At least, it was apparently true, especially in the case where a noted editor had been all around the world and came back to a college community to tell the boys all about what he had seen, and because he left his manuscript at home he forgot that he had seen anything. Rather he could not talk intelligently about a single thing he had seen; and, judging from what he said, you couldn't tell that he had ever been out of his home county. One might doubt that he had ever seen his county seat, if he even knew what a county seat was.

And that man became so conscious of his failure there before the college concourse that he looked like he felt sure the inferiority complex trouble would kill him before he could make his escape from the platform.

Besides that, it was such an evident case of it that all of us who were listening, or trying to, took the same trouble—or the jitters, or something else that was mighty bad. So, from more standpoints than one, it is bad to have the disease. We humans are so constituted that when a big brother up before us is simply suffering agony with the trouble, we fall right in and suffer in the same way. Everybody wishes for a hole to fall through—and on out into eternal oblivion.

It has been a mighty good time these last few days, to develop cases of that trouble, and to observe others who had it.

It has been commencement time in the big colleges and universities. People from all walks of life have gathered together. Yonder were two people, at another place a little group, having the time of their lives in conversation and laughter. But in hundreds of cases there was the lonely looking fellow, standing around with the appearance of one who had got off at the wrong place, or one whose best friend had just died, or one whose sweetheart had "kicked" him, or one who was simply wondering if he himself should ever have been born.

He felt all right at home, but when he got off over there—well, his world simply ended.

In many a case the situation might have been something like this: The fellow dressed himself up in the best he had—and it all looked good to him—it all ways does look so there in the house before he gets out where there is something better; he proudly said goodbye to the members of the family remaining at home, waving his hand like a king to the little fellows as they were talking and jabbering to what they regarded the best man on earth; he threw his traveling bag into the car and drove off in break-neck speed, like a fellow sent for, to get to where he thought he ought to be. Everything was in high gear—his feelings and all—until he got in sight of "Old

Alma Mater." Then things began to look different on the outside, and certainly conditions were rapidly changing for the worse on the inside, and already he began to feel that very probably he had as well not made the venture. To make things worse, and to complete the development of an inferiority complex, he met a professor on the street—one who used to smile at him occasionally in the classroom or out on the campus when meeting up, and who was good enough to give him 80 a few times on a subject when the student didn't really deserve but 70 or such a matter—and this commencement-bound man, son of the dear old college, ventures to speak to the professor as in years gone by—when he and behold, the professor eyes him as if he wondered from what corner of the universe he came from, and never so much as grunted.

If such a thing as that actually happened, we might say it was enough to give a poor fellow a case of what we are writing about. In which case it might have been a fine thing if the embarrassed old college "grad" had boldly walked up to side, and said: "Look here, man, the high-minded professor's I'm So-and-So from Swill Creek, a member of the class of XYZ, and doing as important piece of work down there as you have ever done here—even when you prepared me for this task. What's this commencement for, if it's not for me and my kind?"

(Or it might have been the best thing if the old "grad" peered just as wonderingly at the professor as the professor did at him—or if he had, upon the slightest opinion of how the professor would act, strutted on by him with more dignity than anybody else on earth could make use of.)

But now we are getting down to the problem—how to master this ailment so universally known and so frequently spoken of by the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the educated and the less educated, the good and the bad, in short, almost everybody.

Getting right down to the problem, therefore, and to be sure to start early enough in one's life, I want to suggest to everybody interested in mastering an inferiority complex that he begin about 100 years before birth (at least that early) choosing who his parents shall be.

This is something really to be serious about. Every man has the right to be well-born, and a lot of choosing should be made use of a long time before he is born—such wise choosing that the very day he is born into this world all who know about it may be able to say: "That fellow certainly has a right to be proud of his birth, and he is to be congratulated for the choices he made along through several generations before he got here. He has made a good start; the rest of the way ought to be rather easy."

And there's a lot in just that. I look all around me and find people who are handicapped on every hand, simply because they did not make a wise selection of parents—and other kin folks.

Whatever any psychologist says about the theory that any man can be just anything he chooses after he gets here, I want to say that the biggest part of that is nothing but theory. A start does mean something. Blood does tell. Heredity does count. Environment is not all.

That may sound like dogmatism. Whatever it is, it's true.

I have seen the handicap in too many places—and I knew exactly what caused it.

You can't take a man and fling him for a hundred or more years through just any sort of blood veins and then expect him to be able when he gets into the

world to become what the fellow can who has selected carefully what sort of blood he should germinate and grow in.

Of course this thing is so serious that we who are now living must get down to actual thinking about the matter, planning wisely and patiently who shall be born, and of what—some hundred or more years from now.

It is a pity that a lot of folks cannot go back a few hundred years and be born all over again—after making selection of parents and kin folks.

Now I would go back to along about the beginning of one's life on earth and give some advice about environment.

The man who once shut himself up in a monastery, or somewhere, to beat himself into sameness, or to isolate himself into God's perfect kingdom, perhaps did not hear the divine call to that sort of procedure that he then thought he did.

If a man is a "mixture of deity and dust," the dust must touch dust as well as it is true that deity must touch deity.

A long line of wise choices, as concerns environment, has tremendous effect upon what sort of complex shall develop in one's life. A deal sight of inferiority, and the feeling of it can be prevented.

A good birth is very important; but that is not all—surroundings and associations are tremendously important factors in the shaping of a life in accordance with the tendencies with which one was born, and in creating of ideals in one's life not born simply of good blood.

I should like to see one man who spent 100 years selecting his parents and 100 years more in selecting his environment.

I would dare that man to prove to me that he even knew what an inferiority complex is.

And yet there are some other things I should like to say to those who are interested in mastering an inferiority complex.

This might figure in the environment problem, but I want to emphasize the importance of choosing the right sort of work as a life pursuit.

I have talked a lot in the past about square pegs in round holes, and I want to say again that there are plenty of them—and there'll never be a fit until a square hole is made for the square peg. In fact, there will be such a misfit that not only will the individual misfit be sorely conscious of an inferiority complex, but everybody else will be conscious of the poor fellow's misfitness and unhappiness.

But let a man choose the right sort of work, in which he is happy—whether that work be ditch-digging or anything else of its class—and I defy any man in any so-called superior work of life to make that happy workman become conscious of an inferiority complex.

Perhaps just before this I should have inserted a statement concerning the all-important thing of choosing to be something within as concerns genuine character.

Let a man be well-born and let his environment be good, then let him choose to be good in the good environment and to do good work, whatsoever the task—then I would defy any of the world superiors to make him out an inferior fellow, either in the estimation of the individual himself or in that of the multitudes of observers.

That fellow can certainly walk up to the college professor, or anybody else and declare: "My work is as important as yours, and if I work my task as effectively as you do yours, and if I work with the same holy purpose of service to humanity as you do, then we are on equal footing—we have the same foundation and our lives are fired with the same

(Continued on page 4)

## AN APPEAL TO REINSTATE THE ENGLISH BIBLE AS A CODE OF MORALS

FOR CHURCH, SCHOOL, STATE AND NATION

(Reprinted from a booklet by the Rev. Robert Elliott Flickinger, D. D., Rockwell City, Iowa.)

Article IV.

THE AUTHORIZED VERSION OF THE BIBLE, THE DIVINE STANDARD OF GOOD MORALS

Enforce the Law

Enforce the law is the frantic cry that is going up from the people.

But enforcing the law is not sufficient to stop the crime wave. So long as the source of it remains unchecked, enforcing the law will not keep your boy or girl from making an error that will doom their usefulness.

Can was not put in prison for the law that envy led him to inflict upon his brother, Abel, but he was led to exclaim: "My punishment is greater than I can bear." God spared his life, but he put a mark on Cain, the mark of guilt on his memory and conscience. Most people who have learned the Commandments in youth, and to remember the Sabbath as a day for public worship, refrain from becoming violators of the civil laws by their respect for the higher moral laws of God, in the Commandments.

Crime Must Be Prevented

That was the method outlined by Moses in the management of the Commonwealth of Israel. He was given the Ten Commandments and directed to instruct the people in the knowledge of them. They were prohibitory in their form: Thou shalt not kill, steal, covet, nor bear false witness.

Prevention of crime by instruction is better than cure.

Crime in the State is very much like disease in the human body. The ideal of a sound mind in a healthy body is maintained by a variety of good foods that have in them all the elements for the bones and sinews; and outdoor exercise. All chronic diseases in the alimentary tract are now said to be due to a deficiency or surplus of the food elements. Prevention of disease by a balanced diet is better than cure.

All the youth of our land need to know the divine standard of good morals as it is found in the Authorized Version of the Bible. They need to know also something about the broad ways that lead to ruin. They need to be taught that crime does not pay. They need a wholesome fear of crime implanted in their youthful minds.

"Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it."

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."—Solomon.

"Wisdom and knowledge is the stability of thy throne."—Isaiah.

Every child and youth needs a correct standard of good morals, more than he does the multiplication table, or weights and measures. The Authorized Version of the Bible is the standard in good morals that made England and the American Colonies great. It is the standard that every American youth now needs for good citizenship, and for leadership in checking the present wave of crime and corruption in high places.

About 1840, the country by some of the Old World elements in its citizenship, ruled the Bible out of the public schools, in some of the older States, and its importance as a standard of good morals was not appreciated by the legislators of a number of States organized later. The Bible needs now to be adopted by all the States and nations as the Divine Standard of good morals. Let the Bible now be replaced in the classrooms of every public and pri-

vate elementary and secondary school in the land, as one of the most approved methods of preventing the spread of vice, crime and corruption.

This appeal is for unity and cooperation in making the Authorized Version of the Bible the standard of good morals, and placing the same or a copy of the New Testament and Psalms in the hands of every alien, and in every elementary and secondary, private and parochial school, college and State university as a corrective and preventive of crime.

The cost of crime in our country is now greater than the cost of education. One of the best ways of preventing crime is through the good influence of the elementary schools where the New Testament and the Golden Rule are exemplified.

This appeal contemplates a time when all the teachers and public officials will be Bible readers and approvers of the divine standard of good morals.

"Truth crushed to earth will rise again."

This appeal for the daily use of the Bible in all public schools of the land is based upon the well known facts that God, whose name is Jehovah, is the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe; that he created man after his own image, endowing him with a spiritual or moral faculty known as the soul, so that he might hold converse with his Creator; that he has revealed to man that his name is Jehovah, King of Kings and Lord of Lords; that he has given to mankind the power of language both spoken and written; and in the Old and New Testaments, the inspired Word of God.

These sacred Scriptures, by history, precept, prophecy, and the ministry of his only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, reveal what man is to believe concerning God and the duty he requires of man. They reveal Satan, that old serpent the devil, as the great enemy of God and man.

Satan Causes Fall of Man

Satan, entering the Garden of Eden, caused the fall of our first parents from innocence and personal fellowship with God, and their exclusion from Eden.

Satan caused Cain to envy, hate and even to slay his brother, Abel, and merely because he was righteous. He caused the ante-deluvians to be so wicked and worldly they were swept away as a nuisance from the face of the earth by a mighty flood. When the chosen people were delivered from hard bondage in Egypt and were prosperously settled in the land of Canaan, Satan caused them to become divided in two monarchies soon after the beautiful temple of Solomon was built.

By wicked rulers, like Jeroboam and Ahab, he caused the people to become idolaters, dissipated, and drunk with strong drink; and as a punishment for their general ungodliness, to be carried in captivity by the Assyrians and Babylonians.

The remnant of the Jews in the world today represent a miracle of the ages, a fulfillment of the prophecies made known by Moses, Isaiah, Ezekiel and Daniel.

(To be continued)

In the Gospel of Matthew, the great teacher said: "The poor have the Gospel preached to them." You can always tell the real Gospel, for it has something for the poor.—Sel.