

Distilled Dew

“My speech shall distil as the dew.”
– Deut. 32:2

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FRANK BARTLEMAN

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DISTILLED DEW

By FRANK BARTLEMAN

Fragmentary faith produces fragmentary experience. The Scriptures must be adhered to closely or we shall go astray. The exaltation of Jesus supplies the channel for the manifestation of God. The idea many people have of power is any manifestation that makes them feel good but does not dig them out and locate them. We have too little prayer, and too much propaganda. There is no successful substitute for the real thing. We should be so eager to be right with God that we would welcome continually every ray of light upon our mistakes and failures.

Preach the truth and trust God for the outcome. Even the world hates a coward. When parents do not obey God how can they expect their children to obey them? God's people have largely withdrawn from the fire. They do not enjoy being burnt out. Many a religious nest needs renovating, disinfecting, fumigating.

God sees us in Christ. But the people have got to see Christ in us. Men dispute the claims of God upon them. Criticism from our enemies is good for us. They will find out our weak spots for us. We seldom look for the answer to our prayers the way it comes. A guilty conscience needs no accuser. The most guilty are generally the most anxious to justify themselves. Prejudice against a person or their ministry can blind one altogether to any good in them. Do not bring the Scriptures to prove your doctrine, but test your doctrine by the Scriptures. All battles must be fought out on the Word of God. The truth will overthrow error quicker than anything else in the world.

The real reason that leaders fight the anointed messenger is because he has paid the price, and they are not willing to do so. God takes our blessings from us when we abuse them. Do not obey a party whip. Obey God. If we

keep on driving a nail after it is in, the wood will splinter. Don't harp on one truth too long. Spiritual congestion takes place when love grows cold. Keep free to preach any message God puts on you.

Don't be superficial. Get down to real facts. Potato plants often run to top. Then there are no potatoes. We must look for the potatoes under ground, out of sight. Pies swell up when baking. But they are mostly "hot air." Hobbies are for children. They go nowhere. If we crowd a man's conscience he will hate us later. Don't let the other fellow bait your hook. Preach the preaching God gives you. Never glory on a party victory.

The persecuting spirit is not christian. Elijah did not have to tell the people that God was with him. Pentecost will advertise itself. God's way of separating a company for "new wine" is often to let the old crowd kick them out. He has an awful time to separate us from the flock. We cry like a weaning child. "And he died." - Judges 12:1-15; Gen. 5. That was about all there was to be said of them.

Don't marry a movement. Only the free man can hope to get God's perfect mind and will. How much better to obey God without questioning than to search for a thousand plausible reasons not to. The spirit of disobedience is so common today it seems to require a special revelation to understand even God's slightest command.

The apostles knew nothing but Jesus Christ. They could preach nothing else. When we quit "fighting" for God He will probably begin to fight for us. Too often the persecuted later become in turn persecutors. Too many of us have religion. It never gets below the level of our hat band. It is time to quit posing and go to living. Religious diplomats and politicians will never make the kingdom. The true saint will become more and more of a pilgrim as we enter the evil days of the end. What we save

we lose, what we give to God we keep. What we use on ourselves unnecessarily is all lost. There is very little 100 percent consecration. If there had been the world would have been evangelized long ago.

God's strength is made perfect in our weakness. Most of us are too strong. When we are nothing Jesus Christ can become all and in all. God's power is sovereign in its operations. Nothing is ever really settled until it is settled right. The Roman church dug up the bones of one of the early reformers and burned them, after he had been buried 50 years. Most of us are not worth burying, let alone digging up. We shall not pass this way again. Opportunity never returns. Do it today.

Many people live continually in a fool's paradise. Like the ostrich they hide their head and consider themselves safe. It makes very little difference whether a hen sits or sets. The thing that matters is whether she lays eggs and hatches chickens. The terminology is not the thing that counts. The tail does not wag the dog, but the dog the tail. Put first things first. A turtle once wanted to fly. He engaged two crows to carry him aloft, with the ends of a stick held in their beaks while he held to the middle with his mouth. He opened his mouth to boast and down he came, cracking his shell. Stay where God has placed you and be content. Don't follow the line of least resistance. Dead fish float with the stream.

A skunk and a tale bearer have very much in common. Both stir up a bad scent in the neighborhood. The nearer we approach to Jesus the smaller we find the circle of his followers. Let us saw off our shot guns, shorten our sermons, and we will do the devil more damage. We have preached the people to death instead of life. When a hen lays an egg she cackles as though she had laid an asteroid. And that is the way some preachers report their meetings. One would think they had saved the world.

Exaggeration is a soul disease. Don't allow the applause of the people to affect you. They can deify you today and damn you tomorrow.

Religious zeal, void of the Spirit of Christ, is the cruelest thing in all the universe. Make the things of time and sense your servants. Do not serve them. Men are ever ready to shed their blood for their opinions. What we need is facts. The superlative man will need no advertising. It is only a step from discussing (controversy) to cussing. Preach the whole truth of God and you will have all the goats in the country "but"-ting you.

Do not be too credulous, or take too much for granted. "Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good." Cattle fenced in cannot feed further. Take the Bible for your creed. It is more praiseworthy to feed some hungry child than to remove mountains. Do not claim infallibility of judgment, and then rail at the Pope. God can only use the man who is useless in his own eyes. If we were called to give up our party strifes and hobbies, would we have any religion left, I wonder. If we want oil we must "dig" for it. We must have the "manifestation of the Son of God" before we can have the "manifestation of the sons of God." We cannot lay eggs of strife and contention and then refuse the chickens when they are hatched.

A man first begins to get stiff in the neck in old age. Spiritual stiff necks are very common. We have spiritual hardening of the arteries, poor circulation. It is not so much the mere difference of opinion in minor points of doctrine that has cursed the work of God and separated the body of Christ, but rather the uncharitable spirit of division and antagonism. The wells that our Pentecostal fathers digged in the old "Azusa mission" days have become pretty well filled up again. We should want nothing here but what we can take to heaven with us. Seas of ink and rivers of blood have been spilled in carnal controversy.

How much incense has been burned to party spirit! The devil as a great religionist. Many of the saints are suffering from an enlarged gall bladder. To put miracle working power before christian character is to invite disaster. We have got to be big enough to at least allow the other fellow to have an opinion or two of his own. God speaks in the major key. Our key is the minor one. Then is all the difference in the world between a broken or an unbroken horse. And just so with the ministry. God does not ask us to analyze, dissect and explain Him. He wants us to love, reverence, and serve Him. The one most worthy of the blessing of God is the one who feels himself most unworthy.

It is the counterfeit of salvation that hinders far more than emptiness and formalism. The latter may drive us to God. The counterfeit shuts us up in hopeless delusion and makes impossible the realization of the real. The preacher should take his place with the rest of the penitents, and not in the confessional box. Let not the Pentecostal people sell out their primo-geniture for a mere mess of worldly church pottage.

Too many religionists seem more concerned about the establishment of a consummated system of theology than of a full revelation of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. They conceit a finality in the knowledge of the truth. We have but a partial realization at the best. Only those who have no theory to defend, but the Word of God to follow, may hope to see the truth clearly, even in a measure. We have sighted truth at an angle at the best. Both knowledge and experience are but fragmentary. A mistake in our premises is bound to lead to error in conclusion. Clinging too tenaciously even to a partial revelation may hinder us from receiving the clearer, fuller revelation. Never put a part for the whole.

The Gospel is a revelation. It is grasped

neither by fallen or unfallen reason. Adam unfallen never had the revelation of salvation by grace. Never preach the Pentecostal movement, but rather a Scriptural Pentecost. Movements are full of human errors and additions, the weaknesses of men. Only God is perfect. We must be thoroughly dead to all personal ambition, while fully awake to all the interests of God.

There were two buckets in the old fashioned well. They went down empty, and came up full. We must go down empty if we would come up full. Like the old fashioned windmill we must set our sails to the breath of God. Our soul should be as an aeolian harp for God to blow upon its strings and make sweet music as He will. An automobile with the engine running shakes itself to pieces until it gets started down the road. The baptism with the Holy Spirit is for service.

The early church like Samson, lost her strength in the lap of Constantine. She ground through the “dark ages” for the devil. Correct forms are not necessarily perfect conductors for the power of God. But humility, faith and obedience are. The higher we climb the harder we fall. Human failure may but prove the work to be of God. The instrument is as weak as other men when not possessed of God. God uses earthen vessels. He works in spite of weaknesses and error. He is never responsible for the error. The power of God will never fall on guile and the supplanting spirit. Too many are observing times and seasons. God’s greatest foes are ever found within his own household. Come fresh to the Word of God, free from all traditions of men.

Don’t get your wires grounded through earthliness. Be a “live wire” for God. Trees grow downward before they can grow upward. The kings of Israel rode on mules. Jesus rode a mule. We will ride on white horses later (Rev.),

when we have gotten the victory. Keep humble now. More preaching against sin will help keep the preacher himself from falling into sin. No one man ministry can fulfill the need of all the people. Hence God has placed many “gifts” in the body. If people would speak out their inner convictions without reserve we could soon get to the bottom of a matter. God will not work along our lines. Most people want God to repent.

Resist the devil and you will hear from him. A handful of humble fishermen were used in the beginning to herald the message of salvation. We speak of God as though he lived in a far off world. I wonder how that must sound to Him? Two classes of people hinder God. Those who resist Him, and those who try to help Him. Our failures should but teach us to sink deeper into God. Only a broken spirit can break others. Greatness is discovered most largely in the unconsciousness of the fact. Not he who strives the hardest is the conqueror, but he that is able to control himself in the conflict. If the devil is saved it will have to be by His works (impossible), for there is no atonement made for him.

We cannot get our bearings with God by earthly compass. All directions are lost in space. God is our spiritual center. We must be God-centered, not self-centered. The Bride must keep her eyes on the Bridegroom, and adore Him, not on her beautiful garments (“gifts”). God has not left it to man to decide the standard of truth, but rather to discover His standard of truth. Our business is not to build up anything but the kingdom. Forms, ceremonies, creeds and dogmas have been piled up in the way of the cross, like Hebrew, Latin and Greek were placed over the head of Jesus. The early reformers had little time for speculation and theory. They were fighting for their lives. Past experience must not be allowed to hinder present fact and realization. Religious reformation is only effected by preaching positive facts and

truths. We must never be satisfied in an experience, but in Him.

No one sect could be entrusted with the full Gospel. They would corner it for their party. Where there is little fire it is easily put out. It will not stand much “raking.” Are we a “burning bush,” or a mere heap of ashes? Let us speak of Jesus’ sacrifice for us, and less of our own sacrifices. Multitudes are bound up helplessly and hopelessly in their party systems. They dare go no farther. The shepherds are very zealous to bell their sheep.

The Word of God is the only infallible utterance. The human is liable to be mixed with all we say and do. God’s love as manifested in his redemption is sufficient to answer all questions as to his love and justice. Jesus Christ has not called his church to fight for him, but to suffer with him. When we feel led of the “spirit” let us be sure it is not our own spirit that is leading us. Many have brought their Babylonish garments into Pentecost with them. It is better to be found steady and dependable than merely brilliant and evanescent. Live for God as earnestly every day as though he were coming right away. Saul of Tarsus came down off his high horse before Damascus at the vision of Jesus. The deepest experiences in God are only possible to those who are willing to suffer the severest conflicts.

Whatever we get of blessing from God will be just that much more than we deserve. We need not go around challenging the devil. He will look us up. If Satan cannot get us discouraged he will try to elate us, puff us up. Most people prefer a dazzling pretender to a true, tried servant of God. They call for Barabbas. Mind the checks of the Spirit. They are God’s red, danger flags. We will soon lose the keen edge of our discernment if we fail to be true to God.

After wild fire has burned over the field of the mere enthusiast, the man who lives humbly for God's glory will feed in pastures green. What is in us is bound to come out on us, like the measles. The sheep will bleat. God's "gifts" are like the angels, not to be shown off. Don't get hold of one of the devil's live wires by mistake. A snake's eggs and a bird's look very much alike. The time to crush out error is while it is in the shell. Ill wishes are prayers offered to the devil. A man must have a backbone to walk uprightly. Daniel was all backbone. The lions could not chew him. The man who lives for God alone must walk alone.

Men who succeed in making themselves heard the most hear the least from God. Crowds mean nothing. They have itching ears. Not one person in a thousand has discernment. They who expect results from God without the proper means are mere enthusiasts. The deeper we dig for water the higher it will spout. Those who get the most from God are those who feel they deserve the least. Jesus is forever wounded in the house of his friends, crucified between two thieves, the two extremes. There are multitudes of demons simulating the work of God. They are very religious. People got a notion in Wesley's time they were never going to die. In Luther's time some declared they had no further need of the Word. The spirit spoke to them direct.

What cannot be clearly and satisfactorily proven had better be laid aside. It is not wise to know more than we know. God never baptizes man's strength. "Upon the flesh of man shall it (the anointing oil) not be poured." To analyze God is to destroy Him, like faith, or a beautiful flower. God judges of how much we give by how much we keep for ourselves. The hardest tests are those we cannot understand. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!"

Don't make life a joke. All considered it is a

very serious proposition. Only fools are jokers in this matter. Tremendous results accrue from small acts. The ages turn on minute hinges. A child's finger can press the button that will set the world on fire. The John the Baptists are generally rough, hairy men. Truth's forerunners always arrive in crude form. The devil tacks his tag on almost every mission. He will intrude some crudity or error to destroy their usefulness. Most of them have their own peculiar little quirk, which to them is a matter of life and death.

Luther declared he would "rather obey than to work miracles." Miracles will follow the man who obeys God. Try all opinions, notions, party spirits, etc., in the light of eternal realities. Wise-cracking and joking, especially in the pulpit, is the pastime of fools. No preacher can have liberty of speech when minds are closed against him. God himself will not give a message to be rejected. As long as we pander to carnal, selfish christians, we shall not dare to preach the kingdom of God as set forth in the Word. The pocket book is the seat of the affections and about the most sensitive part of the ordinary man's anatomy.

We are very familiar with just a few party cries in the Word of God. But the greater part of its practical teaching lies all undiscovered and unknown. We are usually more concerned for our "shibboleths" than we are for souls. Most people have never known the luxury of thinking for themselves. Possibly it would not be sate for them. They would be most likely to think wrong. The masses are most illogical. Very few can bear to see others more used of God than themselves and rejoice in it. The man who is used of God will have all hell, and jealous preachers, on his trail. Most christians have got to have something human to hold them up. Some other god. We should seek the kingdom of God as a whole, not some mere sectional part of it, or party.

If we were more anxious to live a holy life than to work miracles we would doubtless work much more of them. Only “fall not on me yourselves,” said Samson to the elders of Israel. Don’t bind the preacher. Free yourself from all bondage to particular creeds and parties. Be God’s man. Conform to nothing but the Word of God. We can only have fellowship in the pure Spirit of Christ, not a mixed spirit. The enemies of Christ find no difficulty in uniting against us. Preach Christ, not movements. Don’t throw a sop to party spirit. “Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty.” - Jas. 1:25. Love is the “acid test.” - I Cor. 13.

There are many whose backs are breaking under the heavy load. Don’t add the last straw to that load. Religion is a hard god to serve. Salvation brings peace and rest. We are living our life today, not simply getting ready to live. God’s time is when we are ready receive Him. His blessing is never arbitrary. Let the money element enter into our preaching and our power is gone. Just as in music, painting, or any of the fine arts. Selfishness will destroy any gift.

We have slipped so many cogs we have just about stripped all the gears. About the only hope is a “new lump.” “Purge out the old leaven.” The whole mass needs to be set free again, as in the old “Azusa mission” days. We need a mighty explosion, to liberate the truth, to create a forward movement once more. Today we are going around in a circle largely. Theological discussions have always been the curse of the church. They are intellectual feeding at the most. Keep out of the psychical realm.

At “Azusa” we could not get on our feet without the anointing. Today we cannot get up with it. We made history in those days. Today we are writing it. Railroading the masses through in divine healing services is far more spectacular than helpful. Repentance is always

the preparation for revival. Close your soul against all mere psychological tricks.

If we keep saved it will keep us busy without worrying about the devil's salvation. We are only capable of enjoying to the extent that we are capable of suffering. Some are satisfied with a thimble full of blessing. Others, like behemoth, can drink up a river. A spiritual wizard can generally carry off the crowd in a delusion. They seek signs and wonders rather than to be holy. Many are self-hypnotized. Preach Christ and cease exalting differences. Most people are filled with their ideas and opinions, notions and speculations. Filled with their own ways. They are filled with morbid curiosity, but not with a real desire for the truth. They desire knowledge of mysteries. We had better "let the lid stay on the ark," lest we be struck dead. Most missions are so full of plans and projects they have no time to hear from God.

Shallow souls substitute transient blessing for permanent joy. Do not try to drive a sharp bargain with God. Reverence Jesus, don't discuss Him. We cannot argue if Jesus is real to us. Today is some one's last day. Tomorrow may be yours. Just as we decrease to self, we increase in God. In the higher spiritual altitudes the evil tendencies in us become inert, just as with T. B. germs. In the beginning man was made in the Image of God. In the end he is winding up by denying the very existence of God - atheism.

Let us appeal our case to the Supreme court of Heaven when accused by our enemies. Let us pitch our tune to B natural. Tradition is stronger than the Word because we go to man for our interpretations. We shall have no reward if our first consideration is our own welfare, rather than the glory of God. Be as much in earnest as God is. The preacher who jokes in the pulpit soon becomes a joke himself. Too many are still on the Cradle Roll. Not fiddling

entertainments, but the presence of God, will save the people.

Babylon “trafficked in souls.” The souls of men should never be touched by human hands. They are too delicate for such handling. Few can stand the immediate presence of God. The flesh and the devil will cry out in such meetings. How shall we meet God finally? The world kills its benefactors and enthrones its deceivers. As bushes are trained to grow in unnatural shapes so the sects are used to train their converts. No two blades of grass grow exactly alike in nature. Just to the extent that men are unwilling to give up to God they will oppose all those who are surrendered fully to God.

It is easy to enthuse people with some propaganda. There is just enough carnality in them for that. But to talk to them of Christ alone is an insipid matter. “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” Emphasis on the “righteousness.” What is heaven’s standard? That should be our issue.

We would venerate the actual cross of Christ if it were still in existence today. Why not venerate the cross by which we are daily crucified to the world, the trials of life, misunderstandings, persecutions, etc., for Christ’s sake? The spirit of the Inquisition is a “persecuting” spirit. Shun It. We must be found unattached to the trifling, unthinking frivolities and spirit of this life and age. The true philosopher of life studies the span of human existence as a whole. God’s self-revelation is in Jesus Christ. Thus we find the Godhead Scripturally stated, but never explained. Much Scripture is not yet entirely clear. Hence it is wicked to break fellowship over these issues.

The world cares nothing for our niceties in differences of opinion, our differing creeds, etc. They are uniting against Christ. We should unite for Him. We must “hang together,” or “hang

separately.” No creed but Christ. “Nearer my God to thee” should be our song today. The hand struck up that hymn as the Titanic went down. We are nearing the rapture, going up. The command is not to “be British,” but to be christian.

There is not even a match stick left standing of old “Azusa mission” today. Nothing but the bare ground. So with our past experience. We must seek God anew, for fresh manna, every day. It is no time to be building great temples of brick and mortar. Spiritual temples are the only kind that will be standing very long. The end of all things is at hand. The Reds may soon be using the others to stable their horses in. The reign of Antichrist is rapidly approaching. The Gospel will not be preached very long.

Most christians live in the “outer court” of spiritual experience. They walk by sight, by feeling, rather than faith. A goat is known from a sheep by the food he demands. Goats eat rank weeds, sheep eat tender grass. The highest type of christian experience is not measured by our zeal for God, but rather by our conformity to God. Most men’s experience of salvation is little more than a fire insurance policy, to keep them out of hell. A mere fire escape, in the conception of sinners.

A hard boiled spirit opens no door for us but the door to the “pit.” The “open door” Is set before the church of “brotherly love,” Ulterior motives make fellowship impossible among the brethren. There can be no confidence under such conditions. Men die such beautiful deaths, without a struggle, after a shot of morphine from the doctor. Thus the devil slides sinners into hell unconscious. God is not the author of war. To foretell it is one thing, to determine it is quite another. “From whence come wars?” From our own lusts. Jas. 4:1. “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil.” – Isa. 6:20. Many have a doctrine of

“good Lord, good devil.” Both Judas and Satan are made martyrs to the will of God.

What the world needs is a whole Gospel, for the whole man, and for every man, not a party spirit, or a denominational preference or prejudice. There is but “one body” in Christ. The church is not going to heaven in denominational sections. The sect spirit is nowhere countenanced in Scripture. Then what do we want with it? No one church is the true church. There is only one true church. “Little children, keep yourselves from idols.”

We are dealing not with a mere set of principles, but with a personal God. What is in a preacher’s life will come out when preaching. We preach our own experience and standing continually, unconsciously. Aaron is the preacher in demand today, to preach a “golden calf” god. Moses is rejected by the people.

Take away from most christians the right to contend and strive for their own peculiar little opinions and doctrines and they will have no experience left. How pitiful! The world wants our agreements, not our differences. Our differences have cursed them. A few bricks from the top of a building in an earthquake will preach a more convincing sermon than most of our churches.

We can have a doctrinal god, and worship doctrinal devils. The fallen church of the centuries has been born almost every other way but the right way. There have been Caesarean births, and all the other abnormal births known to science. Most of the children have been born dead, still-born. What we need is a church normally born, according to New Testament order and spirit.

Spiritual pride has been the downfall of every spiritual movement. We can only know the strength of God as we come to know our own weakness. As long as we are able to accomplish something God can do nothing through us. God begins where man ends. We have become

too familiar with God and He has withdrawn from us. I wonder what they think about us in heaven.

The voice of the people is not the voice of God. God's people are always in the minority. "Fear not little flock." Until we are more anxious to be than to do we will not do very much. Cattle run around the pasture when the grass is short. That is why so many run from minion to mission. When a man smokes a cigar he sends up a burnt offering to the devil.

To withhold the truth when revealed is to question God's right and wisdom in the matter. Finney taught that when truth is revealed it is time to declare it. The world waited 4000 years for Jesus' first coming. We have only half as long to wait for his second. No people fear death like the Jew. Small wonder, for they have rejected their Messiah. God is giving the race a full length of rope today, to fill up their cup of iniquity. He always does that in the end, closing up, of every dispensation. God will soon do the preaching now. The world has rejected His prophets and apostles. His Spirit is also leaving the Gentiles and turning to the Jews. – Rom. 11. This is one more powerful sign of the end.

The church can only life the world to its own level. Sinners cannot be brought to God by worldly methods. They despise pious clap-trap and deception. We are tired of the old hackneyed expression: "Meetings as usual." Why not have some unusual meetings, where God can take some part? Some people are just about as sensitive to the Spirit as a piece of old rubber hose is to an electric current. The gigantic waste of spiritual energy through the imaginations and speculations of men, their cults and systems of philosophy, only God can compute. And it is all worse than wasted. It would seem that almost the whole race are crazy.

If christians have any sense left at all they will soon get together. The enemy is already

hammering at the gates, like Titus battering at the walls of old Jerusalem. The devils cannot be silent in Christ's presence. An unbroken spirit is a continual menace to the work of God, especially when it be found in a leader. The weakest man is the strongest, the emptiest man is the fullest, in God.

We should take into careful consideration the result of every act. Never fear ostracism in obeying God. Stand out for God. Short of the perfect mind and will of God every man is living in his own delusion. One day at a time is enough to live in these days. Those who go to sea in deep waters must expect to encounter storms. The Psalmist prayed, "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me." How easy it is for God to withdraw from us. We may never have another privilege of working for God such as we have in this life. Let us make the most of it today.

If we were all to go to the stake together tomorrow would we not get together and forget our petty differences? What percent of the human race have been saved since the creation of man, or even since the advent of the Church of Christ? Today in China there is one soul for God out of every 1250 for the devil. One for God in Japan, out of 600 for the devil.

The sum of the earth's population since Adam has been computed at 36,627,843,275,000,000. There are at least 1,800,000,000 living today. There are 170 heathen born daily to every soul converted to God. Modern foreign missions, carrying the Gospel to the heathen, has only been in practice during the last 100 years. What percentage has been saved since Adam?

History will approve the man who separates clearly between light and darkness, between good and evil. To regard nearby interests is to despise future values. History sees clearly, and judges impartially. Live in the light of future history.

Los Angeles, California, March, 1934.