

# The Gospel Witness

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T. T. SHIELDS  
PASTOR AND EDITOR

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."—Romans 1: 16.

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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

PETER'S SERMON AT PENTECOST.

A Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Sunday evening, July 29th, 1923.  
(Stenographically reported.)

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?"—Acts 2: 37.

**T**HIS chapter gives us an account of the first public preaching of the triumphant gospel of the resurrection; and the verse I have just read to you is the response of the people who heard the message, who were pricked in their heart, and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

Just to stir up the pure minds of believers by way of remembrance, and also to endeavour to bring home to the heart and conscience of any unconverted man or woman here the great central truths of the Gospel, I want to go over this exceedingly familiar chapter with you this evening. I do not know why I should do so; but so often nowadays I find my own plans put aside and some special Scripture at the last moment urgently laid upon my own heart, and it oftentimes later transpires that God in His wisdom so ordered events that some one dropped in to the service who specially needed the particular message given.

It is well for us, then, to refresh our minds by consideration of what was involved in this Pentecostal message. It was when they heard certain things they were pricked in their heart. And it would appear that, although the Word was accompanied by the power of the Holy Ghost, the result was not altogether without relation to the particular truth which was declared. The result, indeed, was and is attributed to the special word which was spoken. Not when they heard, but when they heard this particular message, they were pricked in their heart. I know it is a commonplace to say that if we are to have Pentecostal visitations and Pentecostal results, we need to go back to Pentecostal methods and to the Pentecostal message. And so I want you to enquire with me—you will hardly need to open your Bibles; to those of you

who are Christians, this second chapter must be so familiar as to be fastened upon your memory—just what are the great cardinal principles to which this divinely inspired preacher gave emphatic utterance on that Pentecostal occasion.

I. First of all, he dealt with THE FACT OF CHRIST, with Jesus as an historic figure. I know it was a matter of recent history with them—but still it was in the past—that there had come into the midst of them a man—"Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did, by him, in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know." Peter began on the plane where all his hearers could follow him—not with an elaborate quotation from some forgotten classic, not with any apology for speaking the name of Jesus: he dealt with this great outstanding fact, that a human personality had appeared among men, for which men must find some explanation, and toward whom they must learn rightly to relate themselves. And so, my friend, the great business of the preacher to-day, as then, is to speak about Jesus Christ. He has no other message. However long his ministry may be, however varied his congregation, however often he may proclaim the truth, he will never exhaust the fullness of teaching that is involved in the very Name of Him "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge . . . for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." We may speak of Jesus every day, and all the day, and all the years, and through all eternity. This is the wonder of wonders that God was manifest in the flesh, that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

Now, it may be that some one here is wondering what this old-fashioned preacher will have to say this evening. It may be that there is some one here who is entirely out of sympathy with the old position. I received a letter only last week from a lady at a distance saying that she was not able to accept the position of the higher critics; she was not able to receive the New Theology; nor was she able to take the old position, particularly in relation to the Scriptures; and she believed that she had found a happy medium. Well, I do not know what sort of people are here to-night. We have some strange people come in here sometimes; and it may be that there is some one man whose heart is not set upon Christ, but upon whom the heart of Christ is set, and who has come in here without any intention whatever of meeting with Christ or of yielding to His Gospel. And yet it may be that in the sovereignty of His grace and mercy, the Lord has designed to compel your surrender, and utterly and absolutely and for ever to bind you to Himself as His bondsman. Now, where can I begin with you? If there is one here to-night who says, "Well, sir, I do not subscribe to the old-fashioned view of the inspiration of Scripture, and I do not believe in the vicarious atonement,"—but let us stop there. You could entertain me for half the night telling me what you do not believe: I want to talk with you on the ground of what you do believe. Never mind about what you do not believe. Let us see if there is not some place of meeting where, while there are some things we do not hold in common, we can at least find common ground upon which to begin. And I say, you cannot deny the fact of Jesus Christ; you cannot deny Jesus of Nazareth as a fact of history. He is a figure on the page of history; you cannot blot Him out no matter how much you try; you cannot ignore Him; you dare not say, if you have any sense at all, that you are superior to a consideration of the fact that one human personality in the long ago appeared who has exerted such a tremendous influence upon the world that even to-day His Name is above every name. If you are a Unitarian, you may say, "I agree with you only so far as we in common admit that Jesus lived, that there was such a

Person as Jesus."—"Jesus of Nazareth," said Peter, "a man approved of God among you." Did He live? Well, if He did, what explanation are we to give for the fact of Christ? How did Peter explain it on the day of Pentecost?

II. The next thing he dealt with was His DEATH. That, too, was an historic fact. Jesus of Nazareth lived, and Jesus of Nazareth died; and there was no doubt about it. All Jerusalem knew it. It was a matter of public knowledge that Jesus of Nazareth had been crucified. Nor will the various sceptics question for a moment that simple statement that Jesus lived and died.

But what explanation had this apostolic, this Pentecostal preacher, to offer for the death of Christ? First of all, he said there was a human element in it: "Him . . . ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Now, historically, that was true; the death of Christ was not unrelated to human action. It was by human hands the cross was made; by human hands the crown of thorns was platted; by human hands the nails were driven; by human hands the spear was thrust into His side; it was by men that Jesus was crucified. There could not be found to-day a man who would justify the death of Christ. I do not think I could find anybody here who would for a moment say that Pilate was right in delivering Jesus up to death. I think we should all agree with Peter that, whatever be the ultimate explanation, so far as human participation in that great tragedy was concerned, the hands that put Jesus on the cross were "wicked hands." My friend, you may deny that Jesus died for your sins according to the scripture; but the truth is that the same principle, the same antagonism toward all that Jesus represented in that day, may be discovered in human hearts and in human lives to-day. The world is full of "wicked hands." If Jesus Christ in the simplicity of His sinless life were here, in all the majesty of His holiness—if He, the very incarnation of truth, were here to-day, if He were to come even into our churches to-day, He would be crucified again. For the life He lived, and the life He exemplified, and the life He taught, and the life He requires of every man, is just the life that men and women are resolved not to live; and they will crucify any man who dares to commend that example to them.

But there is a further explanation: Peter taught them that although men were responsible, yet there was a divine purpose in it: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." He said the cross was no accident; the cross was divinely planned; the cross was not a miscarriage of justice; the cross was not a denial of the moral government of the universe; the cross was of God's ordering: He was "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." Now, if once you admit that, then you must find some other explanation of the cross than merely that men were natively and inherently opposed to Jesus. The truth is, it was the offering of a great sacrifice; it was the great atonement; it was the fulfilment of all that God had promised.

I have not time to go into it in detail this evening. I am merely suggesting to you, first of all, the fact of the life of Christ; and the fact of the death of Christ; and these two elements in His death—man did it; God planned it. Why? Peter said it was the fulfilment of prophesy. He said the death of Jesus was the fulfilment of all that was promised in the scriptures; it was no accident. He said somewhat more elaborately what the Apostle Paul said when he summed up the whole Gospel: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day

according to the scriptures." Now that was Peter's claim on the day of Pentecost that Jesus Christ was the Lamb of God Who had come to take away the sins of the world; and that His going to the cross was the execution of the divine plan, and the fulfilment of God's eternal purpose. But now he must establish that truth. They would say, "Yes, sir, we know He lived; we know He died; we know we crucified Him! but when you talk about God as having anything to do with it, when you say He is the Messiah, then we have a controversy with you."

III. But again, this apostolic preacher said that not only did He live, not only did He die by human hands and by divine purpose, and was buried, but he added, "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." He, therefore, declared that this great and surprising truth of the physical resurrection of Jesus was the proof of the value of His death. The resurrection is the interpretation of the significance of the death of Christ. He might have died as a martyr; He might have died as a mere zealot who was pursuing some high and noble ideal; but what about His resurrection from the dead? You see, my friend, the resurrection is the complement of the truth of the crucifixion, and the only adequate interpretation of that fact. Then again, they said in their hearts: "We do not believe in the resurrection. We have done with Jesus of Nazareth." But said this Apostle: "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." And he declared His resurrection to be the fulfilment of Scripture. David spoke of it, David predicted it; and He has been raised from the dead.

IV. But what is the proof of the resurrection? He is not here. If Jesus could walk these aisles this evening, if He could show himself alive by many infallible proofs, do you think it would be possible in all the world to find anything that could compete in its attractive power with that tremendous fact that the risen Saviour is in a particular place? I will venture to say that there would be no building in this city, or in any other city, that would be large enough to hold the people if Jesus in the flesh were to show "himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs" to-day. Now, that is what Peter preached, and he quoted Scripture. But that was not all; for he in effect said: "You have come together to ask an explanation of what you have seen in this group of men and women who have now been gathered together these many days in prayer. You have said that they are drunk, but I tell you that they are not drunk; that the explanation of what you have seen and heard is in the fact that a man called Jesus lived, that He was crucified, and He was buried, and He was raised again from the dead, and that He has been exalted to God's right hand, and that He from His throne in glory has shed forth this which ye all see and hear."

What then was the proof of the resurrection of Jesus? Follow me. The resurrection interpreted the death: the death and the life were indisputable. The resurrection was proved by what? Merely by the testimony of those who had seen Him? No! The resurrection, the divine authority, and sufficiency, and finality of the whole revelation of God in Christ was established by a church that was filled with the Holy Ghost. There is no use of your talking about the resurrection unless you have that to back you; there is no use of your writing books about it, and preaching sermons about it, unless you can prove the Lordship of Jesus, the Sovereign Saviourhood of the Incarnate God, unless you can produce the evidence that He is still working and still doing what He said He would do. This preacher stood up in the midst of that congregation, and because of the evidence of the Holy Ghost in the midst of the assembly, he said: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." If He is not Lord and Christ in your life, and in the church to which you belong, well, then, all the books in the world that you may write will not estab-

lish the truth of His Lordship. That is the evidence—that He has received from the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, and He hath shed forth this.

Have you ever used your imagination on that congregation at Pentecost? I wonder who were there! I wonder what Peter saw when he stood up with the eleven! I wonder if Caiphas was there! I wonder if all the kindred of the high priest were there! I wonder if the soldiers who nailed Him to the cross were there! I wonder if the maid who said to Peter, "Thou art also of them"—was she standing down there! I wonder if the servant of the high priest who was kinsman of him whose ear Peter had cut off, who said, "Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilean"—I wonder if he was there! I expect they were all there. When they heard of this mighty supernatural manifestation in this group of people who had followed after Jesus, I think it is most likely that they all gathered together to see what was happening. And if they were there, don't you think that servant girl had a different opinion about Peter? She remembered when tauntingly she had said, "Thou art also of them," and she saw the look of terror on his face. And she remembered that Peter had said, "No, don't associate me with Him." But now, Peter, a veritable lion, clothed with divine majesty, looked into the very eyes of the murderers of his Lord, and said: "Him . . . ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain"—bold as a lion, as though he would rush into the very jaws of hell, if need be, in defence of his Lord. I think the maid must have said, or at least thought, "Something has happened. Oh, there is a miracle there. He is not the same man at all."

And, the simple suggestion I make is this: that what a sin-sick world needs to-day is to know that Christ is on the throne, and that He still has power to shed forth This, which can accomplish a révolution in a man like Peter, and make him a new man. There are thousands of men and women in this city, beaten, defeated, running before the enemy, trying to justify themselves; who yet, in their hearts long for Somebody Who can put His almighty hand upon them and change them utterly. Have you the message? What is the use of wasting their time preaching a so-called "social gospel"? It is proverbially difficult to make bricks without straw, but it is impossible to build houses without bricks or stones. A morally vital society can be fashioned only of "living stones." That man with whom you work knows very well that the plague that has to be dealt with is not in his environment promarily; it is in his own heart. You must have a gospel that will assure him that there is Somebody Who can make him over by the power of God.

My friends, you who are unconverted, let me preach this to you. I am afraid that too often, even when Christ crucified is preached, He is preached merely as an Object of faith, as an objective Saviour; and we may tell men what Jesus has done for them; that He paid their debt, that He cancelled their obligation; and leave them with the impression that it is all outside of themselves. They say, "Yes, sir, I can understand all that. God's grace may abound, and He may forgive even such sin as mine." But if they were to speak their hearts they would say, "I am just like the leper in the Book who came to the Saviour and said, 'If thou wilt thou canst make me clean'—not, 'Thou canst save me from death; not, 'Thou canst give me back the use of my fingers, my failing sight, and hearing, and help me to bear the burdens of life. No, not that! He said: 'If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.' I would rather be clean than anything else; and unless I can be clean, I would like to die; for I am an outcast; I am loathsome to myself and everybody else. I want a power that can make me clean." Don't you see? We have too often, perhaps, told you only of the objective value of the death of Christ, of what He has done for you; without preaching the doctrine of the power of the Holy Ghost. Now, remember, Peter was preaching to unconverted people. He said: "I preach a Saviour Who has shed forth this. He can make a new man of you, and change you as He has changed me." And so while I preach the blood of Christ in all its cleansing power to wash away our sins, let me tell you that I declare in His Name that there is a living Saviour and there is an ever-present Holy Spirit Who comes to take up His abode in human hearts, and to make us—you and me—the living evidences of the truth of the resurrection, and therefore of the whole Christian revelation.

V. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall

we do?" I wonder is there somebody here this evening, are there many here this evening, who are prepared to say, "Well, sir, I would like to know what I ought to do, in view of that great fact. I know Jesus lived, I know He died, and I am compelled to admit that here and there at least I have met men and women who are the proofs of His resurrection. And if that Saviour is living and can do that for me, I wish you would tell me what to do, and I wish you would tell me now!" Is there anybody here like that? Anybody here who would like to know what to do?

Peter said, "Repent—change your mind, change your attitude toward Jesus Christ. Accept Him at His own estimate. Give Him in your thought and in your heart the place God gives Him in His holy Scripture. Repent—you drove the nails, you platted the thorns, you rejected Him, you said 'Not this man but Barabas', now reverse the verdict and say, I want Jesus, and I will take Him just exactly as the Scripture represents Him to me; I will yield to Him; I will accept the truth that He died for my sins according to the scripture; and that when He went down into the grave He went down as my substitute, that my sins went down into the grave with Him, and that when He was raised from the dead and ascended into the heavens, that He went up to the glory as my representative, and that He is there now as the pledge of a new race of redeemed humanity." Do you repent? That is what it means to repent of sin—right about face.

"And be baptized every one of you." I ought not to say that! Somebody says, "That preacher is going to spoil it all. Why does he introduce the subject of baptism?" He does not introduce the subject of baptism; he simply refuses to exclude it. It is introduced already; it was there on the day of Pentecost. "What shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."—if you believe all this, if you believe in His death and His burial and His resurrection, then obey; put on the badge of discipleship, and proclaim to the world that you have died with Him, that you have been buried with Christ by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." That is what Peter preached on the day of Pentecost. That is what I preach now. That is what we should always preach. It has its place in God's plan: "For the promise is unto you." Mark that! "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you—not only to us apostles, not only to the chosen ministers of the church—for the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Just as surely as there is the promise of the cleansing blood for every one who will repent, so there is the promise of the fulness and the power of the Holy Ghost to every one who will obey Him: "The Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."

And then what happened? "They that gladly received his word were baptized." There were some people who did not receive His word very gladly, I suppose. But there were those who said, "I am so glad that Jesus is not in the grave; I am so glad to know that He is 'the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world'; I am so glad to know that He is raised from the dead, and that He has ascended into the glory:" "They that gladly received his word were baptized."

Are you going to do the same thing? Are you glad? Of course, you are. How many others are glad? I confess I am; it is the greatest joy of my life—quite often the only joy—but I can conceive of no message that can bring greater gladness to the human heart than this: that Jesus lives to be our Saviour, as we sang just now:

"Hallelujah! what a Saviour!  
Hallelujah! what a Friend!"

Then if you have gladly received His word, why don't you do what He tells you to do? But I am not a Baptist. I was brought up a Presbyterian." Somebody else, perhaps, will say, "I was born a Methodist." No, you were not. You may have been born a modern Methodist; but a real Methodist is always "born again." I will tell you what you were, you were born a great

big thumping sinner. Perhaps you were not so very big when you were born, but you soon showed it was in you. But that is not the question, how you were trained in early years. But now that you have come by the illumination of the Holy Spirit, and with God's Holy Word before you, to learn for yourselves what is written there, do not stop to ascertain whether it is Methodist, or Presbyterian, or Anglican, or Baptist; find out what is in Scripture, and do what God tells you. And if you do not, say that you don't, and do not pretend that you do; do not pretend that you believe in the inspiration and authority of Scripture when you believe only just so far as it pleases you. Do not take the ground that when it runs across your own theory, you must be allowed to put it aside.

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." It is so simple that the children in the kindergarten class could understand it, if only we would accept Him at His Word, and take the Bible to mean exactly what it says. You have heard perhaps of the Paedobaptist father who was explaining to his little boy the matter of baptism, or who tried to. When the little fellow read his scripture, he brought his New Testament to his father, and said, "Daddy, you don't do that." "No, my boy, it does not mean exactly that." And he tried to explain what it meant. And at last the little fellow said, "Well, Daddy, if the Lord Jesus did not mean what He said, why in the world didn't He say what He meant?" Now if the Bible does not mean what it says, why doesn't it say what it means? Let us cease our discussions about the inspiration and authority of Scripture and the Lordship of Jesus Christ so long as we stand face to face with the plain command of Jesus Christ and absolutely refuse to obey it. "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" There it is in the Book; do as He tells you. "They that gladly received his word." After all, whether it be baptism or any other thing that crosses our will and our preconceived notions of things, what a joy it is to let the Lord Jesus have His own way! It is so much better than our way always. In the keeping of His commandments there is great reward.

I do not often speak of my own experience. Some of my friends tell me that I do not speak often enough of those things. I always feel some reluctance in doing so. I remember when I received the word that Jesus was my Saviour, and I believed that all my sins were laid upon Him, when I took Him at His word: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," and I believed just what it said. I did not feel that any miracle had been performed; I did not feel any kind of electric shock; I did not feel any great accession of joy and gladness. It was a simple, matter-of-fact, business transaction. I rested in the Word of the Lord; and I said, "If that is the Word of the Lord either I am a Christian or God is a liar—one or the other." And seeing that He cannot lie, I believed all my sins were forgiven for His Name's sake, I dared to believe and rest upon His Word. But I could not have shouted Hallelujah at that moment. I did not feel particularly like it. I just accepted the promise, and then I went forward and applied for baptism. I shall never forget it. I remember stepping down into the waters of baptism, and I should like to have had a congregation of at least a million just them to witness my confession. And I remember emerging from those waters, and the joy that came to me. I did not hear a voice from Heaven saying, "This is my beloved son"—I was His beloved son—but I had this testimony that God by His infinite grace had put one simple duty plainly before me, about which there could be no doubt, and I had done just as He commanded me, and He said, "Well done, I am pleased with you to-night." I did not then know that it was in the Scripture that those who had been baptized thus had the answer of a good conscience toward God. But that is Heaven—to be conscious of the divine approval. And you may have it every day you live, not only in this matter but in every other matter. You may so conduct your business and all other things that you may know that through the grace of the Lord Jesus you have been enabled to please God.

May He lead us into the way of faith and obedience to-night for His Name's sake. Let us pray.

Note—Fourteen applied for baptism as a result of this sermon, and, with two others, were baptized Sunday evening, August 12th.

THE publication of this paper as a missionary enterprise is made possible by the gifts of members of Jarvis Street Church and others, and is sent to subscribers by mail for \$2.00 (under cost) per year. If any of the Lord's stewards who read this have received blessing, we shall be grateful for any thank-offering you may be able to send to The Witness Fund at any time; and especially for your prayers that the message of The Witness may be used by the Holy Spirit for the defence of the Faith, the salvation of souls, and the exaltation of Christ. As our funds make it possible, we hope to add to our free list, from time to time, the names of ministers at home and missionaries abroad.

## EDITORIAL

### "THE SPIRIT OF FAITH."

The heading of this article is very suggestive. It is a word from the second of Corinthians and the fourth chapter: "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." The verse suggests that what is truly believed must be spoken; that 'the spirit of faith' compels expression. It is well to believe in the divine inspiration and authority of the Bible. That has long been a cardinal Baptist principle. But if we really believe it, we shall surely have the courage to express our conviction. Why should Baptists, who for so long have maintained a separate existence in order to be free to bear witness to what they believe to be the truth, so often apologize for proclaiming the very truths to which, as a denomination, we owe our existence? Many Baptist churches engage in union evangelistic services with a tacit understanding that they will say nothing whatever about the ordinance of baptism. And even in the regular work of the church itself, many a pastor fails altogether to preach the doctrine of baptism. If we believe the whole Bible, why should we not preach it? If we still believe that baptism is a duty binding upon all believers, why should we not instruct all our converts to this effect? Ought we not indeed to go even farther, and in our evangelistic messages proclaim the doctrine of baptism as part of the whole counsel of God? When the subject is reserved for occasional and special treatment,—as, for example, when the ordinance of baptism is administered—it is far more likely to give offence than if preached as a part of our gospel message. Ought we not to recognize the fact that there are tens of thousands of devout believers in other denominations whose attention has never been directed to the subject at all? "How shall they hear without a preacher?" We venture to enter a plea for a more aggressive effort in respect to these matters. If we have 'the spirit of faith,' and are firmly convinced that divine authority attaches to the New Testament teaching respecting the ordinance of baptism, that 'spirit of faith' should find expression in the regular ministry of the church.

### A RELIGIOUS CAFETERIA.

Christ did not come into the world to make machines, but to re-make men. The Christian religion does not provide a salvation apart from the man, as a boat is separate from the passenger. It provides a salvation which enters into the man, and becomes a part of him, quickening the dead soul, energizing all his faculties, and providing means whereby he may grow "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." But such a development can come only by the exercise of the faculties of the soul. Pastors and teachers and all good books have their place; but whoever would be a really strong Christian must learn the importance of individual development.



To very many the Bible is looked upon as a kind of restaurant before whose tables hungry souls must sit until they can receive the attention of some ecclesiastical waiter. It was never intended that the ministry of the Bible should be so restricted. It ought rather to be regarded as a cafeteria into which every believer may enter and help himself to what he needs.

Quite recently we interviewed a Christian in humble circumstances who had been deprived of many of the advantages enjoyed by those brought up amid Christian surroundings; but this good woman had been taught of the Spirit; and what a joy it was to observe how she had learned to unlock the treasures of Holy Writ. What spiritual intelligence she displayed, and what a splendid religious independence she exemplified! She had heard God speak; she had listened personally to the highest religious Authority, and was happy in the consciousness that He had unmistakably revealed to her a knowledge of His will. May we all learn how thus to get our orders from Headquarters.

### THE HABIT OF KINDNESS.

It is possible to represent, or rather to misrepresent God as an indulgent father, as one who never prohibits and never punishes. There is a type of mind which conceives of the love of God as being something akin to honey—all sweetness. It would be impossible to exaggerate the loving-kindness of the Lord. It is true that—

"There's a wideness in God's mercy,  
Like the wideness of the sea;  
There's a kindness in His justice,  
Which is more than liberty."

But we do well to remember that the fact of the Cross compels our consideration of the sterner attributes of Deity. And consistent with this view of God, and indeed, in agreement with the whole revelation of God in Christ, is the apostolic injunction that we should "be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love." We think of one just now who has cultivated the habit of saying kind things. She is too wise to believe in absolute human perfection, and frankly recognizes that we all have our faults. But she has formed the habit of speaking kindly of everybody in whom any virtue can be found. What a happy world this would be—or, indeed, to narrow the sphere of our observation, what happy churches we should have, if Christians everywhere could emulate her example! It is said of some, "the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." How easy it is for all of us to speak poisonous words, words that penetrate and poison the very springs of life! And, generally speaking, there is no fundamental justification for such fault-finding. Indeed, it often happens that the poisoned tongue venomously condemns in others the very faults which are most conspicuous in its own character. While we give attention to the great principles of the faith, we must not fail to apply these principles to ourselves. The Sermon on the Mount is by no means obsolete; let us therefore heed the Saviour's admonition: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

# Among the Children

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## A LETTER TO A LITTLE GIRL FROM THE LORD JESUS.

Some years ago when I was assisting a pastor in a certain Ontario town, a little girl raised her hand in the meeting indicating that she desired to be a Christian. At the close of the service I went down to the pew where she was and tried to tell her how she might know that God had forgiven her sins. But she could not understand how it was possible for her to be sure of it. At length I said to her, "If the Lord Jesus were sitting in this pew beside you, and were to tell you that He had heard your prayer, and had forgiven your sin, would you then know that you were saved?" She answered, "Of course, I should, if Jesus were to tell me so: But then He is not here sitting in the pew." I said, "No, He is not; but what if He were to send you a letter telling you that you were saved? Could you be sure then?" To this, she replied. "O yes. And I think I would rather have the letter, because then I could always keep it, and then I should always be sure." And I said, "Well, the Lord Jesus has sent you a letter to tell you that very thing." And when I had got thus far, somebody came along and interrupted our conversation, and I was unable to talk further with that little girl that evening. At the close of the service the next evening, however, she came up to the platform, and said, "Mr. Shields, you told me last night that the Lord Jesus had sent me a letter. May I have my letter, please?" So I sat down with her and asked her to open her Bible at the first Epistle of John, the fifth chapter, and the thirteenth verse; and we read these words together: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." When we had read it, I said to her, "Now, do you sometimes go to the post-office for a letter?" And she replied that she did. Then I asked her what she did when the postmaster handed out a letter. And she said, "I read the address to see if it is for me or for my Daddy." And I said, "What if some other name is on the envelope?" "Why, then," she said, "I should hand it back." "But if it is addressed to you, what do you do?" "Then I open it and read it, of course," she said. "Very well, then," I said, "I want you now to see to whom this letter is addressed." And we read together again: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God." "Now," I said, "are you included in that?" "Do you believe on the name of the Son of God?" And she declared that she did with all her heart. "Very well, then," I said, "that is the name on the envelope, and it is written to you. Now let us open the envelope and see what is inside." And we read on: "That ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." When she had read this, the light broke in upon her soul, and she said she knew she was saved, and that she would always carry the Lord's letter with her.

This little story is for the boys and girls among our readers, and we ask the parents who read this to ask the children to read it. How simple it all is! We have only to believe on the Name of the Lord Jesus, and then we can be sure we are saved.

It may be that someone will read this who knows someone else who, while seeking the Lord, has never rejoiced in the assurance of salvation? If so, pass this story on with a prayer that God may bless it to the everlasting comfort of a soul.

## CHURCH NEWS.

### LAST SUNDAY EVENING

The many readers of *The Witness* outside our own congregation we are sure will be interested in hearing something of what God is doing among the people from time to time. Last Sunday was another great day in Jarvis Street, particularly the Sunday evening services. The evening congregation was very large. We think there is little doubt that it was the largest congregation in Toronto. During the service sixteen believers were baptized. These included three whole families—in two cases a husband and wife, and in the third, father and mother and two daughters. At the Communion service following, at which the attendance was very large, the Pastor gave the hand of fellowship to twenty new members. While the Communion service was proceeding, the Open-Air service was begun on the church grounds. Every seat was occupied, and crowds were standing around. The crowd was, of course, augmented by the membership of the church when the Communion service was dismissed. At half past nine the Pastor preached again in the open air, and several professed conversion. Altogether it was a day of great blessing; and we publish this item of news for the information of the many friends who regularly remember us in prayer.

### TUESDAY EVENING

The prayer-room was completely filled and a great spirit of prayer was upon the people. We were glad to have with us many members of other Baptist churches in the city, as well as many from outside the Baptist denomination. Following this, we had another great open-air service on the church grounds, at which Evangelist Pugsley gave a very earnest evangelistic message. Several hands were raised in response to the invitation.

### PRAYER RETREAT AT WOODSTOCK COLLEGE.

We are glad to note that the Executive of the Baptist Ministers' Conference of our Convention is arranging what they have called "A Prayer Retreat" at Woodstock College, September 3rd and 4th. We do not see why we should borrow our phraseology from Rome; but, after all, the name does not matter very much. There is always need for prayer. We cannot pray too much nor too often. We hope this Prayer Retreat will be largely attended. It will have value if it inspires us to more prayer in our regular work. We believe there is nothing more necessary than that we should all get back to prayer as the fundamental ministry of the church.

### GOSPEL WITNESS RETURNS.

At this writing, Wednesday evening, the replies from the members of the church to whom the Pastor wrote, have contained pledges aggregating within \$11.00 per month of the amount asked for in the Pastor's letter. Many of our members are still away from home, and we feel confident this amount will be made up in due time. In the meantime, the Pastor would like to express his profound gratitude to the membership of the church for their most generous response. We wonder if there is another church in the land where such a thing could be done. The Pastor still hopes to receive a reply from those who have not found it, as yet, convenient to write him.

### THE GOSPEL WITNESS CONSTITUENCY.

As an indication of the extent to which this paper is circulated throughout the Continent, it will be of interest to our readers to know that during the last two weeks in the new subscriptions received in the *Witness* Office the following places are represented: Pontiac and Howell, Mich.; Wolfe City and Hadley, Texas; Los Angeles and Fresno, Cal.; Rochester, Minn.; Pittsburg, Penn.; Warren, Ill.; Wyaconda, Mo.; Lagrange, Ga.; St. Catharines, Burk's Falls, Kitchener, Port Hope, Toronto, Peterboro', Ottawa, Cobalt, Talbotville, Ont.; Ashville, N.C.; Merid, Sask.; Pauls Valley, Okla.; Mahwah, N.J., and Sussex, England.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### THE WEEK EVENING SERVICES.

Considering this is summer-time, when it is so generally assumed that little can be done in the way of aggressive evangelistic effort, our week-evening services are nothing short of phenomenal. They are not what we want them to be; they are not what we think they may easily become; but as they are, they are truly wonderful. Each night the Prayer-Room is filled with people and, according to the promise, with the presence of the Lord. Tuesday and Thursday the people eagerly gather outside to hear the Gospel message. Already we have discovered that not a few who had not been inside Jarvis Street Church before, through the open-air service have been attracted to the service within. These week evening services provide us with a great opportunity; and, at the same time, impose upon us a great responsibility. We ask the readers of *The Witness*, who are too far away to attend, to give this work a place in their prayers. This week we shall meet as usual—Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, for prayer; Tuesday and Thursday, at nine o'clock, open-air services.

### "THE PASSING OF 'MISS KITTY.'" "

This is the title of a beautiful booklet of twenty-two pages, described as "A Memorial Message, Catharine Eager Straton, by Her Father and Mother." It tells the story of the passing of Dr. Straton's little daughter into the Gloryland. Fifty copies have been received at the office. As many of our people are so much interested in all that concerns our beloved brother, Dr. Straton, they may be obtained at the office without charge by any who desire to read this beautiful story.

### TO OUR MEMBERS ON VACATION.

Many of the members of the church are away from home, seeking rest; and we send this message to them to let them know they are not forgotten. They are missed; but they will be glad to know that the work is going on and that the members who are at home are continuing by prayer and effort to lead others to Christ.

### SUNDAY EVENING, AUGUST 19th.

At the evening service baptism will be administered. In the sermon the Pastor will refer to Dr. Chown's article in *The Christian Guardian* on "Modernism and Fundamentalism," in which the General Superintendent of the Methodist Church implies that the Fundamentalist Movement is inspired by the devil.

### JARVIS STREET CHURCH DIRECTORY.

T. T. Shields, Pastor, 96 Winchester Street. Tel. Randolph 0628.  
George Greenway, Treasurer, 28 Broadway Avenue. Tel. Hudson 0910.  
Violet Stoakley, Church Clerk and Office Secretary. Tel. M. 5670.  
W. J. Hutchinson, Sunday School Superintendent, 295 George St. Tel. M. 3321.  
C. Leonard Penny, Director of Music, 1139 St. Clair Avenue W. Tel. Ken. 0557.  
William Fraser, Pastor's Secretary, 40 Nanton Ave. Tel. Randolph 1268.

### The Church Calendar

Sunday. For the week beginning Sunday, Aug. 19th, 1923.  
10.00—Prayer Service in the Church Parlor. Mr. George Greenway.  
10.30—Communion Service.  
11.00—Public Worship. The Pastor will preach.  
3.00—The Bible School will meet.  
6.00—Prayer Meeting in Church Parlor.  
7.00—Public Worship. The Pastor will preach.  
Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday—8 o'clock—Prayer Meeting, followed by open-air service, Tuesday and Thursday, 9 o'clock.  
The Parliament St. Branch, 250 Parliament St. Sunday: Bible School, 3.00; Evangelistic Service, 7.00—Rev. W. L. McKay.  
Wednesday, 8 o'clock—Prayer Meeting.