

The Gospel Witness

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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

FROM SHUNEM TO PHILISTIA AND BACK.

A Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, Sept. 9th, 1923.
(Stenographically reported)

"And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done."—II Kings 8: 4.

LAST Sunday morning I spoke to you of "a great woman" of Shunem, who recognized Elisha as the prophet of the Lord, and hospitably entertained the truth, constraining him to abide with her, proposing to her husband that they make "a little chamber on the wall," furnished with bed and table and stool and candlestick, that the truth might find a home within her home. And then Elisha, you remember, asked her if he should speak for her to the king, or to the captain of the host, to which she replied: "I dwell among mine own people." But great changes have taken place since then. Although she had no request to make for herself, the prophet did for her exceeding abundantly above all that she could ask or think. And there came into her heart a new joy, and into her home a new life and a new light. Thenceforward the prophet often called, and stayed with them as an honoured member of their family circle. What a picture that is—the happy home at Shunem; the harvest-field where the reapers sing about their work, and where a little child plays among the sheaves! It is a picture without any cloud, or shadow, without any admixture of sorrow, but a representation of undiluted joy.

But you say, "That is not quite true to life. When I was younger, I should have thought such a picture was. I used to expect to find life a long, unclouded summer day." But instead you found what this woman found. The shadows came; death crossed the threshold; the precious life was terminated. And Elisha found this woman just where we have been found—at the meeting of extremes. She found her chiefest sorrow where she had found her greatest joy. And then as the child who had been miraculously given to her was

miraculously restored, she found her greatest joy where she had experienced her greatest sorrow. But still other changes came. The prophet saw that famine would come upon the land. Cruel war visited the country; and this "great woman" of Shunem by the prophet's counsel emigrated from Shunem to Philistia, and was away from home during the seven years of famine. "And it came to pass at the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines; and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and for her land. And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done. And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored a dead body to life, that behold the woman whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, My Lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life." And in all the world there was no one so well qualified to speak on that subject as this woman of Shunem now returned from Philistia. "And when the king asked the woman, she told him." Let us look for a few minutes this morning at this further chapter in this interesting life.

I. I begin with this observation, that THIS "GREAT WOMAN" OF SHUNEM FOUND THE GUEST OF HER SETTLED HABITATION TO BE THE GUIDE OF HER JOURNEYING YEARS. When first she opened her home to the prophet in Shunem, she was living a quiet pastoral life. She dwelt among her own people. She had no desire whatever to explore the larger world. She even declared that she had no request to make to the king or to the captain of the host. But she received as cordially as she could, and offered to him the most generous hospitality, the "man of God" who passed by her dwelling continually. But she little knew what she was doing when she made a little chamber on the wall for him, when she made a friend of the "man of God." She could not see into the future. She did not know how urgently she would require his assistance in the coming years.

And my dear friends, by God's good grace, most of us are given the opportunities of the quiet life of Shunem in order to prepare us for the more stressful and trying years that are to come. Happy are ye if now ye entertain as Guest one who in those darker days shall prove your Guide. It was given to the prophet to see that famine was coming upon the land he loved, and upon the land she loved, and that there would be no sustenance for her there. And then the Syrian bands came down in one of their victorious invasions, and the country was rent with war; so that the godly family of Shunem had to emigrate. The little house was vacated, and they set out on the long road for Philistia. And very probably during those seven years the prophet often passed by that little house where he had been so royally welcomed. Perhaps he may have longed for the quiet and comfort of the little chamber on the wall. Possibly the Syrian soldiers spent the night beneath that roof. Perhaps some captain of the Syrian host found rest for his body on the very bed upon which the "man of God" had lain. And often as he passed by, this "man of God" remembered the woman who had been kind to him, and, doubtless, often prayed for her.

And I have been long enough a minister to see this story repeated again and again—the family broken up, the members of the family scattered, the family fortunes reversed, prosperity give place to adversity, and the clouds cover the face of the sun until men and women say as Jacob did, "All these things are against me." If now you live a quiet life in Shunem, my friend; if now you are able to say, "I dwell among mine own people—there is scarcely a desire that is not gratified"—I venture to remind you that there are many

changes in life, and to-morrow you may have to take the road. Do not say, I am not kind to prophesy disturbance, or the breaking up of the nest. I am only forewarning you of the possibility, in order to urge upon you the necessity of making the acquaintance of the Man of God, of the Godman—for Elisha was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ—and of seeing to it that you have someone who is able to speak for you to the King or to the Captain of the host.

All we know about the Shunammite's life in Philistia is that while she did not become wealthy, she was preserved from famine, and was not suffered to want for bread. The Psalmist said: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." And somehow or another, through all the trying years this woman was preserved, so that she returned again at last to her own country with her husband and with the child that God had given to her—and she returned just in time.

We may rejoice that the Lord is pledged to go with us all the way, through whatever experiences we have to pass, if only we have made a little chamber for Him; if only we have received Him as our Guest; if only we know Him for ourselves: He will never leave us nor forsake us.

II. Another simple word is this: HER SOUL WAS ENLARGED IN FAMINE AND HER LIFE ENRICHED BY POVERTY. I know that is paradoxical, but life is full of paradoxes, because most of us see things inverted. This woman dwelt among her own people with no larger view of life than Shunem. Her reply to the prophet was not an unworthy one. She lived an humble life, and was content with that which God gave her. And yet it was a life that was very circumscribed, she had few interests, and lived a life that centered very largely in herself and her husband; her sympathies were few; her correspondences were few; her views of life were restricted. She was "a great woman" because she had a capacity for greater things than the quietude of Shunem could possibly afford her. So the nest was broken up and she went abroad.

And when she came home we find her passionately pleading her own case before the king, or ready to do so. She came, first of all, "to cry unto the king." That was the very thing that Elisha had suggested to her. He said: "Wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host?" And she said, "Why should I speak to the king? What should I ask from the treasury of the king? Why should such an humble soul as I visit the palace? I dwell among mine own people; leave me alone." But the time came when she learned that above all things she needed the privilege of access to the king. Ah, yes, it is possible to be content with Shunem. I have seen many an individual and many a family like that—doing the daily task, thinking of their own personal affairs, concerned about themselves and their families, with absolutely no interest in life outside of that; until God comes in and disturbs them, and leads them out on to the long road and gives them a vision of the larger world and of the larger life; and by many a bitter experience teaches them their own limitations, until the time comes when the greatest privilege of life is to be permitted "to cry unto the king." I wonder if there is somebody here disposed to repeat the disciples' prayer: "Lord teach us to pray." They little knew what they asked—teach us to cry unto the King, translated into the language of our story. They little dreamed that Pilate's hall was down there on the road. They little knew that Gethsemane was in the path; that Calvary's cross must be met and understood and experienced; that there must be a grave and a resurrection and a pentecost before they could learn to pray. Thus, my friends, you are not going to learn "to cry unto the King" by reading books, nor by shutting yourself up to some cloistered existence. We shall learn these lessons not in the

quietude of Shunem, but on the long and rough road that leads to the land of Philistia. We learn to pray as men learn to swim, by doing the thing, not by talking about it. It is strange that some churches have no prayer-meeting; that churches should be content to say, "I dwell among mine own people. Come and visit us at Shunem. We are the happiest little social club you ever knew. We come together to admire each other, and we tell each other all the nice things we can think of. We are a lovely little family circle." Of course no one says this in so many words, but that is their inarticulate confession. When it is so, sometimes God comes into the life of the church, and sends it out on the road to Philistia to teach the church to pray. He has His own way of accomplishing His purposes; but we shall learn this lesson only on the road.

So the "great woman" came back "to cry unto the king," to avail herself now of the opportunity which "the man of God" had offered her. She came "to cry unto the king for her house." When "the man of God" spoke to her before, she said, "I dwell among mine own people." But out yonder she had learned to go out of herself and to think of other people. And she came back to "cry unto the king for her house and for her land," and for the larger interests of life. Have you learned to pray for other people as well as for yourself, to cry unto the King for somebody else? Until we learn thus the ministry of intercession, we do not learn to pray at all. Poor Job had a hard time, hadn't he? He lost his family; he lost his property; he was worried by his friends; he went down into the depths; and if any man in all the world's history might have been justified in praying for himself and persuading himself that he needed all the help of God as nobody else did, that man was Job. And yet, the old record tells us that "the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends." Begin to pray for your friends, pray for your house and for your land, and for all the needy of the earth, and in the very exercise your own soul will be enriched.

And then I think there is another sense in which she prayed: she wanted to have that house back again. She had had it from the Lord, and now she came longing to get back to that little home in Shunem. It never was so attractive as it had been to her while she was in Philistia. Ah, you English people—I come from that land myself—but if I could have met you a few years ago on some rainy day in that old Land, I should have heard you grumbling at the weather, and at everything that belonged to it. My, what a sad tale you would have had to tell! But you had not been in this country six weeks before you began rather to weary the people about you by telling how the birds sang in old England, and about the primroses, and about the daisies, and about those wonderful country lanes, and about the hawthorn hedges, and the glorious green fields, and all the other things that are characteristic of that wonderful land, which you never appreciated when you were there. You had to get away to get a perspective view of it, and then it appeared to you a glorious land. Some people are too close to their blessings to appreciate them. The little chamber on the wall, and all its accompaniments—it is such a commonplace thing until God threatens to take it away from us, and then we learn to appreciate it. But the principle is this, my friends: *we never really possess anything until we get it from God the second time.* Abraham was never sure of Isaac until he got him from God the second time. He came to him by God's gift in the beginning, and then he laid him on the altar, and gave him up to death. When he received him back from the King this second time, he was his own. Thus this woman now came to ask for her house and for her land.

III. I touch now upon something to which I think I will return next

Sunday morning, if the Lord so orders, because it is enough to occupy us for a long time. When the woman came back, she came back wondering, I think, what had happened. While she was yonder in Philistia, she may have wondered what the "man of God" was doing, and whether he was still the mighty man he was when she was there. War had swept the country during her absence; many heroic deeds had been done; famine had been the portion of her people, and many a tragic tale could be told of sacrifices made and endured. And coming back, she may have wondered whether Elisha would still have a place in the public mind. "After the war!" Do you remember how people talked about what was going to happen "after the war"? Everything was going to be changed "after the war." And one might have supposed that preachers would have nothing else to do for the rest of their lives than discuss the war, and the heroism of the war. But now if they talk too much about the war, they may expect all the ex-soldiers in their congregation to say, "Tell me where we can go to hear something else." As a matter of fact, they do not want to hear about the war. A very quiet sort of man came to see me last night saying he had decided to enter the ministry. And I said, "Tell me about yourself." He said, "I was in the air force for seven years." "Did you do any flying?" "O yes, flying all the time." "Were you a pilot?" "Yes—not so very long, only about six months." Only about six months in the air in France, over the German lines—that is not very long is it? He did not want to talk about it at all; it was out of his mind. But we were to be occupied with all these things "after the war." When this woman came back, notwithstanding the experiences through which the country had passed, as she came into the king's presence, she heard the king asking this question, making this request: "Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done." Elisha was still the centre of the national interest, because he was "the man of God," and had brought God near to the people. And there is nothing this old world needs to know—and I believe, properly understood, nothing this world wants to know quite so much as the great things which our Elisha hath done. That is what every man in the office, and in the shop, and on the street, wherever you meet him—that is what every man is saying in his heart to every Christian, "Tell me the great things that He has done Whom you call your Saviour. I would rather hear about that than about the earthquake in Japan, or about the war, or about the exploits of the most heroic of earth. Tell me all the great things that Jesus hath done." Well, we will talk about that next Sunday morning. In the meantime, read this second book of Kings, beginning with the first chapter. Read on to this eighth chapter, and read of all the great things that Elisha did. Elisha was the type and prophecy of a Greater than Elisha, think therefore of all the great things which you have seen your Elisha do, and of which you may be telling every day; because—and I suggest this to you; my long announcement this morning prevents my further exposition of the subject—this woman, as I intimated at the outset, was better qualified to respond to that request than anybody else. She was herself the witness. And as she came in Gehazi said, "My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life." And Gehazi stepped back as though he would say, "It is your turn. You tell the king the great things Elisha has done." So also if you have been saved by God's grace; if you have been partaker of the power of His resurrection; whether you have been to college or not, you have a story to tell. How foolish it would have been if anybody had said to this woman, "Now you write it down. You cannot write very well; you cannot put it in very good language; but write it down as well as you can, and we will edit it,

and we will present it in due course to the king." O no! The woman was to be herself the witness of the great things which Elisha had done. And so are we. That is to be the programme for the week, my friend, if you are a Christian—to go out and tell the great things which Jesus has done. Our friends who call themselves the "Brethren," say that they do not believe in a one-man ministry—and they are perfectly right. The New Testament does not teach a one-man ministry. There is a place for the minister. But we ought all to be preachers; we ought all to be witnesses. And no church will accomplish much for the Lord who leaves its testimony wholly to the pulpit. Every Shunammite must tell what she knows.

"Suffer a sinner whose heart overflows,
Loving his Saviour, to tell what he knows;
Once more to tell it, would I embrace—
I'm only a sinner saved by grace!"

Will you go out and tell it, and keep on telling it, and tell the same people the same thing over and over again? Do you suppose this woman of Shunem ever got tired of telling that this son was God's gift to her? Do you suppose she ever wearied of telling how "the man of God" came and stretched himself upon the child until his soul came into him again? Did she ever weary of telling that it was by the touch of this "man of God" that this son of hers lived again? But we also have a story, my friend, that will occupy us to the end of time, and even eternity is too short to utter all His praise. Do you believe that? If you do, say so. Do you believe eternity is too short to utter all His praise? Well, then, the logic of it is to begin to utter it now. Let us tell the great things our Elisha has done. Let us now ask His help.

THE MINISTRY OF COMFORT.

It was the famous Ian McLaren, we believe, who said toward the close of his ministry that if he had his ministerial life to live over again he would exercise himself more frequently with a view to bringing comfort to his people. An interesting light is thrown upon the principle Dr. Watson in this observation recognized, by the demand for the sermons appearing in *The Gospel Witness*. We have noticed that the sermons designed to minister comfort to troubled hearts are most in demand. As for example, of the sermons on the Second Coming—"Christ's Coming, the Hope of the Bereaved"—in printed form, proved the most useful, as every single copy was taken from the shelves. And we have just received a reprint of this sermon in the form of an artistic booklet reprinted in Baltimore. "Other Little Ships" was another comforting message—and our supply of that issue was soon exhausted.

These are simple incidents which teach us that this sinful world is full of troubled hearts who need to be comforted. There is a place for the word that will awaken the sleeping soul, and for the message that will inspire the laggard. But all things considered, perhaps, a ministry of comfort is most necessary. We may well pray, therefore, for the tongue of the learned that we may know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.

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

"I HAVE GIVEN THEM THY WORD."

In these words our Lord summed up His ministry to His disciples. He said nothing of healing the sick, or feeding the hungry, or clothing the naked: such physical ministries were incidental to the chief work of His life, which was to give to the people God's Word. The Apostle Paul says, "We were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel." The Christian Church has really but one mission, and that is to give to the world God's Word. How much our religious life would be simplified if we could abide by the plain teaching of Scripture! This should be recognized as the preacher's one business. Preaching should, therefore, be an exposition of God's Word. Nothing else has any importance. Why should people regularly come to church to listen to a man's opinions? Unless his message is clothed with the authority of a "thus saith the Lord," it is valueless.

But this also should be the end of all the church's activities. Notably, it should be recognized as the one and only function of the Sunday School—to give the people God's Word. The work of the Sunday School, therefore, should be gathered around the Bible. Those who teach should be required to teach only the Bible. And such recognition will simplify all the problems of church life. True evangelism consists in giving men God's Word. But evangelism is much more than calling the unconverted to Christ. At conversion the soul is born again; but thenceforward it must needs be fed with "the sincere milk of the word" if it is to grow. The greatest problem before any church is this: how to take care of its converts; how to instruct them in the Word of God; how to build them up in the faith of Christ. We have a conviction that the solution of this problem lies in providing at least one service in which every member of the church can find a place as a student of God's Word. An announcement on another page of this paper of the effort about to be made in Jarvis Street Church with this end in view, will, we are sure, be of interest to our readers.

DO FUNDAMENTALISTS EXAGGERATE?

Those who contend for the faith, and who are concerned for the souls of men, are sometimes charged by theological liberals with exaggeration. It is admitted in some quarters that all things are not as they ought to be in the churches of to-day. But Fundamentalists are described as extremists; and it is insisted that they overstate the case against modernism. A gentleman who has opportunity of coming into contact with many church officials of all denominations, and with every variety of theological opinion, recently reported to us that he found many taking the attitude described above. He said, how-

ever, that he was convinced the case against modernism was invariably understated rather than overstated. And as an example of this, he called our attention to a book, entitled, "The Contents of the New Testament, An Introductory Course by Haven McClure." We found the book the more interesting because it was recently interviewed by The Christian Guardian. The Guardian's reviewer wrote as follows:—

The Contents of the New Testament. An Introductory Course by Haven McClure.

This book is the result of a number of years' experience in teaching the New Testament as an elective English course in High Schools. The aim was to present the New Testament from the point of view of assured modern scholarship, in such form that the ordinary student would understand and appreciate it. The work has been done in true scholarly fashion and the result is a book of real value and helpfulness. The author adheres very consistently to his purpose of setting forth in orderly fashion the contents of the New Testament, and it is his refusal to turn aside to discuss other matters that makes his work significant.

It has occurred to us that perhaps some of our readers would like to have a few samples of what this Methodist reviewer describes as "assured modern scholarship."

On page 37, speaking of the birth of Christ, the author says:—

"The father of Jesus was Joseph, a poor carpenter of Nazareth in Galilee."

And on page 38:—

"Many beautiful traditions have clustered about the birth of the Founder of Christianity, some of which have been recorded by the Gospel writers, among them being the chorus of the heavenly host, the appearances of angels to persons most immediately concerned, and the doctrine of the virgin birth; but it must be recalled in this connection that the writers of the Gospel narratives lived in an ancient Jewish atmosphere of angelology and demonology, and have recorded what they believed at the time to have been literal fact. In the references previously noted it will be observed that nowhere does the New Testament disavow that Joseph was not really the father of Jesus."

On pages 44-45:—

"The temptation of Jesus is still naively interpreted by our traditionalist commentators, because the equally naive Gospel writers give it in dialogical form,—a drama spoken by two human actors in actual physical speech. Mark only gives one verse to the temptation of Jesus, and does not state of what the temptation consisted. Matthew and Luke are more explicit. Where did they get their apparent stenographic report of the conversation between Jesus and the "devil"? Obviously, it is Q. material, and if authentic, Jesus Himself must have told it later to his friends and followers. What were the temptations? They were auto-suggestions that he introduced himself to the public in harmony with the prevailing and popular conceptions of what the Jewish people expected the Messiah to be."

Of these "auto-suggestions," the writer says:—

"That Jesus pushed aside all these suggestions proves his sanity, poise, and common sense,—that he was a man for the ages. Not by revolution but by evolution; not by social and political upheaval, but by silent transformation, was the method ultimately decided upon by Jesus. That there was a physical devil present is purely a primitive belief, and is preposterous from the modern point of view."

We have never heard of any "traditionalist" who taught that in the wilderness there was "a physical devil present." But that there was a personal devil, no one who believes the record can have any doubt.

On page 52, speaking of prayer, the author says:—

If prayer is unpopular, wherein does the difficulty lie? We believe it to be due to misconceptions or to outworn conceptions of the true nature and function of prayer in the lives of men. If we continue to look at prayer as supernatural, long-distance communication, we have a singularly unscientific and valueless conception. Emerson must have been right in his summary of the nature and function of prayer. If we eliminate the supernatural element in prayer, we at once find something strangely electric, vital, and compelling. Prayer assumes a new function and aspect.

On page 59, under the head of "Christianity as a Religion of Adventure," the author says:—

There is nothing in the religion of Jesus, barring possibly his purely prescientific concepts, such as angelology and demonology, that conflicts with sanity and common sense. Religion to Jesus meant aspiration and attainment through self-sacrifice and suffering; the Cross looms up forever as the emblem of personal sacrifice to the last degree,—the laying down of one's life for an ideal.

On pages 63-64, under the head of "The Miracles of Jesus: A Modern Conception of Miracles," the author says:—

All persons in New Testament times having some obscure mental or nervous disorder without an accompanying organic defect, uniformly had their cases crudely diagnosed as "demon-possession." Jesus believed in demon-possession; and so did his disciples; so did the authors of the New Testament documents; so did people universally. The demons, or devils, were supposed to be hiding among the rocks and tombs, and in out-of-the-way places, ever on the look out to enter the human body. . . . A curious fact in Mark 5 is the fact that the victim dwelling among the tombs believed that he had a legion of devils in him, which means 6,000 or up, on the basis of the Latin military unit. Moreover, the actions of this victim were such as to strike panic into a nearby herd of swine, who fled precipitately down the hillside into the lake and were drowned. The gospel writers, writing from the naive standpoint of first century (not twentieth century) men, and firmly believing in demonology, attributed the destruction of the swine to Jesus directly, who, of course, was indirectly responsible. Although professional exorcists sprang up in multitudes to cure these unfortunate afflicted ones by means of charms, spells, herbs, incantations, etc., it is noteworthy and admirable that the Carpenter of Nazareth used nothing but his personal authority and marvelous influence to restore his patients. That vital, dominant, authoritative personality with the healing faculty pervading it to an extraordinary degree was irresistible in its magnetism. Many obsessions yet to-day can be scared away by a decisive personality. Such cures go on to-day in the clinics of modern psychotherapeutic hospitals. Whether the cures of Jesus were permanent or not, however, the New Testament does not state."

On pages 70-71:—

"The Widow's Son of Nain: This miracle is recorded by Luke alone, and is not, therefore, a part of the usual trustworthy tradition handed down by Peter. In this hot climate burial was speedily accomplished (John 11: 39). In this instance the widow's son, the question again naturally arises; did the ancients discriminate between actual death and apparent death? When is the psychic element completely severed from the physical? The ancients customarily said "revival from death"; moderns say, "not dead in the first place, if restored." In I Kings 17: 17-23, Elijah restored a widow's son. Luke 7: 16, re-

ferring to Jesus as "a great prophet" in this connection shows that this incident paralleled almost exactly in the minds of the alleged witnesses Elijah's feat. II Kings 4: 32-36 records the fact that near the same spot where Jesus raised the son of the widow of Nain, Elisha also raised from death the son of the Shunamite widow. It is plainly apparent that a parallelizing tendency is at work here, and all the more from the fact that Luke places this miracle in an obscure, unconnected part of his account. Luke further admits (4: 25-27) that the Messiah of the Jews, when he was come, was to act similar to Elijah and Elisha. It must be further remembered that Luke, though the only evangelist to tell of this miracle, was not a resident of Palestine."

On pages 104-105:—

"The Resurrection then, to be brief, as preached by Jesus himself, by Paul, and by the Twelve, meant that the soul of Jesus would not remain in the underworld (Sheol, or Hades: see Acts 2: 27), but would rise from thence, out from among the company of departed souls, and escape on high into the heavenly realms.

"It was inevitable that the tradition would crystallize into being in the early church that "being raised from the dead" was the equivalent of the revival of a dead body. Was Mark then to blame for this, since he is the first Gospel writer, and writes of an empty tomb? As a matter of fact, Mark did not finish his Gospel after chapter 16, verse 8. In J. Paterson Smyth's admirable little volume, "How We Got Our Bible," the author states, in a first-hand discussion of the two oldest New Testament manuscripts in existence, that in these two manuscripts (the Vatican and the Sinaitic Mss.) that the last twelve verses of Mark's Gospel are omitted. The Sinaitic manuscript is yet plainer evidence, for it ends with the two Greek words "ephobounto gar" (for they were afraid," v. 8). It was finished by a later and unknown hand, and on the work of this meddler are the accounts of Matthew and Luke based. Why was it finished thus? Because it was very humiliating to give an account of the anti-climax of the ministry of Jesus, of his disciples being thrown into a terrible panic, and of their fleeing back to Galilee, as the Fourth Gospel account intimates all too plainly that they did; and because of the tradition that the Resurrection had something to do with the physical body of Jesus,—a thing of which he never dreamed. To-day no person imagines that his own body will physically be resurrected from the tomb, for we have the burial formula: 'Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, and dust to dust.'

"The 'ascension' of Jesus, therefore, would be synchronous with his resurrection, although one scientist has observed that if the physical body of Jesus ascended, it has not yet reached the nearest fixed star."

We could quote much more to the same effect; but this is what The Christian Guardian reviewer calls "assured modern scholarship"; and that "the work has been done in true scholarly fashion and the result is a book of real value and helpfulness." If this book is not an infidel production, we have never read one; and how its commendation is permitted in the pages of a supposedly Christian journal, we are utterly at a loss to understand. With such books as this before us, we confess we know of no language which could overstate the case against modernism.

FURTHER NEWS OF LAST WEEK'S BLESSING.

When we went to press last week we could only begin to tell of the inspiration received through the visit of the Executive Committee of the Baptist Bible Union of America. Wednesday evening Dr. W. B. Riley brought us a great message on the fight against Modernism in the colleges and schools; while Dr. W. Oliver VanOsdel told of the victory God had given in his own local work in Grand Rapids. Thursday evening, with the large auditorium

packed to its utmost capacity, Dr. J. Frank Norris inspired us all to a new sense of service; to a closer walk with the Master, by his address on "Endowment with the Power for Witnessing." Friday evening Dr. R. E. Neighbour was used of the Spirit to unite in our minds once again the old covenant with the new in his address, "The Christ of the New Testament—the Jehovah of the Old Testament." These addresses, together with those of Dr. A. C. Dixon and Dr. W. Pettingill, of which we wrote last week, will long be remembered by the Baptists of Toronto.

ALL HANDS ON DECK.

We are about to undertake in Jarvis Street the greatest enterprise ever attempted in the history of the church. We shall enter upon a campaign which, we believe, will make Jarvis Street the greatest Sunday School in Canada.

The hour of the Sunday School will be changed to 9.45 a.m., and the school will close only with the conclusion of the morning service. The plan is to endeavour to get every individual member of the church to come to the school, either as a teacher or a scholar. Thus, parents will be able to bring the whole family with them, and there will be a class for every one in the family. In this way people who live at such a distance from the church that if they attend either morning or evening service it is a physical impossibility to come to school in the afternoon, will now be able regularly to attend the session for Bible study.

This plan will render all the teaching talent of the church available for Sunday School purposes; it will join the church and Sunday School together as nothing else could do.

In addition to all this, it will go far to solving the problem of keeping in vital touch with every individual member of a large church, for by this plan every member of the church would either be teaching, or would be a member of one of the classes in the school. Each class would keep in weekly communication with every member of the class, so that nothing could come to any member in the way of sickness or trouble which would not be immediately known.

The question is: "Is such a plan practicable?" and the answer is, "Yes." We have seen it worked; we have seen 4,630 in actual attendance in Sunday School on Sunday morning. What has been done in other places can be done in Jarvis Street, and we are going to attempt to do it.

Of course, the enrollment of the whole church in the Bible School will not mean that we shall live to ourselves; rather it will mean that hundreds and thousands of people—men and women, boys and girls—who go to no Sunday School at all, will be personally visited, and urged to take a place in one of these classes.

How is this to be done, and by whom? It will be done by an army of Jarvis Street workers, and they will be led by the very man who, under God, has accomplished the same miracle in other places—the Rev. Louis Entzminger. It was he who brought the Sunday School of Fort Worth, Texas, up from 250 to nearly 5,000; the same miracle was wrought in Minneapolis, where the attendance increased from a few hundred to 2,000. We believe the same thing can be done here. Preparatory work is being done this week, beginning Sunday, under the leadership of Mr. Entzminger's brother. Mr. Entzminger himself expects to be with us for October 2nd.

CHURCH NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

TO THE BOYS AND GIRLS.

In a couple of weeks' time "Uncle Hutch" and "Cousin Fred" will be resuming their Wednesday evening meetings for the children. This season the pictures will be better, the singing brighter, and the prizes bigger. Be sure to be at Sunday School Sunday afternoon, as special announcements will be made. Boys and girls not members of our school are already asking when these meetings will begin, and have their minds made up to be the first to register.

YOUNG WOMEN'S MISSION CIRCLE.

The opening meeting of the Young Women's Mission Circle will be held in the church Parlour Monday evening, September 24th, at 8 o'clock. Miss Olive Copp, our missionary from Timmins, Ont., will tell us of her work. Miss Copp went to Timmins, where she labours without remuneration, in response to a direct call from God; and her message will be full of inspiration. All our members are urged to be present, especially the new members of the church.

CHINA INLAND MISSION CONFERENCE.

The China Inland Mission will hold a three-days' conference in Knox Church, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, September 24th to 26th. Meetings will be held at 3.00 and 8.00, and will be addressed by Dr. and Mrs. F. Howard Taylor, Dr. H. W. Frost, Rev. G. W. Gibb, Rev. William Taylor and Rev. F. C. H. Dreyer. Tuesday, September 25th, is the 35th anniversary of the outgoing of the first party from this continent in connection with the China Inland Mission, and will be suitably celebrated by addresses bearing upon God's faithfulness through all this period.

We should like to add this personal word: China Inland Mission has contributed largely to the spiritual life of Jarvis Street Church, and we would urge all our members to endeavour to attend some of these sessions, as they will be most inspiring.

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, Sept. 23rd, 1923.
10.00—Prayer Service in the Church Parlor. Mr. George Greenway.
10.30—Communion Service.
11.00—Public Worship. The Pastor will preach.
12.00—Mr. James Entzminger will address Sunday School workers.
3.00—The Bible School will meet.
6.00—Prayer Meeting in Church Parlor.
7.00—Public Worship. The Pastor will preach. Baptism will be administered.
Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday—8 o'clock—Prayer Meeting.
The Parliament St. Branch, 250 Parliament St. Sunday: Bible School, 3.00. Evangelistic Service, 7.00—Rev. W. L. McKay.