

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

RESCUED AT SEA.

A Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, August 12th, 1923.

(Stenographically reported)

"And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

"And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

"But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

"And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

"And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

"But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; It is I; be not afraid.

"And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

"And he said, Come. And when Peter was come out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

"But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

"And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

"And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

"Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God."—Matthew 14: 22-33.



HIS is a familiar passage; but I think it may yield us much spiritual profit. The figure of the journey of life as a sea-voyage is a very familiar one. It has been a favourite metaphor of the poets from David's day: "He bringeth them unto their desired haven." "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." The sea with its wide expanse, its unfathomable depths, has always been suggestive of the mysteries of life. Some of you sometimes stood at the dock where a mighty ocean liner was moored; and you have looked to the upper deck as to the top of a great building. You have surveyed its length and breadth, and watched the hundreds of men busy at their task, loading and unloading, and you have felt that such a monster would surely be safe anywhere. But if from another ship in mid-ocean you look upon that leviathan of the deep, you see it tossed about by the mighty waves as though it were but a

cork. And there are some personalities that seem great; there are men who seem equal to almost every emergency; and yet you have seen even the greatest of them driven with the wind and tossed and exposed to all the fury of the gale.

Well now, this story, which I have read to you this morning, of the coming of the Lord Jesus through the storm to the relief of His much-tried disciples, is illustrative of miracles of grace that are continually wrought in the experiences of God's people. It is no unusual thing to see an individual Christian, or even a group of Christians, tossed with tempest. These men were in the midst of the sea, and the wind was contrary to them, and they were severely tried. I say, that is not at all an uncommon thing. It is one of the problems which young Christians have to face, and which they find most difficult of solution. From the earliest days it has been a matter of open observation that the wicked are not in trouble as other men are, that they have more than heart could wish. Very often the careless soul seems to be permitted to sail over untroubled seas. He has fewer difficulties than other people, and he sails from place to place with comparative quiet; while many a man who seems to be desirous of walking in the ways of the Lord and doing the will of the Lord from the heart finds that his course lies through the storm, and he is continually asking himself why it should be that he should have so much difficulty when he is really sincerely seeking to follow the Lord's direction. Now, I do not for the moment attempt to explain it: I simply remind you of the fact that it is a matter of universal observation that those who follow in the ways of the Lord are very frequently found in the storm.

I. In this particular case they were there BECAUSE THEY HAD DONE AS THE LORD TOLD THEM TO DO. The Lord Jesus constrained them to get into a ship, and to go unto the other side. There was absolutely no doubt about their being in the way of the divine plan and purpose. They had followed the direction of the Lord Himself. They were just exactly where He wanted them to be. Their ship was headed in the direction He desired them to sail; and it was because of that very fact that they had to row in the teeth of the gale. The wind was contrary to those who were moving in the direction of the Lord's purpose. And so is it, my dear friends, with believers generally: "The carnal mind is enmity against God." All the tides of life in this world run contrary to the life that is set in the divine direction; and because you have difficulty you must not hastily conclude that you have missed your direction. Daniel was in the way of the divine purpose when he found himself in the lions' den; so were the Hebrew children when they found themselves in the burning fiery furnace; so was Joseph when he was despised and rejected of his brethren; so was Jacob when he complained, "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away."

Therefore, I want to bring this simple word to the man or woman who in business or in some other way has been beset during this past week with special and peculiar difficulty; and that is the common lot of those who are the Lord's people. We are not going to sail over summer seas always; we shall have to encounter the contrary wind. However, let me remind you that *sometimes we bring ourselves into the storm*. It was so of those who sailed with Paul. They set sail from the fair havens when the south wind blew softly, when circumstances seemed to be specially favourable. And you remember how Paul stood forth and warned them: "Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives. Nevertheless, the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship," and refused to hearken to the word of this prisoner in

chains. And very often we set out upon some speculative voyage, we embark upon some course that we are warned will be with hurt and much damage; but we refuse to listen to the warning voice because the south winds blow softly. There came a day when this same man stood forth after long abstinence and said, "Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me." Some times God comes to men and says, "I told you so. You ought to have hearkened unto Me and you would have saved yourselves a great deal or trouble." But in any case the Lord does mercifully come to His people and deliver them, even when they have brought themselves into trouble; for in the instance to which I referred, the Word of the Lord came to Paul promising that there should be no loss of life. They cast themselves, "some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land."

These are many commonplaces, and there is not a man or woman here whose life is not touched by these simple observations. We have all been in the deep; we have all been tossed with tempest; we have all asked these questions why it should be so, and have wondered why others should have had a pleasanter voyage.

II. THERE WAS MORE DISCOMFORT THAN DANGER in the instance before us. As a matter of fact, they never were in any real danger; but it was very uncomfortable and very distressing. An ocean voyage often is very uncomfortable for some people. There are some sea captains who never put to sea without being sea-sick. I have, fortunately, escaped that experience myself. But I have often seen sailors sick. I have talked with them about it, and there are some who never get over it, and I believe there are some of the Lord's children, who seem to be so constituted that they are half the time sea-sick. They are greatly troubled. There are some people who cannot stand any kind of a tossing. The slightest difficulty disturbs them, and they begin to moan and complain and wonder whether, after all, they are going to be lost. I have dealt with some of the Lord's children until I have been at my wits' end. I could not doubt that they were really in the ways of the Lord; I had not a shadow of a doubt that they were trusting Him; but they seemed never wholly to recover from the habit of getting sea-sick. As soon as the winds blow, as soon as any little difficulty presents itself and they are tossed with tempest, then they are full of distress and discomfort, for they are not made for the storm. I am sorry for you, my brother, if that is true, as I am sorry for people who are constitutionally disposed to sea-sickness. I have seen them get on the ship, they wave goodbye to their friends, and as soon as the ship begins to move you see the look come upon their faces as though they would say, "I am in for it now." They are prepared for it, they expect it, and they get what they expect. There is a habit of looking upon life in that way; and there are people who are never happy unless they are miserable. They find their chief delight in being full of trouble. I know that is a paradox; but if ever they should find themselves on smooth seas they would hardly know how to behave themselves. My dear friends, I do not think this is wholly necessary. But even if it be so that there is some soul here this morning, tossed about, and saying, "I never seem to get out of the storm; I never have the peace that some people have; I never have the joy that other people experience; and I wonder sometimes whether I am a Christian," perhaps you are just a sea-sick soul on the Lord's ship, sailing in His direction, yet not having fully learned how to put your trust in Him for deliverance from discomfort as from danger. For there are some people who, somehow or another—I cannot understand it—believe that the Lord can save their souls—they never have any doubt about that; they know

where the ship is going, and where it will drop anchor at last; they are certain that they are saved—and yet they cannot leave the bread and butter question with God: they have not learned to trust Him in the material affairs of life; they have not learned to find rest by casting all their care upon Him.

I wish I might say some word this morning that will cure you of that chronic spiritual sea-sickness. There is the fact, that these disciples were in great discomfort, but they were in no danger. They were distressed in rowing; they laboured hard to bring the ship out of the storm; they dug their oars deeply into the waves; they exerted themselves to the utmost; but *there were powers external to themselves which were not subject to human control*. And with all their rowing, the sea was still boisterous, and the wind was contrary, and they needed a power not their own. Don't you see the simple truth? There are some difficulties from which we cannot possibly extricate ourselves. There are some difficulties beyond human control. All our rowing will not smooth the sea, and our best efforts will not still the tempest. Some things we may be able to order ourselves as God helps us; but there are things that are entirely beyond our control—winds that are contrary, waves that are boisterous—and while that condition of life obtains we shall be just like these disciples on the sea—tossed with tempest.

III. Now a further simple observation: While these disciples were on the sea, JESUS WAS UP IN THE MOUNTAIN PRAYING: "And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone." He was there, and they were in the midst of the sea. And that is still true. Our Lord Jesus has gone into a mountain to pray. Do you remember when He said to His disciples, just as now He constrained them to get into a ship and go to the other side—ere He departed, He said: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations—Go ye into all the world; put to sea and cross the deep; I am going up into the mountain to pray. All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore." And He ascended into the glory, and to the Father's right hand. And while we are in the midst of the sea, He is at the place of power praying for us.

There is here, therefore, *the suggestion of remembrance*. Jesus did not forget where the disciples were. He did not forget that they were in the very place to which He had sent them. Nor does He ever forget us. I wonder are you sometimes troubled when people ask you to pray—to remember them in prayer! I receive letters from many people who say, "Will you pray for me?" And I try to remember them. Do you ever feel rebuked that you have forgotten to pray for somebody who asked you to pray for him? Do you ever feel somewhat condemned that you have not taken upon your own heart the burden of another life who is looking to you for spiritual help? I think we need to be somewhat careful about saying, "I will pray for you." Do not say it unless you mean it. Do not offer comfort of that sort unless you really mean to take that name upon your heart and to present it before the Lord. Do not mock Him and mock your friends by saying, "I will pray for you," unless you are determined to remember it, and to continue in prayer. But, blessed be God, our Lord Jesus never forgets! He has gone up into the mountain to pray, and He will not forget us in the midst of the storm:

"The names of all His saints He bears
Deep graven on His heart;
Nor shall the meanest Christian say
That He hath lost his part."

He never forgets. We grow out of each other's knowledge. I was in my old church last Sunday, and met a great many people. Some of their faces were familiar, but I was unable to associate the face with the name in some few cases; and the young people who had grown up in these last twelve or thirteen years had grown out of my knowledge. They came up to test my memory, and said, "Do you remember me?" In some cases I did—they had not changed greatly; but others had changed altogether. But we never grow out of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, He is up yonder and He remembers us. I wish I could lay that simple truth upon your heart this morning, that whoever else may forget, the great Intercessor will never forget to pray for His own. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." You have not to introduce yourself. When I was down in the South a few weeks ago, I found they had a very happy practice, as I thought. They did not put the preacher's memory to a test; they came up, and said, "How do you do? My name is Jones. What is yours?" They always introduced themselves: "I am Mrs. So-and-so;" or, "I am Miss So-and-so." They did not wait for anybody else to introduce them. We need to do that with each other, but we never need to do it with the Lord: "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and He never forgets. As He went into the mountain to pray, He had every one of those disciples who were in the storm upon His heart. And He has you, my brother. You say, "Nobody cares." You are in this City living your life alone. You are face to face with tremendous problems, and you are bowed beneath great burdens. But there is One Who remembers, and Who is in the mountain at prayer, and He is there in full sympathy with you. I think we do not make enough of that great principle: "He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." He "was in all points tempted like as we are."

Jesus became a man not only that He might die for us and bear in His own body our sins—salvation in one sense was completed at the cross; that is, atonement was completed there, the price of redemption was paid there—but salvation in the full and complete sense involves presentation of the redeemed soul without fault before the throne of God; and our Lord Jesus carried our human nature into the glory. Hold fast by the truth of the physical resurrection of our Lord Jesus. He appeared in bodily form. He had a real body; it was with a real body He ascended to the Father. The Godman is in the Father's presence to-day; and the One Who prays for you and me is still "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." He is God; but He is still a man. He has not forgotten what it is to be weary and to be hungry, and, mayhap, to be sleepy—to be weary altogether of the burdens of life. And the same Jesus prays for us this morning, and He can enter into perfect sympathy with every one who is tossed with the storm. *And that, my friends, means safety.* It was impossible that anyone should be lost for whom Jesus prayed. You will remember what He said at the grave of Lazarus before He said, "Lazarus, come forth:" He said: "I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." Jesus declared that He never prayed in vain. The man for whom Jesus prays is safe. He said: "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat—you will be tossed with tempest; you will be shaken about; you will be terribly tried—but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fall not." And it was answered on the day of Pentecost when that mighty man of God spoke in the fulness of the Holy Ghost. But Jesus said: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." Somebody foolishly

wrote me the other day—we have all had such letters, and you will understand me when I say 'foolishly'—but somebody wrote to me the other day from a distance saying, "If you will only pray for me, I shall be sure to have the blessing." But there is one Who always prevails in prayer; there is One without Whose prayers we cannot prosper. And I would tell every troubled Christian here this morning that the Lord Jesus is praying for you: "He ever liveth to make intercession for them." And what is the argument? "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Thus the assurance of eternal salvation is found in the fact, not only that Jesus died, not only that He was raised from the dead, but that He still lives and pleads the merit of His own blood, and demands—if I may reverently say so—at the hand of God, that which He has purchased by His own blood. So, if we are saved, even if we are tossed about, the Lord Jesus is praying for us.

IV. The next thing is that IN DUE TIME HE CAME—about the fourth watch of the night. *He did not come at once*; it was past three o'clock in the morning. It was in the evening just as the shadows were lengthening that Jesus sent them over the sea, and He went up into the mountain. He allowed the night to come, and the darkness to fall, and the storm to break and rise to its full height, while he left them to themselves. Jesus does not always come the moment we send for Him. He does not always come in the first watch, nor in the second watch, nor in the third watch; and, perhaps, that element of time is entering into your difficulty. They sent for Jesus when Lazarus was sick, and "when he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was." He refused immediately to go to Bethany, and He waited and gave Lazarus time to die. And when at last He came, Martha said unto Jesus, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." They were prepared to write their blessings in the past tense, to speak of what might have been if Jesus had only come when they sent for Him. My friend, He may not come in the first watch, or in the second watch; but He will come in time: that is the main thing: in the fourth watch He came!

But the *disciples did not see how He could come*. They were in the midst of the sea. There was no way by which Jesus could come to them. They canvassed all the possibilities, perhaps; but they could see no way by which the Deliverer could come. And that is how we estimate the possibilities of God's answering our prayer. A friend has written to you to say that he will arrive in Toronto on a certain day, and he is coming from a certain place. You go down to the railway office, and ask when trains will arrive from that place—what is the last train? And the last train has come in, and your friend has not arrived, you say, "He cannot come to-night. There is no other way by which he can come." And we have a habit of doing the same way with the Lord. We pray, and immediately we sit down to consult the time-table to discover by what train He will come, by what means He will answer our prayer. And when we have surveyed the whole situation, we decide at last that because we cannot see any way by which He can come, He will not come at all. But He will come in His own way.

"In some way or the other, the Lord will provide;

It may not be my way, it may not be thy way,

But yet in His own way, the Lord will provide.

At some time or other, the Lord will provide;

It may not be my time, it may not be thy time,

But yet in His own time the Lord will provide."

Why then should we try to shut God up to our programme? It is of the very essence of faith that we allow God to be God, and that we expect of Him even the impossible. I remember after the war, just after the Armistice, being in Mons, and having to get to London in about twenty-four hours. There was no railroad, as all the railroads were blown up. All sorts of possibilities were canvassed, and they even talked about getting an aeroplane and sending me back that way. However, I got home at last by motor car and military railway and various means of transportation. But I want to tell you that long before the science of aviation was discovered, it was written in this Book: "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky." You do not know when His aeroplane will come. You do not know how God will answer your prayer. But remember, that He Who has prayed has all power, and somehow, some time, and in some way, He will come to your deliverance.

At last, *He came in a way that was, humanly speaking, impossible.* He came walking upon the very waves which threatened to engulf them. Their difficulties were made by divine grace the stepping stones of their Deliverer. The very waves of the stormy sea was the path of His feet. How many of you Christians have found that to be true? It was true of Jacob, to whom I referred a moment ago. Talk to him, and say, "What is the matter, Jacob?" He will answer, "I am terribly bereaved." "Well, how are you bereaved?" He saith: "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me." But if you get God's standpoint, you will say to Jacob, "The very things you describe as your troubles are God's way of bringing you deliverance; for it is through Joseph, and through Simeon, and through Benjamin that your prayer is going to be answered." And that is the true experience of every one of us:

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head."

There are Christians here of experience who, if I were to stop now and turn this into a testimony meeting, would get up and say, "The greatest blessings that have ever come to me, by God's grace, have come on the stormy seas, when the Lord has actually walked upon the waves and brought me deliverance through the difficulties I most feared."

And then as He came to them, *they feared to accept deliverance in God's way.* What an infinitely patient Deliverer we have! They complained because He did not come; they were distressed because He did not come; and then they were terrified when He did come. No wonder Jesus said: "Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like? They are like unto children sitting in the market place, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept. For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!" We seem to be determined not to be satisfied. What a blessing that the Lord is so infinitely patient!

"And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit;" *but they found comfort through His word.* After all, it is the Word of the Lord which always dispels our fears. When Jesus spoke and said, "It is I; be not afraid;" they were, indeed, comforted. My friend, if you

are to get comfort, you will have to come to this sure word of prophecy; you will have to hear the Word of the Lord in the midst of the storm.

V. I want to say this before I close: I think IT WAS A TRUE INSTINCT WHICH LED PETER TO SAY, "LORD, IF IT BE THOU, BID ME COME UNTO THEE ON THE WATER." What did he mean? He said, "I see no reason why the Lord Jesus should not enable me to do what He does. He treads His difficulties triumphantly under His feet, and I ought to be able to do the same." And Jesus said, "Come. I will take you at your word. Come." And I rather fancy He paused in His march toward the ship. You can see Peter climbing down over the side of the ship, and he began to walk on the water to go to Jesus. I do believe that you can walk on anything to go to Jesus. Now, think of that: "He walked on the water, to go to Jesus." If you want to go to Jesus, if you want to get into closer fellowship with Him, keep at his side, be sure of His identity, and you can walk on anything. "But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord save me." And the Lord stretched forth His hand and saved him, and they stepped up over the side of the ship into the ship with him. And as soon as they were in the ship, the winds ceased. Jesus came in the fourth watch of the night, and He brought the morning with Him, as He always does.

VI. "Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God." WHY DID HE LEAVE THEM IN THE MIDST OF THE STORM? Why did He try them to the very utmost? For this very purpose, that He might find in their extremity His opportunity, *that He might find by means of their difficulties the opportunity to prove His Deity.* And it was well worth spending that night on the stormy sea if by means of it their conviction of the Deity of Jesus might be strengthened. You want to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" and you ask me if I know of any books you may read, any course of study you may take. These are all useful in their place; *but if you want really to know the Lord, you will have to go to sea with Him.* You cannot learn Jesus, you cannot come to know Jesus in the quiet places only. It is out on the stormy deep, it is in the lions' den, it is amid the flame, it is out where the battle is raging, it is in the place where all human helpers fail, that you learn what Jesus is. And unless you are willing to go to that college, and master that lesson, then you will not "grow up into him in all things."

I have spoken this word this morning in the hope that some troubled soul here may come to see that the experiences of life are part of the discipline of grace, and God's way of leading you more perfectly to know the Lord. Thus, "grace and peace will be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord."

ARMISTICE DAY..

Who can ever forget November 11th, 1918? Or who can forget the precious lives which in the four years of war were laid down for us? Sunday morning the Bible School will assemble in the church five minutes earlier than usual, viz., 10.40. The Headquarters Staff of the Toronto Garrison will attend Jarvis St. Church, arriving about 10.50. At eleven o'clock the congregation will rise and remain standing for two minutes of silence in honor of the memory of our loved dead. We hope every member of the church will endeavour to be present.

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 HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH.

We have in mind an ideal family circle. The father is a professional man of eminence, the author of several books of importance. But he is chiefly a father, and loves to have his children about him. On a certain evening the family might be seen assembled in the living-room, all interested apparently in the same thing. But they are not listening to a learned lecture by the head of the household, nor to a musical performance by the oldest daughter: they are listening to the baby learning to talk; and by the smiles which irradiate all faces it would appear that the greatest entertainer would have to look to his laurels when in competition with his majesty the baby.

Thus should it be in the household of faith. Among the members of the family there should be some who are deeply learned in the mysteries of the gospel. The older children should be leaving the first principles, and going on to perfection. But where love reigns the household will feel a special interest in and responsibility for the younger members of the family, especially for the babes; and every member of the household will help to teach the baby to talk and to walk.

The church prayer-meeting should bear the voice of mature experience in prayer and testimony; but it ought also to be the place where the babes learn to talk. Nothing is so stimulating to faith as the prayer and testimony of new-born souls. Pity the church which is a stranger to the music of the prattle of new-born babes!

Moreover the household of faith ought to learn to look after itself. How uncomfortable a guest would feel in a home where all the older children were content to sit around in idleness, while one pair of hands did all the work. Each member of the family should carry a share of the household burdens. And a growing church should be like a growing family, where the work is equally distributed among the stronger children.

We know a church where these ideal conditions increasingly obtain; where an ever-increasing family love to listen to the lisps of the new-born, and where all the children are learning so to work together that no one is over-worked, and what is more unusual, few are under-worked.

THE LORD MEANT WHAT HE SAID.

It is strange that so many people who profess to believe the Bible to be the Word of God, should ignore some of its plainest precepts. For instance: "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses." Nothing could be plainer. Yet some people nurse a grudge for years while praying God to bless them. Life is too short and too serious for any of us to be able to afford to entertain enmity toward

another. A grudge is a most expensive guest to entertain. It injures whoever affords it hospitality; it defiles the heart, embitters the spirit, hinders prayer, blinds the understanding, perverts the judgment, destroys peace, banishes joy, impoverishes life, and dishonors God. The hateful heart is bound to result in spiritual barrenness.

And what reason we have to forgive who have been forgiven so much! An eminent preacher told us recently of two of his deacons who found it impossible to get along with each other. One was slow and deliberate, the other was quick and impulsive. One day the impulsive brother told his pastor that he and Mr. Slow-deacon had reached the parting of the ways, and that this time he would make no effort toward reconciliation. Whereupon the pastor enquired, "Deacon, how would you like to be pastor of the two of you?" And then the pastor hung his head and said, "O Lord, how canst Thou be patient with the three of us?" "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

THE WESTERN RECORDER.

The Western Recorder—A great Baptist paper published in Louisville, Ky., of which Dr. Victor I. Masters is the Editor—publishes this week a sermon, which appeared in *THE GOSPEL WITNESS*, by the Pastor of Jarvis Street Church (Vol. 2, No. 15), on "The Relation of Baptism to the Lord's Supper." Not because *The Western Recorder* has been kind enough to republish one of our sermons, but because of the strength of its editorial matter and the value of its contributed articles, we wish that every member of Jarvis Street Church, and all the readers of *The Witness*, could have *The Western Recorder* coming into their home every week. It is a great Baptist paper; and the Editor of this paper makes no apology for saying that he would like to see all his readers staunch and intelligent Baptists. This is most likely to be effected by the prayerful study of the Bible itself; but we believe *The Western Recorder* is wholly biblical in its treatment of the questions it so ably discusses. Send two dollars to *The Western Recorder*, Louisville, Ky., and ask the Editor to put you on his list. You will get a hundred times the worth of your money before the year is done.

CHURCH NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS. LAST SUNDAY.

This was another day of revival blessing. There was a great school. If we had no larger attendance than last Sunday the effort would be abundantly worth while. Again seven or eight came forward when the invitation was given. In the evening, notwithstanding the bad weather, there was a great congregation. Some who had expected to be baptized, on account of sickness or other reasons, were unable to be present, but two were baptized in the morning and seven in the evening, making fifty-six baptisms in the last four Sundays. A good number—we have not the exact figures at hand while writing—came forward and went into the enquiry room. At the Communion Service following, seventy were on the list to receive the hand of fellowship, but twelve were unavoidably absent, so that fifty-eight were welcomed by the Pastor, which with forty-one October 14th, made one hundred and eleven additions to the church in three weeks, or four Sundays. At the Communion Service there was a great attendance and great joy.

The membership of Jarvis St. Church is now larger than on the memorable Sept. 21st, 1921; and in the last two years and seven months, or since April 1st, 1921, nearly six hundred new members have been added to the church. For these blessings we ascribe all glory and praise to our gracious God alone.

THE WHOLE BIBLE S.S. LESSON COURSE.

Lesson Calendar.

Third Period—Abraham to Moses.

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|---|-------------|
| 5. Nov. 4—The Abrahamic Covenant..... | Gen. 12-14 |
| 6. Nov. 11—Restatement of Abrahamic Covenant..... | Gen. 12-14 |
| 7. Nov. 18—Promise of Birth of Isaac and Destruction of Sodom
and Gomorrah | Gen. 18, 19 |
| 8. Nov. 25—Birth and Offering of Isaac..... | Gen. 21, 22 |
| 9. Dec. 2—A Bride for Isaac | Gen. 24 |
| 10. Dec. 9—The Stolen Blessing | Gen. 27, 28 |
| 11. Dec. 16—Jacob's Experience at Haran | Gen. 29-31 |
| 12. Dec. 23—Jacob, the Supplanter | Gen. 32, 33 |

LESSON VII.

NOVEMBER 18, 1923.

PROMISE OF BIRTH OF ISAAC, AND DESTRUCTION OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH.—Gen. 18, 19.

Lesson Exposition by the Editor.

These two chapters are full of the gospel. We believe the greatest good will result from bringing out the spiritual lessons here taught. We have a further example here of how the great doctrines of the gospel may be illustrated by the proper use of these Old Testament scriptures.

I. ABRAHAM'S HOSPITABLE RECEPTION OF HEAVENLY VISITORS. (Chap. 18: 1-8.)

(1) God appeared to Abraham; Abraham did not go to look for Him. God is ever ready to reveal Himself to us. How do we spend our leisure hours? It was while Abraham sat in the tent door in the cool of the day, doubtless in meditation, God appeared to him. Of what do we think in our times of leisure? (2) To the receptive heart God's angels are always coming (Heb. 1: 13-14). Every holy desire and spiritual aspiration is heaven sent; they come to us as angels to lead us to God. (3) Abraham invited them to remain with him. It is possible to detain God's angels. One of these was the Angel of the Covenant, Jehovah, "the Lord" (vs. 1, and 16, 17). Thus the Lord Jesus comes to those who talk to Him (Luke 24: 28-31).

II. THEY ALWAYS RECEIVE MORE THAN THEY GIVE WHO ENTERTAIN THE LORD. (Vs. 9-15.)

(1) The Lord promised what Abraham and Sarah had long desired,—a son. Christ is the desire of all nations. Isaac was a type of Christ. All the highest aspirations of the soul find their realization in Christ. (2) The Lord promised that which was contrary to nature, and was therefore supernatural. The Christian religion is a supernatural religion. The Bible is a supernatural Book, which tells of a supernatural Person, Who promises to all who believe, a supernatural experience. For older scholars, we have here the heart of the gospel: the miracle of the Virgin Birth; of the New Birth; of the resurrection of the soul dead in trespasses and sins. By nature men are dead toward God and toward holy things; but may be made spiritually alive by the power of the Holy Ghost (John 3:1-16).

III. JUDGMENT AND MERCY GO HAND IN HAND IN ALL DIVINE COM- MUNICATIONS TO SINFUL MEN.

(1) God takes account of man's sin and visits it in judgment (vs. 20, 21). (2) True prayer is always based upon a divine revelation (Vs. 17-22). See also II Sam. 7: 27; Rom. 8: 26, 27. Thus the study of God's Word, giving a knowledge of His will respecting sin and salvation, always inspires people to pray. (3) This chapter suggests the possibilities of the ministry of interces-

sion (vs. 23-33). (a) The vicarious principle is here, "for their sakes." (b) The want of human righteousness is suggested. Abraham feared the lack of it, and lowered his pleading ground from "fifty" to the last pathetic cry, "Peradventure, ten shall be found there," the sequel being that there was not sufficient righteousness to save the wicked cities. (c) Thus the volume of righteousness necessary to weigh against the world's sin is suggested. We need not cease to pray because we can plead only the merit of ten: we plead the merit of One "Who is made after the power of an endless life." (Heb. 7: 16).

IV. AN EXAMPLE OF JUDGMENT.

Jude 7: We have a brother in Jarvis Street who was converted in his own home in the small hours of the morning as a result of reading Matt. 11: 23, 24, quoted in a sermon in THE GOSPEL WITNESS. This chapter suggests many lessons. (1) Men of worldly ambition and compromise, like Lot, who trust to their carnal wisdom in the choices of life (Chap. 13: 10-11) invariably take a course which leads to irreparable loss. Lot lost his wife, and had a corrupt family, and in the end lost all his material possessions besides. This is a terrible example of what follows a worldly course; a much-needed lesson for the worldly-minded professing Christian; and a fearful illustration of what Paul had in mind (I Cor. 3: 11-15) when writing of some being saved "yet so as by fire." (2) The lesson affords a fine opportunity to preach the gospel to unconverted scholars. (a) God never judges without knowledge (I Sam 2: 3). He sent His angels to Sodom to investigate. Thus He sees all men, and sin is evil done in His sight (Ps. 51: 4). (b) The angels came to save Lot, rather than to destroy the wicked cities. Christ came to seek and to save (Luke 19: 10); and angels are still the ministers of salvation (Heb. 1: 13-14). (c) The urgency of their mission (vs. 12-16). The angels had no doubt about a judgment to come. There is another judgment that is equally certain (Luke 17: 28). If we believe God as the angels do, we shall be as earnest in seeking the salvation of men as they were in seeking the salvation of Lot. (3) "Escape to the mountain"—what a suggestion of Calvary! (4) There must be no looking back (vs. 26)—Luke 9:62.

The Church Calendar

- Sunday.** For the week beginning Sunday, Nov. 11th, 1923.
 9.45—Bible School, including an Intercessory Class. W. J. Hutchinson, Supt.
 11.00—Public Worship. Dr. T. T. Shields.
 6.00—Prayer Meeting in Church Parlor.
 6.30—Communion Service.
 7.00—Public Worship. Dr. T. T. Shields.
 Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, 8—Prayer Meeting.
 Tuesday—6.00—Teachers' Meeting.
 Wednesday—7.00—Junior service.
 The Parliament St. Branch, 250 Parliament St. Sunday: Bible School, 3.00. Evangelistic Service, 7.00—Rev. W. L. McKay.
 Monday—8.00—Young People's Meeting.
 Wednesday—8 o'clock—Prayer Meeting.
 Friday—7.15—Junior Meeting: Mr. F. Turney and Mr. W. J. Hutchinson.