

The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED WEEKLY.

IN THE INTEREST OF EVANGELICAL TRUTH, BY JARVIS STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, TORONTO, CAN., AND SENT FOR \$2.00 PER YEAR (UNDER COST), POSTPAID, TO ANY ADDRESS, 5c. PER SINGLE COPY.

T. T. SHIELDS
PASTOR AND EDITOR

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

Address correspondence: The Gospel Witness, 130 Gerrard Street E., Toronto.

Vol. 2

TORONTO NOVEMBER 29th, 1923.

No. 29

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE FAITH THAT GLORIFIES GOD.

A Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, Nov. 25th, 1923.
(Stenographically reported)

"And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me."—Genesis 22: 21.



FROM the lesson we read this morning, as well as from many other passages in the New Testament, we learn that Abraham is the supreme example given us in the Scripture of what it is to believe God. I want to speak this morning of that last and most severe trial to which his faith was subjected, when he was required of God to offer up his only son. We have in this story an illustration of how God demands and obtains for Himself the first place in a human life. Abraham is an example of what it means to put God first, to trust Him before and beyond and above all others.

I. I shall begin by saying that God requires us to put Him first BECAUSE HE IS GOD: "The Lord He is God; there is none else beside him." I think we need very especially in our day to emphasize the importance of giving God His rightful place in our lives. The first commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." And I want to remind all the young people, and the boys and girls, too, that important as it is that we should be rightly related to all the people—to our playmates, for instance, to our work-fellows, to father and mother and brothers and sisters—the first and most important consideration of all is that we should be properly related to God; that we should remember God; that we should have the fear of God before our eyes, and a love for God in our hearts.

Now, God came to Abraham and claimed a place for Himself. There are a great many Christian people—I ought to say professing Christian people—

who talk of their associations in the church, of the little bit of work they do in the church; they think of their minister, and talk about him and about the work he does—they think and talk about everything and everybody but about God Himself. Abraham was a man who found a place in his heart for God, and God was never satisfied until He had the first place. And that is what He wants in our hearts; before father and mother and brother and sister and wife and husband, before everything and everybody else in the world, God demands the first place. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." And I ask you who are older, this morning—I think I had better make the application of this principle as we go along—what place there is for God in your life? This Bible is His Word. Do you listen to Him speak to you as God? When you pray, do you really commune with God? (In all your life—in your business affairs, in your family affairs, have you found a place for God? Is God real and present and precious to you every day? This is the great question. You cannot read the story of Abraham's life without feeling that to Abraham God was real. He was not someone Who lived afar off; but He was One Who was a factor in Abraham's life every day. He talked with Him, and God talked with Abraham. God led him, and blessed him; and everything that came into Abraham's life, he recognized as coming from God.

We should give God the first place because He is God. No one else has a right to His place. We worship Him apart; "Hallowed be Thy Name." The Name of God should ever be hallowed by us. I trust there is no one here this morning who ever dares to take that Holy Name in vain. Shun that as you would shun a plague. Remember, God's Name is to be held in reverence. We are to hallow His Name. We are to bow our hearts before Him always, because He is God.

We are to give Him the first place, *because He made us and not we ourselves*: He is our Creator. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says, "For every house is builded by some man; but He that built all things is God." Nobody supposes that this church built itself; that this pulpit made itself; that this electric light found its way into this church of itself. Everybody knows that somebody planned this house; somebody laid the foundation; somebody reared the walls, put on the roof, furnished it. We know that "every house is builded by some man; but He that built all things is God." The sun does not shine of itself; the stars do not pursue their courses of themselves; the rain and the dew do not come of themselves; they come in obedience to certain laws. But behind all those laws stands God, and the Scripture says, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." And we, too, are made by God. He made us; we did not make ourselves. Our hands, our eyes, our ears, our powers of intellect, our powers of body and mind and spirit—God is the Author of it all. We owe our being to Him, and derive our life from Him. As the bread we eat, and the clothes we wear, and all the good things we enjoy come from Him, He demands that He should have not only a general, vague, recognition, but He demands that He should have the first place in our lives. You do not get your bread primarily from the baker; he does not get his flour from the miller; the miller does not get his wheat from the farmer; the farmer does not get his wheat from the fields; they all get it right from the hand of God. It is God Who spreads the breakfast table, and Who will give us our dinner today, and Who will put the clothes upon our back, and a roof over our head, and Who will keep us warm in the winter-time, and supply us with all the fruits of the earth. And I want you young people ever to have that in mind; that there is a real God; that He opens His hand and satisfies the desires of every living thing; and He demands that,

behind the landlord, and behind the merchant, and the farmer, and all these human agents through whose industry our needs are supplied—He demands that we should recognize that behind all these and above all these is God; and He wants the first place in your life and in mine, because of that fact.

II. And then He demands recognition of the first place BECAUSE OF WHAT HE DOES. God is doing something for us every day. He keeps our hearts beating and the blood flowing. We owe even our physical being to Him; and it is because He ever watches over us that we live physically. I bought a watch about a year ago. I found it was not a very good one, and I sent it back to have it repaired, again and again. I have met some men who say, "I carry my father's watch. That watch, sir, is fifty years old, and it has been going all that time." And some of you have in your homes, I suppose, a grandfather's clock. It has come down from the dim and distant past—perhaps it is a hundred years old—and we say, "What a wonderful thing that is, to have a piece of mechanism that lasts as long as that!" And yet, you know, it does not last so very long—eight days at the most, unless you wind it up. But there is a clock inside my breast here that has been ticking away—well, I am not going to tell you how long, but it has been ticking away for a few years. And there are some of you here who have a watch, not in your pocket, but inside there, which has been going a great many years longer than mine has. There was a woman eighty-six years old, converted here last Sunday morning in the service. She was sitting in her pew, and her heart was opened to receive Christ. Her watch had been going for eighty-six years; and the Lord had been looking after her all that time, keeping that heart of hers beating, extending her life, until at last her heart was opened to Jesus Christ. And I urge you to remember that God is doing that for us every day; and because of that we ought to give Him the very first place. We can do without father or mother, if we have to; we can do without husband or wife; we can do without children; we can do without each other, and somehow or another their places and our places are taken; but there is one Person Whom we cannot do without—we cannot do without God. If He were but to withhold His hand, if He were not to make His sun to rise for one single day, the whole world would be thrown into confusion.

And then God wanted the first place in Abraham's life *because He was going to do for Abraham the very thing that He asked Abraham to do for Him.* "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." I do not know what Abraham said, but I think he must have said something back to God that is not written here. He must have said: "O God, that is a hard thing to ask me to do. Ask me for all my cattle, for all my silver, for all my gold—ask me for anything, for everything I have; but let me have Isaac. He is the best possession I have. He is the son I love. Do not ask me to give him up. How can you ask me to do that?" And I think in some way God must have communicated something of His purpose; He must have said to Abraham: "Abraham, I am not asking you to do any more than I am going to do myself. I made you a promise. I have already fulfilled that promise to you in sending this laughing child into your home, when you feared that he never would come; and I have shown you that I am going to give you a blessing, and that in you and through Isaac I am going to bring blessing to all the nations of the earth. But, remember, down yonder, when centuries have passed, on in the distant future, Another will come. He will be born of a woman; but He will be begotten of the Holy Ghost; He will be My Well-Beloved, My only-begotten Son. I am going to send

Him into the world, and some day, we, too, will walk the hillside together, and we will come to the top of the mountain, and I, Abraham, will give My Son. I have given you the first place in My life, and I want the first place in your life. I want you to give your best to Me, just as I am going to give my best to you." And that is what God wants of every one of us: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." You have in this story this morning a picture of that great Sacrifice, at the place called Calvary, when Father and Son went together, just like Abraham and Isaac, and when Jesus voluntarily laid down His life, the Father and the Holy Ghost consenting, and so made an atonement for our sins. The same appeal comes to you and to me this morning, that because of what God has done for us, we ought to give Him the very first place.

Further, He wants us to trust Him *when we cannot understand Him*. He came to Abraham, and said, "Abraham, I want Isaac." And I think Abraham must have said, "What for?" "A burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." "But why Isaac for a burnt offering? Won't something else do?" "No; no one but Isaac will do." "How is Thy promise going to be fulfilled? Thou hast said that in Isaac shall my seed be called. Thou hast said that Isaac should have children, and his children should have children, and so at last all nations of the earth shall be blessed through this son of mine. And now Thou requirest me to lay him upon the altar as a burnt offering. I cannot understand it." Don't you think Abraham talked like that? And the Lord said, "No, you cannot, Abraham; but you must trust Me when you cannot understand Me. You are a man, and I am God. Haven't I told you that I want you to trust Me as God?" And Abraham trusted God when he could not understand Him. There are some people here this morning who cannot understand God; they cannot understand why some things have come into their lives; they cannot understand why life has become so complicated, and why some special difficulty, some special loss has come. But God asks us to trust Him there in the difficult place; and that experience has come to us just that we may learn to trust Him in the dark.

God required Abraham to trust Him *when He seemed to contradict Himself*. You know people nowadays love to talk about that which is "reasonable." That is what young men get in college. Their professors sometimes tell them that God never expects you to believe anything that is not reasonable. He gave you a mind to think. And when the professor talks like that, that young man begins to feel he is growing a little bit, and says to himself, "O yes, I am a great thinker." Dr. Faunce said that Fundamentalists would exclude all thought and all thinkers from the Christian Church. Of course, Dr. Faunce knows how to think! I am going to tell him one of these days that he has not learned the alphabet of correct thinking—supposedly great man as he is. Excluding all thinkers? Well, the Word of the Lord says—"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." And if you are wise you will learn to let God do your thinking for you, and think God's thoughts after Him—they are a great deal better than your thoughts. Abraham, no doubt, was tempted, like the rest of us, to take God's promise and put it down beside the requirement He now made of him, and say, "Lord, by this demand Thou dost contradict every word Thou hast spoken to me. Thou didst promise Thou wouldst bless me in Isaac, and now Thou requirest me to lay him in the dust of death. How canst Thou fulfil Thy Word when Thou dost ask me to do that?" I think God said: "Abraham, where did you get Isaac?" "Well, I got him from Thee." "And

he came to you supernaturally, did he not?" "He did." "He came to you out of death, did he not?" "Yes, he did." "Well, can I not give him back to you in the same way?"—"By faith, Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." Abraham must have said: "Lord, it seems to involve a contradiction of every word Thou hast spoken; but if I cannot understand Thy Word, I will trust Thee anyway." You say the Bible is full of contradictions? It may be full of contradictions to our little thinking. I do not wonder the Bible seems to some people to be full of contradictions. It is an old, old Book. From the beginning to the end, it covers all human history; it is God's final revelation. And who are you, that you think you can understand it? Do you think your little mind can understand all that God has written? Get down before Him, and let Him be God, and trust Him even when He seems to contradict Himself. Blessed be God! He is only providing a way whereby He may glorify Himself still more, and where He may reveal Himself to us more and more fully as the great God. I love that verse which sums up Abraham's trust: "Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations. . . . He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." One evening not long ago I was motoring to Brantford. It was dark. I could look out of the window and see only about a half car's length ahead of me; I could just see the line of the road, and all beyond that was fog. That is about as far as we can see. We cannot see very far. We have to go on in the fog. But I can see Abraham coming, and he said: "I can see how God can bless me up to a point, and beyond that line lies the realm of the supernatural, of the miraculous." And when Abraham came to that line, the Scripture says, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief;" but he walked right over it into the supernatural.—

"The steps of faith
Fall on the seeming void,
And find the Rock beneath."

God is in that realm, and He will show Himself: "Abraham believed God!"

III. There are many things in this story about which I should like to speak this morning; it is an endless story. But I want especially now to say that WHEN GOD IS TRUSTED AS GOD, HE ALWAYS SHOWS HIMSELF TO BE GOD. Will you all remember that?—that when God is trusted as God, He always shows Himself, or reveals Himself to be God. What does it say about Abraham? "Abraham believed God." What sort of a God? The only God there is. Abraham's faith gave God His place as God. Somebody here wants to make God an entertainer. "Oh," you say, "I would like to trust God to make me happy," as though that were God's supreme purpose in the world—to make you happy. There is joy, there is gladness with Him; "In Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." But the failure of the modern church lies there in part, that He is too often presented to men as though He were a sort of a star entertainer. And if that is all He is to you, you will not get much from His hand. There are some people to whom God is nothing more than a merchant—the Head of a big departmental store. God demands that you recognize in Him something more than One Who spreads your table. To others God is only a teacher; He does not know quite as much as some university professors, but then the best that can be said of Him is that He does teach us a few things, that we may learn a little from Him sometimes! Oh, my friend, read this story over again, and many applications of its principle will occur to you. You have known men who have a meagre God, a little bit of a God, a conception of God as One Who does only little things for them. Let us accept God's revelation of Himself, and believe God for what He is. Abraham said to God: "O that Ishmael might live before Thee!"—As though he had said, "I can understand Thy promises on the natural plane. I have got a son already; Ishmael is his name; now let Thy promises be fulfilled through Ishmael." And God said in effect: "Abraham, I am looking for a place in your life where I can show Myself to be God. Will you trust Me to do for you what nobody else in all the universe can do? Will you step out on the Word of God, and believe God, and let God be God in your life? If you will, I will do for you what nobody else can do." And Abraham at last said "Amen" to the promises

of God. And Isaac came; then he was to offer him up; and it required a God to raise him up again. And Abraham said, "I will still let God be God. Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

Don't you see the great truth, my friend, that God wants an opportunity to reveal Himself as God? Somebody says, "I reject the idea that God revealed Himself in the Bible and ended it all there! He is revealing Himself every day." Yes; there are new revelations every day; but those revelations are fulfillments of Scripture. The revelation He wants to make is this: He wants to find an opportunity in your life to show that the promise He made to Abraham, that out of death a life shall come, can be fulfilled in your experience and mine—that we can be born again, children of promise as Isaac was; that we can surrender everything to Him, and He can give it back to us. What do we want in this church? A full church? Yes; but something more than that. You can have the multitude if that is what you want, through Ishmael. You can make a show of success on the carnal plane by the exercise of mere natural powers. Get the right kind of preacher who will tickle people's fancy, who will entertain them, with all the accompaniments of that kind of a ministry, and you can get people to come to church. *Ishmael will have children as well as Isaac, but what sort will they be?* Oh, no! We want a church that will let God be God! We want to see in this place miracles wrought which only God can work. We want to see such wonders accomplished by the power of His Spirit that everybody will say, "God lives; and if you want to know where He lives, I can tell you a church where you will find Him." Now, we are not magnifying the church. There are scores of places in this city of which this is just as true as of Jarvis Street. The measure of blessing that has come to us has come not only in answer to our prayers, but in answer to the prayers of thousands of devout people who have been praying for us. But my point is simply this: that God wants a place where He can exercise His divine power and show Himself to be God; and whenever you and I trust Him as Abraham did, He will vindicate our faith and He will show Himself to be God. I frankly confess that I do not care what anybody says about the preaching; I do not care what anybody says about the singing; I do not care what they say about our church life, so long as they confess that in this place they find God. That is what God wants; He wants to be God.

Shall we let Him be God? Somebody here says, "Well, sir, I wish I could have an opportunity." You have such an opportunity. "Dead in trespasses and in sins," He will work the same miracle in your heart as he wrought in Isaac's birth. He can make you a new creature in Christ Jesus. He can make you a child of promise. He can raise you up. Is there anyone here this morning who desires to glorify God? If so, trust Him absolutely; go down with Him into death, lay everything at His feet, and see what God can do. Let us now ask Him to bless His Word to us this morning!

THE WHOLE BIBLE S.S. LESSON COURSE.

Lesson Calendar.

Third Period—Abraham to Moses.

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| 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 |

THE STOLEN BLESSING.

LESSON X.

DECEMBER 9, 1923.

Lesson Exposition by the Editor.

If the "Whole Bible Course" is to be of real benefit, the whole Bible must be studied. Therefore, the chapters (25 and 26) connecting the last lesson with this should be carefully studied. Also read Heb. 12: 14-17.

It is to be observed that the Bible tells the whole truth. This is the story of two human characters as they appear in the light of truth.

I. It may teach us that sin is mixed with our holiest aspirations. Esau's character is revealed in chap. 25: 29-34. Rebekah had discerned Esau's "profanity", as the New Testament describes him, which does not mean that he was addicted to the use of what we call "profane" speech, but that he was wholly of the earth; he had no place in his life reserved for God. Therefore, Rebekah coveted the blessing for Jacob, whom she had discerned was not without some thought of God, in spite of his many defects. Rebekah was the instigator of Jacob's deception. Thus when we would do good, evil is present with us (Rom. 7), so that we may all be tempted to do evil that good may come. There is not one of us who has not made Rebekah's mistake in some degree.

What endless illustrations and applications of this principle are possible!

II. It may also be learned that God's Purposes Are Often Obscured by Carnal Desires. Isaac, with all his excellent qualities, allowed his appetite for venison to direct his prophetic gift, and hence would have bestowed a prophetic blessing upon one not entitled to it. Thus the carnal mind in many ways may misinterpret the promise of Scripture, and the influence of even legitimate desires of the flesh may altogether cloud our spiritual judgment.

III. We May Learn Frankly to Condemn Evil Though it be Found in Good Men. Jacob was blessed in spite of his deception, and not because of it. God would have found some other way of blessing him had he been true. As the Bible never condones evil, so must not we condone it.

IV. Jacob is An Example of What Divine Grace Can Do for a Great Sinner. He was a selfish, scheming man, intent upon serving his own interests, yet grace made a prince of him at last. If God could bless Jacob, there is hope for the worst of us.

V. Jacob's One Redeeming Feature Was That He Recognized God, and found a place for Him in his heart and life. He loved the Lord his God, although in the beginning he gave little evidence of loving his neighbour. Had Jacob loved his neighbour as himself, he would have loved deeply. But because he gave place to the first commandment, he was ultimately led to keep the second.

VI. Again We May Learn That Many Excellent Human Qualities May Be Displayed by those who are utterly godless as Esau was. There is evidence that Esau was a thoughtful and dutiful son, and he was by no means an ungenerous or unworthy brother. Here, too, is an important lesson. God is the Chief Creditor; and the practice of the ordinary human virtues, of mere morality—important as that is, can never be regarded as a substitute for true religion, that is, for the yielding of the heart and life to God.

VII. The Contrast Between Jacob and Esau is Seen in Their Subsequent History. Esau was always godless, whereas Jacob recognized and acknowledged God. Esau never saw the opened heaven; but Jacob learned that grace had established communication between earth and heaven. Read in this connection the closing verses of the first chapter of John. Jacob listened to God, received the promise, and, like Abraham, believed. His bargain at Bethel is sometimes described as selfish; but it is surely better to give back to God one tenth than nothing at all. Moreover, Jacob recognized the truth of the New Testament, that every good gift and every perfect gift is from above.

Esau, on the other hand, lived for time and sense only. He never built an altar, and never called upon God. For one morsel of meat he sold his birthright, and afterward found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

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 CANADIAN BAPTIST AND VAN LOON'S "STORY OF THE BIBLE."

In *The Canadian Baptist* of November 22nd, there appeared an Editorial entitled, "On Writing Bibles." The Editor refers to various "Bibles" and "Lives of Christ" appearing of late from the pens of all sorts of authors, and especially mentions Papini's *Life of Christ*, and Professor Goodspeed's *New Testament in Modern Speech*, and continues:

"Now Van Loon appears in the lists with a big book issued at a high price, on the "Story of the Bible." It is most attractively printed and bound—in fact, a very catchy work. With advance copies issued, Van Loon says it is "the story as he would like to tell it to his children," and that he is not attempting to write any commentary on the Bible. One pities the children if this is to be their spiritual food. Any child fed on Van Loon's Bible will have a very peculiar knowledge of God's Word. The author has an exceedingly fertile imagination, and so there are many things in the story that one cannot discover in the sacred word, and there are some vital omissions. Van Loon, of course, would explain that limitations of space prevent any enlargement of the story. That may be the reason, but whatever the cause, some of these omissions utterly change the meaning of the original and destroy essential truths of Christian faith. These make the book utterly unreliable and filled with error.

"Attractive the book is in makeup and style of authorship, but one lays it down with a feeling of intense sorrow that so much good print and money was used in such a poor way. God's Bible is vastly superior to Van Loon's. Man's attempt to improve the work of God has been an utter failure. His "Story of the Bible" will give a false view of sacred things—its very attractiveness adds to its danger—but the story told in the old, old book of our fathers is divine, and so it will give a correct conception of the essentials of life.

"If one wants a story of the Bible, for youth or adult, the only complete and perfect one is the old Bible itself. Van Loon's is a tragic failure."

We gratefully acknowledge this editorial response of *The Canadian Baptist* to our Editorial of November 15th. We are gratified to know that our interpretation of *The Canadian Baptist's* error in printing a review of Van Loon's "Story of the Bible," which practically amounted to a commendation of the book, was correct, and that its insertion was due to an inadvertence. We have no doubt the Editor will be careful in future not to allow his book reviewer to misrepresent *The Canadian Baptist's* position.

A REGRETTABLE INCIDENT.

The following letters explain themselves. We regret the necessity of writing them, and still more of publishing them. In the last paragraph but one of the first letter we announced our intention of publishing the letter last week; but afterwards felt that, in fairness to the Chancellor, we should await his reply. On receipt of his letter we felt there was nothing for us to do but to make our protest. We trust this incident was no more than a blunder; but even on that score, it is surely necessary that some protest be made.

THE EDITOR'S LETTER TO THE CHANCELLOR.

20th November, 1923.

Dear Dr. Whidden:

I regret exceedingly that I find it impossible to be present to-day on the occasion of your installation as Chancellor of McMaster University. While I voted against your appointment as Chancellor on account of the record of Brandon College under your Presidency, it is my hope, as I intimated at the Convention in Montreal, that McMaster University will so shape its course as to make it possible for those who believe in "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" to give it their cordial support. I am writing now, however, in order that you may be under no misapprehension as to the reason for my absence to-day.

It was impossible for me to be present at the meeting of the Senate when it was decided to grant the honorary degrees which are to be conferred to-day. I am aware that the University does not necessarily approve of positions taken by the recipients of its degrees; but I assume that honorary degrees are intended to serve as a recognition of service rendered.

In the list of those whom McMaster seeks to honour to-day, I have observed the name of Dr. W. H. P. Faunce, President of Brown University. It must be known to yourself and to the Senate of the University that, although called a Baptist, the principles of Dr. Faunce's teaching would absolutely destroy the foundations upon which McMaster University professes to stand. I venture to quote as a matter of record the following from Dr. Faunce's pamphlet—"What are the Fundamentals?"

"But the literalists, curiously enough, reject the theory which so easily lends itself to spiritual interpretation and insist that the Creator did not grow things but made them by fiat. As if creation in a moment were more divine than creation by the increments of a million years! Then to protect Christianity from modern thought and thinkers they have announced a new set of "fundamentals," among which they enumerate the Virgin birth, the Deity of Christ and a substitutionary atonement, the inerrancy of the scriptures in science and history as well as in religion, and the imminent physical return of the Lord on the literal clouds in the sky.

"The question as to the nature of Christ and his death is not directly related to the teaching of science, and need not be discussed here. But science and religion do come into touch the moment men affirm that the church must believe in a scientifically inerrant Bible, in the Virgin birth, and in an imminent physical catastrophe which shall wind up all human history. To the first Apostles of the Christian faith such things were never the fundamentals of Christianity. The writers of the New Testament never ascribe inerrancy to the Old Testament, but on the contrary often pronounce its teaching defective and preparatory to something better. The Virgin birth, which is related with noble reticence and reverence in two New Testament passages and which has for cen-

turies been accepted by the great majority of the church, is not mentioned in any of the New Testament epistles or in any of the apostolic sermons recorded in the Book of Acts. It apparently formed no part of the preaching of the twelve apostles or the seventy disciples. If that miracle was not considered fundamental in the days of the apostles, can it be made so to-day? But the Fundamentalists affirm that belief in a miraculously inerrant Bible, in a physiological miracle in Bethlehem, and a physical miracle soon to occur in the sky, that these beliefs are the fundamental things in Christianity—which is not only a transformation of the early faith, but a palpable inversion of moral values.”

I regret exceedingly that McMaster University should in any way recognize as a servant of the Baptist Denomination the author of such words as these. If it be contended that the degree is conferred in recognition of Dr. Faunce's contribution to the cause of education, I have only to say that I was under the impression that McMaster represented a type of education which finds its truest and most comprehensive summary in the University Motto—"In Christ all things consist." If McMaster University proposes to have any kind of fellowship with the philosophy of Dr. Faunce, the last reason for any believer in Christ giving it any support will have vanished.

I frankly say that in my humble judgment the presence of Dr. Faunce on the McMaster platform is a dishonour to the University and an insult to the Denomination. I am prepared, however, to recognize that possibly members of the Senate may have voted for a recommendation of a committee without realizing all that was involved; but I cannot help asking myself what sinister influence seems ever to be seeking to commit the University to a course which one cannot approve without being guilty of treason to Christ and His Gospel.

I write this letter, Mr. Chancellor, in order that I may dissociate myself as a member of the Senate and Board of Governors from the Senate's action in conferring an honorary degree upon one whose teachings I regard as being absolutely anti-Christian. It is still, in my judgment, pertinent to enquire "What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?"

I should be glad if you will present this letter to the Senate and Board at its next meeting. And may I add that I intend to put this letter in our church paper, which will go to press to-morrow evening.

I should, of course, be very glad if you could give me any reason for letting this strange action of the Senate pass without public notice.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) Thomas T. Shields.

Chancellor H. P. Whidden, M.A., D.D.,
McMaster University,
Toronto.

THE CHANCELLOR'S REPLY.

November 24th, 1923.

Rev. T. T. Shields, D.D.,
96 Winchester Street, Toronto.

Dear Dr. Shields:

Your letter of recent date reached me late Tuesday afternoon, in the midst of a day filled with a great many duties and distractions. The contents of the letter were read as soon as numerous and frequent interruptions made possible.

My impression is that the Honorary Degree Committee made its recommendation to the Senate re President Faunce in good faith, thinking of him

as head of the oldest Baptist University, an institution with a wonderful record. Probably the members of the Senate had never read a theological statement by Dr. Faunce. I myself had not seen any of his pamphlets.

Your request to have your letter read to the Senate and Board is noted, and I shall be pleased to carry out this wish at no distant date. It would seem to be right that all such matters should be discussed first with the body held to be responsible for action taken. My understanding of Baptist and of British procedure leads me to hold to this view. I trust you will find it convenient to meet with the Senate when your letter is read.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Howard P. Whidden.

THE EDITOR'S SECOND LETTER.

28th November, 1923.

Dear Dr. Whidden:

I am in receipt of your letter of the 24th inst. I can well understand that my letter reached you at a very busy time, and I did not expect an earlier reply.

I must, however, confess my surprise that the members of the Senate were unaware of Dr. Faunce's theological position. You say that President Faunce was honoured "as the head of the oldest Baptist University, an institution with a wonderful record." Whatever the record of Brown University may be, its President is certainly in no true sense a Baptist. He has taken a leading position as a Liberal theologian avowedly opposed to the great doctrines of Scripture which are written into the Trust Deed of McMaster University.

I think it is greatly to be regretted that Dr. Faunce was selected for recognition on any account; and is especially deplorable that McMaster University should have honoured him as the head of a "Baptist" University. If His Majesty the King had conferred the honour of Knighthood upon one who was an avowed enemy of the British Constitution, and who was doing his utmost to destroy the British Empire—and that in time of war—it would not have been a greater affront to his loyal subjects than for McMaster University to have selected for academic distinction one of the most conspicuous of the protagonists of Modernism to be found in America.

When requesting that my letter be read to the Senate and Board, I did so only for the purpose of lodging my protest with the body responsible for this unfortunate blunder.

I cannot, however, agree with that part of your letter which says: "It would seem to be right that all such matters should be discussed first with the body held to be responsible for action taken. My understanding of Baptist and of British procedure leads me to hold to this view." It is impossible for the Senate to rescind its action; the damage has already been done, and it has been done publicly; and I feel that I should be recreant to my trust as a minister of the gospel if I did not make my protest equally public.

I hope it may be possible for me to attend the meeting of the Senate when my letter is discussed. I shall certainly endeavour to do so.

In the meantime, however, I think it is necessary that my protest should be published. I shall, therefore, publish my first letter to you, with your reply, and this letter, in "The Gospel Witness" of this week. I do this because I can see no other way. It must be understood that such actions cannot be allowed to pass without protest.

I am,

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Thomas T. Shields.

Rev. Howard P. Whidden, M.A., D.D.,
Chancellor, McMaster University,
Toronto, Canada.

CHURCH NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Women's Mission Circle. The women of the church and congregation are cordially invited to attend the regular monthly meeting of the Women's Home and Foreign Mission Circle, to be held in the church parlour Thursday, Dec. 6th. at 3 p.m. This will be a meeting of great interest, as we are to have with us Mrs. W. L. Kingdon, President of the Boon Avenue Mission Circle, who will speak on "The Need of the Present Hour in Home Mission Work." Come and bring your friends with you. Collectors will please come prepared to make a full report.

On Monday afternoon, December 3rd, the Sherbourne Branch of the W.C.T.U. will hold its regular monthly meeting at 3 p.m. in the Ladies' Parlour of the Sherbourne St. Methodist Church. Will the members please return mite boxes?

Last Sunday. The attendance in the Bible School was most gratifying. The Young People's Department broke their record, so did the Adult Department. Compared with the great things of which we have heard, and also with the great things for which we hope, we are still in the day of small things. But the Pastor had forty-eight men in his class before ten in the morning. There were thirty-five in the Intercession Class. The Young Men's Class seems likely to wake everybody up to keep up with them. All the other departments are full of enthusiasm. And to have five hundred young people in the morning service led by a band of about one hundred and twenty officers and teachers, ready to afford spiritual help to seeking souls, is in itself a great achievement.

The Pastor has felt led each Sunday but one to preach from a text in the lesson which all have been studying. The sermon in this issue was preached last Sunday morning. It is a great advantage to the preacher to have a crowd of people with open Bibles before him, especially when they have spent an hour going over his context. Sunday morning we have hope that at least six were converted. In the evening ten came forward, most of whom came into the light. Seven were baptized, making eighty-seven baptisms in the last seven Sundays.

Tuesday evening the Lecture Hall was filled for the Prayer Meeting and Bible Lecture. People were there from great distances. Is Jarvis Street a "down-town" church? What does it matter? Like the big down-town stores, we shall do a great business if our stock is the right quality. At the close of Tuesday's meeting we had one very happy conversion. Thus at every service God manifests His presence and power.

The Bible Lecture Tuesday evening, Dec. 4th, on the Lesson for Dec. 9th, will be given by Mr. George Greenway. The regular Prayer Meeting will be conducted as usual.

The Monthly Communion and Reception Service, on account of the Pastor's absence, will be postponed to Sunday evening, Dec. 9th. A large number of candidates are awaiting baptism for Dec. 9th, so that we may hope to welcome from fifty to sixty new members on that occasion. Last Reception Service the hand of fellowship was given to fifty-eight, and the month before forty-one.

Monday afternoon last a young lady, recently baptized, called to see the Pastor, and said she had been so marvellously blessed of the Lord that she felt she must present a thank-offering to the Lord, and she handed him \$100.00 for the church funds. Only two or three weeks ago the lady who gave \$150.00 a year ago, just before being baptized, on the anniversary of her baptism sent a note to the Pastor, enclosing \$100.00 for The Witness Fund. Thus the Lord first opens the hearts, and then the hands of His people. But money is always needed to meet our growing requirements. May the Lord open many other hearts and hands!

The Pastor in New York. The Pastor will be in New York-attending the great meetings of the Baptist Bible Union Dec. 2nd to 7th. He will return on the 8th, to preach Dec. 9th.

During the Pastor's absence, Sunday, Dec. 2nd, Rev. W. J. H. Brown of Annette St. Church will preach morning and evening. Bro. Brown has done a great work in the west end these last fourteen or fifteen years. He is a faithful and able preacher of the Gospel. We hope for great blessing through his ministry in Jarvis St. Let us expect many conversions at both services. The Pastor's class Sunday morning will be conducted by the President, Mr. Geo. Booth. Mr. Booth knows the Bible well and will prove an attractive and instructive teacher.