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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

WHY BAPTISTS SHOULD PROSELYTISE ROMAN CATHOLICS AND OTHERS.

A Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Sunday evening, Dec. 16th, 1923.
(Stenographically reported).

"Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren."—Genesis 45: 1.

It has been announced that my subject this evening would be, "Why Baptists Should Proselytise Roman Catholics and Others." Obviously, it is necessary for us to begin with some definitions. We have fallen upon days when it is necessary to ask what we mean by a Baptist. I frankly say that there are many people called Baptists with whom I, at least, have absolutely no fellowship; they are merely Unitarians masquerading under the name of Baptists. I am not particular about names. I learned when I was a boy that it does not make very much difference what people call you: it is what you really are that counts. That is a very useful lesson for any minister to learn; because if he is about his Master's business, he will be likely to be called many names; but, providing he is about his Master's business, it will not disturb his repose in the least. Now, what do we mean by "Baptist"? I can tell you what it used to mean. A Baptist was one who believed the Bible to be the Word of God. And a man who does not believe the Bible to be the Word of God, whoever he is, has no right to be called a Baptist. He may be president of a university, a professor, or the pastor of a church; but if he does not believe this Bible to be the inspired and infallible Word of God, he has denied the source from which all Baptist testimony springs. The most inconsistent man in the world, in my judgment, is a man who calls himself a Baptist and denies the inspiration and authority of Scripture; because there is no reason left for the existence of a Baptist church if the Bible be not true. We practise this ordinance which you witnessed to-night because we find it in the Book; but, if the Book has no authority, why practise it? Why divide the number of those who are called Christians if this Book has no authority? A Baptist worthy of the name believes implicitly in the divine inspiration and authority of this Holy Book. Then, in the next place, a Baptist believes in the essential Deity of Jesus Christ. He resents the comparison of Jesus with mere men. Baptists have

always believed, because they believed the Book to be true, that Jesus was begotten of the Holy Ghost; that He was born of a virgin; that He was born as no other man was ever born of woman; and that He was and is Incarnate God—from everlasting to everlasting, God. The man who doubts that fact has no place in a Baptist church; he ought to get out; and hasn't sense enough to get out, we ought to put him out. That is what of us are engaged in, at the present time—trying to make it impossible for Unitarians to be called Baptists.

Baptists, too, have always believed, because they believed the Book, men are sinners, that they have fallen down and not up. You students, geologists of that evolutionary notion. If you have any grey matter in your head; if that thing that is on your shoulders is really a thinking machine, you will soon discover that you will have to abandon that notion or the Book. You cannot be an evolutionist without denying the Book. If you believe the Book, you will have to believe that man was created in God's image and likeness, that he sinned, and lost his first estate; and that Jesus Christ came to redeem him, to bring him back to the likeness of God. Thus men who expect to make sinners into saints by any process of religious education can rightly be called Baptists. Baptists have always believed the Scripture "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Baptists have always believed that "Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures"; that His death upon the Cross was not merely an exemplary death, was not the consummation of a sublime example, but that He suffered for our sins, "the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to Himself; He died instead of us—our substitute. Baptists have always believed in salvation through the blood. They have believed that Jesus Christ is the priest we have; and they have gloried in this principle—the right of individual believer to have direct access to God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

I understand there are some Baptists who do not believe in making converts of Roman Catholics. Let me warn you, however, never to judge a man by what the newspapers say of him; perhaps he did not say what is reported to have said. Now, I am not going to say anything unkind of newspaper reporters. Reporters are not always to blame; sometimes it is the man in the editorial chair. But I do say this: that it is a pity that newspaper editors cannot appreciate the importance of the subject of religion. They want to get an interview from a minister of the gospel, they send a man who understands something of the subject of enquiry. I usually send a man to report a baseball match who understands baseball. It would be useless to send me; nobody would understand who had won or lost. My friend, Dr. Laws, the Editor of the Watchman-Examiner in New York, told me this story, and I pass it on. I told it to some newsmen only last week. He said:

A young fellow called upon a certain Bishop in New York on a Friday afternoon, and he introduced himself as the representative of a certain newspaper in that city. He had been sent to get a report upon what the Bishop was to say the next day. "Well, now," the Bishop said, "I am quite sure what I am going to say yet. I shall speak extemporaneously, haven't it all in manuscript form; and I am afraid I cannot oblige you." "But," said the young man, "I must have something." To which the Bishop replied, "I haven't anything to give you." Then the young man said, "Give me your text, and I will write it." "No, thank you," said the Bishop, "that would be rather too great a risk." But the young fellow was insistent that at last the Bishop said, "Well, you seem to be rather a nice chap; and you are evidently determined to attend to business. I will let you have it. Will you be seated?" He took some paper, and as he took the pen in the ink, he said, "How long have you been a reporter?" "Only a few weeks only. I am rather new." "Then you are ready to learn something from the Bishop. Now, supposing you were sent to report a sermon, how would you begin?" "Oh," said the young man, "they would name me an important assignment like that!"

That, too often, is the newspaper estimate of the value of religion. I beg of you not to measure any minister by what you read of him in newspapers, either pro or con. He may not be half so good as they say he is; he may not be half so bad. You had better get to know the man; I had rather an amusing experience last week. I went into a bank

own a two-dollar bill, and I said to the teller, "Could you give me an American dollar?" He addressed me by name quite cordially, and said, "The next ticket down, Mr. Shields." I said, "How did you know me?" "Oh," he said—and at the moment his face rather clouded, in recollection of the past—he said, "I was very much prejudiced against you until I went to Jarvis Street one Sunday night, when it all vanished." I was about to go down to the next ticket when he said, "Hold on! I will get it for you."

I say, there are some Baptists who are sometimes represented as having a little conviction that they do not want to make converts. I frankly confess I do, not only of Roman Catholics—now let us be snappy and pleasant—but of Methodists, and you Presbyterians;—I would like to make Baptists of every one of you! You see, if I thought the Methodists were right, I would join the Methodists; if I thought the Presbyterians were right, I would join the Presbyterians; and if I thought the Episcopal Church were the only church, I would seek "holy orders" there. But it is because I am sure they are all wrong, and because I believe the Word of God teaches the very thing you saw to-night, as well as the body of principles for which Baptists have historically stood, that I would like to make Baptists of you all. I rejoice that many Roman Catholics have come in here and have been converted. As we believe Roman Catholics need to be converted—and a lot of Baptists,

now, why should this old-fashioned sort of Baptist, that I have described, seek to win converts to the faith, as he understands it, from the Roman Catholic Church? Wherein does Roman Catholicism differ from Evangelical Christianity?

I.

The Roman Catholic Church believes in God. The Roman Catholic Church all has a God; that is something to its credit. I read in one of the papers yesterday a little article which I cut out. A certain Professor of Psychology speaking of Thanksgiving Day—Professor Leuba, of Bryn Mawr College in the United States—and this is what he says:

"Of the sense of a real, immediate dependence upon a personal divinity, there remain in Christian states but a few pitiable remnants. In the United States the most conspicuous one is the yearly proclamation of a Day of Thanksgiving, by which the members of the nation are called upon to return thanks to God for the good that has fallen to their lot and that of the country during the year. From an expression of genuine belief this custom has become a tradition, objectionable because it diverts the attention of man from those factors of prosperity which he can control to those he cannot. It were better instead that we should be taught to realize our dependence upon each other and the gratitude we owe to the millions who strive, often in material and moral distress, in order to build our material and spiritual prosperity."

That professor would not be allowed to teach in a Roman Catholic college and he ought not to be allowed to teach in any college that is called Christian. The Roman Catholic Church still has a God. There are some churches which have no God left.

The Roman Catholic Church does not deny the divine inspiration of the Scriptures. (I do not say for the moment what use they make of the Scriptures.) But the Roman Catholic Church, as such, never takes the position Modernists take with respect to the Bible.

The Roman Catholic Church does not deny the virgin birth of Christ; indeed, it speaks of Mary as "the mother of God."

The Roman Catholic Church does not deny the doctrine of the essential divinity of Christ. There are no Unitarians in the Roman Catholic Church; it believes in God; it believes the Scriptures are the Word of God; it believes that Christ was and is the Incarnate God.

The Roman Catholic Church never denies the fact of sin—the scriptural teaching that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." The Roman Catholic Church does not minimize sin; it teaches its people that sin

is a reality, and that punishment is sure. The Roman Catholic Church does not deny the scriptural doctrine of judgment, that there is a place where "their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched."

Once again: the Roman Catholic Church does not deny that "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." The Roman Catholic Church in its theology gives a large place to the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Well," you say, "that is fine." Yes, it is fine as far as it goes. I will go farther and say, with respect to these doctrines which I have enumerated, that the Roman Catholic Church is perfectly orthodox according to the scriptural standard: it believes the Bible to be the Word of God; it believes in the Deity of Christ; it believes in the fact of sin; it believes we have redemption through the blood of Christ. And, if that be so, much is to be said in favour of the Roman Catholic Church.

Now, you Protestants, what did you expect of me? You expected me to begin with a denunciation of Roman Catholicism. Let us be fair. Let us try to get the other man's point of view. Let us discover what he believes as well as what he does not believe. I frankly say, that if I had to choose between being a Modernist—denying the inspiration of Scripture, denying the Deity of Christ, denying the blood atonement, denying all religious authority, and being a law unto myself—and a Roman Catholic, I would rather be a Roman Catholic any day. I can understand how amid—I venture to anticipate what I shall say in a moment—I can understand how amid all the darkness and superstition of Rome, men may somehow or another find their way to Christ and be saved; but this damnable philosophy that has taken possession of our schools, that robs us of the Bible as God's Word, of Jesus as the Incarnate God, of the Cross as the means of atonement—leaves us without any religion at all; it plunges us into the darkness; it leads us straight on the way to agnosticism, and ultimately to infidelity. I wish I could arouse the people to see that in many pulpits to-day the very doctrines of hell are being promulgated; that the crown is taken from the brow of Christ; and every fundamental of the Christian faith is being denied. If that be true, why not to make converts from Rome?

II.

How are the benefits of Christ's redemptive work to be mediated to the sinner? The Church says, "The Bible is the Word of God; Jesus is the Son of God; the blood is the way of salvation." But how is the poor sinner to come to Christ? And immediately the Church stands between the sinner and the Saviour and says, "You cannot get any of it except through the Church." It constitutes itself a middleman, and shuts off all human communication with God except through the appointed priests of the Church. Let me explain. The Church says, "The Bible is the Word of God; but you cannot understand it; you must come to us to know what it means." It denies the right of private interpretations. Hence, it teaches that it is dangerous to put the Bible in the hands of the common people, because they cannot understand it. The Church must interpret the Scripture. Jesus is the Son of God; but you cannot even get to Him but through Mary. She multiplies mediators and gives obstacles between the seeking soul and the Saviour. The Church, I say, preaches the redemptive power of the blood; but how are you to get at the blood? Through the sacrifice of the Mass in the hands of the priest: the Church stands between the poor bankrupt sinner and the Saviour who redeems sinners, and says, "You cannot have salvation except through the Church." The Church preaches the duty of confession of sin—not confession to God primarily, but confession to a man who is supposed to be God's representative. The Church preaches the possibility of absolution, of the forgiveness of sin—not forgiveness granted by God outright, but forgiveness at the lips of a man. The Church preaches the doctrine of retribution; it has added to the scriptural doctrine of final awards—the doctrine of purgatory. And what has she done with it all? She has taken every single doctrine of the grace of God and made merchandise of it! She stands between the poor sinner and his Saviour and says, "It was all true back there—the record of sin and redemption—we have a monopoly of it, and you can have it only at our price." I do not mean of course that it is put thus, in so many words; but this is the effect of sacramentarianism.

Joseph left his father, went down into Egypt, and was numbered with the transgressors, having been sold for silver. He was a seer, a prophet; by the divine wisdom given him he made preparation for the years of dearth. He filled the storehouses until he left off numbering them; and when the years of dearth began to come, Joseph opened all the storehouses, and they came from all lands unto Joseph to buy bread. When they came down to Egypt there was one word of direction given to all, "Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do." And when at last the sons of Jacob came with their empty sacks, they passed by all Pharaoh's officers, all Joseph's subordinates, and they came into the presence of the governor himself. They heard his word; and from him they received the fatness of the land.

Now, I say, the reason why we should seek converts from Rome is simply this: We know that it is the privilege of every one to take this Holy Book, and on bended knee and under the illumination of the Holy Spirit to read and understand for himself. Blessed be God! we do not need the Church to tell us what it means. I can find you many an unlettered man and woman, who can scarcely do more than read the Book, who knows far more about the secrets of the Lord than many a bishop, than many a professor: "Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Why should we make converts from Rome? We should push past the priest, and the bishop, and the cardinal, and the pope; and we should get at the souls of men, and say, "Hear what God says for yourself."

But to return to my story. It is too long to tell you in detail, but it will come to your mind. At last, when "Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him, he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren." That is an illustration of the cardinal principle of Evangelical Christianity—the privilege of the individual soul to come into the presence of God Himself, and to hear the Word at His lips. My dear brethren, let us teach the humblest man and woman and boy and girl that it is possible to read and understand God's Holy Word; that our Joseph says, "Cause every man to go out from me. Let Me talk to that little girl about her soul's salvation. Let Me tell her that her sins, which are many, are all forgiven." I went to see a little girl last week who was only six years of age. Her father and mother are missionaries in Africa; and she had been left at home in the care of Christian friends. I asked her about the great fundamentals of the faith, and I found she was learned in the things of God. It was beautiful to hear that little child say, "Why, we are saved through the blood." She understands. She was not repeating what she had been taught like a parrot; but, through the Spirit of God, she had learned the secret of the Lord. And many a man and woman has learned that same thing from God's Holy Word. "And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt." And they were troubled at his presence.

And that is exactly what Jesus does: "I am Jesus who died for you. Come near to me, I pray thee." We may hear His Word for ourselves. My dear friends, we have not to get to Jesus through Mary. Do you see how the Roman Catholic Church has made merchandise of the doctrine of the Virgin Birth, of the Deity of Christ, of every single doctrine of the Word of God? It has laid its hand upon it, claimed a monopoly of it, and said, "You can have it if you pay our price." And instead of salvation being the free gift of God's abounding grace, it is made to be a salvation of works—works—works, all the while, in this life, and down into purgatory, and up out of it. We have not to wait for the word of absolution from human lips; we get it from the Lord Himself. Surely, dear friends, some of us know the joy of this. We have come to avail ourselves of the ever-efficacious blood of Christ. And the Church says, "You may have it through the Mass. You can receive salvation only at the hands of the appointed ministers of the Church." I declare to you, it is absolutely contrary to the teaching of Scripture. The blood once shed atoned for our sins. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper is not a sacrament at all; it is a memorial feast. Believing in the blood, knowing that I am saved, I simply take the bread and the wine and do this in remembrance of Him. It is not a sacrament: it is an ordinance. It does not confer grace: it is but an evidence of grace. And so of the ordinance of baptism. Baptism does not save you, by whomsoever it is administered; it is faith in the Lord

Jesus Christ and that alone that saves the soul; and baptism is God's way you to publish that fact after you are saved.

Thus, dear friends, I think in this simple fashion we have made out our case. What is the business of Evangelical Christians? It is to carry on the work of the Reformation. And what, after all, was the work of the Reformation? It was the *elimination of the ecclesiastical middleman*. The Roman Catholic Church in its dogmas is about as useful as that boy or girl who sits at the hotel dining-room door and takes your hat for ten cents, when you could hang it up as well yourself. I have learned to leave my hat in my room when I am staying in a hotel. But he or she is just as useful as the Church that arrogates to itself divine power, and dares to stand between the soul and God. I urge you, dear friends, to proclaim that great truth. I think if somebody were to whisper to you to-night, "I know you have it in mind to do something. I know where that is manufactured, and I know that it will come from the manufacturer through the hands of several agents before it comes to you; every one of whom will take some toll; and by the time it gets to you it will cost you fifty per cent. more than the manufacturer gets for it. I can tell you how I can short circuit the whole business; I can take the article around behind, and get you to the wholesaler, and get that article for you at the exact price the middleman pays for it." I think you would say, "Please take me to that gentleman." In commerce, in many cases, these middlemen do a perfectly legitimate business. I am talking to a lot of you to-night, and I am not disturbing your business. But in the matter of the soul's relationship to God, there is but one Mediator between God and man—and that is the Man, Christ Jesus. I feel like saying to anybody—I do not care whether it is a Roman Catholic priest with all his ecclesiastical pretensions, or whether it is a modern professor with his claims of scholarship—whoever he is, if he says that I cannot understand what I read, "Get out of my way. I am going to Christ myself. I deny any man's right to intercept me. I am going to push my way by faith to God. It is my right to deal with Him."

It is about time we were getting back to that old evangel, don't you think? Don't you know there are tens of thousands of people in this city, troubled with breaking hearts, who need this almighty Saviour? They need to be able to find Him in their own rooms, that they can talk to Him when they are. Shall we preach the gospel? You see, therefore, I belong to the old-fashioned school.

And I want to say to you who are not Christians that receiving salvation is just as simple as my story. There is the great governor, and the men there do not know him. They wonder who he is. "He seems to know much about us. He put us all round about his table, and he put us in order of birth, and dealt with us as though he had known us from the beginning. He has spoken to us as individuals. We wonder who he is?" When everybody has gone, and when he is alone with his brethren, a sternness vanishes from his countenance, and all the roughness from his face, and the love that he has cherished these many years, with a tender compassion no words can describe, and I think with tears of joy rolling down his cheeks, that love compelled him to break the silence at last, and he said, "I am Joseph your brother. I have longed for you for many years." What a revelation it is of a poor lost sinner when he hears that word, "Jesus! Saul of Tarsus was going along the Damascus road, breathing threatenings and slaughter. . . . and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven; and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice say to him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And never dreaming what he would receive, he said, "Who art thou, Lord?" And down the sky comes that thrilling answer, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." It spoke to the heart and conscience of the Apostle Paul directly; and that that Jesus was alive. And instantly he responded, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And that is conversion. All I can do is to tell you the story; but in conversion this takes place: The Governor says, "Cause every man to go out from under my name. Our Jesus stands alone when He makes Himself known to His brethren." He introduces Himself; God, the Holy Ghost, touches the dead soul, and again; the miracle is wrought; the new birth is accomplished; old things pass away, and all things become new. There is a new creation by the power of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

Shall we get out of our minds this idea that we can convert people? What a absurd thing it is for great churches all through this City, having preachers and organizations for the preaching of the gospel, and no prayer, no waiting upon God, no dependence upon the life-giving Spirit of God, as though men could save anybody! I tell you wherever there is real conversion this principle always operates: it is by the sovereign touch of God Himself that the soul is saved. Everybody must go out and our Joseph must talk to the soul for Himself.

Have you heard Him speak? Is there somebody here to-night who came in heavy-laden, burdened?—it may be some Roman Catholic friend? I would not offend you. I have said everything I can in favour of your Church. Its great mistake is, that it stands in the way of your access to God; and I want to ask you to put that aside, and come directly to Him, with all your sin, with all your burden, and our Joseph will forgive you. It is just as simple as that. Joseph forgave them instantly, the moment they came to him; so shall it be with you. In this place, many a man, many a woman, has been saved sitting in the pew without coming forward; they only came forward to confess it. There is no reason why you should not, sitting right where you are, just let your cry go up from your broken heart, "God be merciful to me a sinner"; and instantly you shall be justified; all your sins shall be forgiven. "Do I not need to see the priest?" No; you do not need to see anybody. Just tell it out to God, and He will save you. That is His way of doing it.

And then I want to say, not only to Roman Catholics, but to others: the time has come, dear friends, when we need to give less attention to names. I have said again and again, I do not care whether you call me a Baptist or not. I have told my brethren, "If you empty the word Baptist of all it originally meant, I will stand by the principle, and you can have the name." Now, there are some of you who are called Methodists, and you are standing by the same. The thing you are standing for is not Methodism at all; it is not the thing John Wesley stood for. I do not know what some of you are going to do in the days of Church Union, where you are going to find a home. You had better come back to God's Word, and let God speak to you. Do not listen to this preacher, or to any other preacher, if what he says is not supported by what God says in this Book. If you have not a Bible, we will give you one. I heard somebody say last night, "If anybody has not a Bible and cannot afford to get one, give them one and charge it to me." But if you have a Bible, read it. You can interpret it as well as anybody else. You can read the third chapter of John, and you can find out what it is to be saved as well as any evangelist on earth can tell you. And when you are saved, find out what the Bible teaches. Don't be baptized unless you find it in the Book; but if you find it in the Book, as you value your peace of mind and your fellowship with Jesus Christ, do not dare to disobey. "Yes, but my father was a Methodist." I do not care what your father was. "One is your Master, even Christ." "Why don't ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Get back to God's Word; open your Bible; let God speak to you. Let Him, first of all, give you the assurance of salvation from His Word; and let Him direct you in the way of His commandments. Then, what a blessing it is to have this Holy Book with us all the time—seven days of the week—to be able to open it in the privacy of our own room, and to read with the light of the Holy Spirit—just as I turn on this electric light! It is wonderful how the Holy Spirit will lead you into the treasures of this Holy Book; and you will become rich and strong and fruitful in the service of the Lord.

Now I call you back, every one of you, as I call myself back, to Jesus Christ. My dear friends, we have one Priest, and we need no other: "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." And now, through Him, you may come to God. I invite you to come to Him. I invite you who are not Christians, you who came into this house without a hope through faith in Jesus Christ. Somebody I know will say, "If it is as simple as that, I will go to Him this minute and accept salvation at His hand." And as for you who are Christians, will you not resolve that you will put the authority of God's Word before your church, and before all your family and business and social interests; and that you will receive Christ, to be your Lord and in all?

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EDITORIAL

"HIS STAR."

"His star." This is a new language. We have heard of a million and we speak of his house, his railroad, his mines, his millions; we have read kings, of their armies, their jewels, their crowns, and their kingdoms; what master of millions or monarch of men can speak of "his star"? What manner of child is this? Why "His star"? "All things were made by Him. He made the stars also." Why His? They speak of Him: "The heavens declare the glory of God." But which is "His star"? They are all His: "He calleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names." Why not "His stars"? Of all these sparks from the divine anvil, these fragments that remain from the cutting of the foundation stones of the gold-paved graveless city, of all these myriad gems scattered like dust of diamonds on a floor of the Eternal's workshops, where "the clouds are the dust of His feet," which is "His star"? Can anyone identify it?

The wise men said: "We have seen His star." Perhaps they can teach us. They were astrologers; it was their special work to "consider the heavens." Was it a new star, or was it one of the ever-shining worlds which had a special meaning and mission because they who considered the heavens had been given new sight? Nature needs not to go out of her way to lead to Jesus. "I saw stars in their courses fought against Sisera;" but "in their courses," while leaving their appointed track, they light the way to Bethlehem and the King. "There is one glory of the sun and another of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory." "The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind." "I will give grace and glory"—subjective grace for objective glory, the open eye, and yonder—"His star." When "the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land," all but the physically blind and deaf have complimentary tickets to Nature's opening concert; she has only a small audience: so many have eyes but see not, and ears but hear not. The same is true of spiritual harmonies of sound and sight—only the wise men see "His star."

In the firmament of truth there are many stars, but there is one which outshines all others, which always leads to where the Young Child is; we find it in the Bible. It is, in a peculiar sense, "His star"—"a light that shineth in a dark place." But thousands who are called educated people have never seen the Bible. They have seen the cover, and the pages, and the cold type; they know something of the mere grammar of the text; but they have never seen the Bible. Only the spiritually wise men see "His star." There are like the vivisectionists whose favourite subject is the Bible. They call themselves "scholars," and think they know all about the Book because they have it in pieces; while the fact is, they are as ignorant of the beauty and value

their subject as the blind man is of the brilliance of the stars; they have no spiritual qualification for their work; only the wise men see "His star."

"We have seen His star in the east and are come to worship Him"—that is the proof of the vision, a changed life. Many profess to know all about the stars; they know the course of every planet, the track of every little world of light—but they do not come to worship. They know the path of the star better than the long, weary road to Bethlehem. You know the people I mean: their admiration of Nature's beauty does not make their own human nature any more beautiful. Or they are lovers of the Bible. They read it? And believe it? Of course! How they love the truth—with their heads! How they measure everybody by it—but themselves! How its light is made to discover everybody's sin—except their own! They have seen the star, but they do not come to worship.

There are those who love a religion of stars. They believe in a religion of culture: they are star-gazers. What connection, say they, can there be between a star and a stable, between a Monarch and a manger? They can exalt themselves above the stars of God, but cannot humble themselves to worship. You have never seen a fly if you have not learned to trust; you have never "considered the heavens" if you have not been humbled by Divine visitations. You have never really seen the Cross if it has not broken your heart and made you worship the Crucified.

"They departed into their own country another way." And "His star" led them to the place where they saw the Child—that was the turning point, that was conversion. They saw "His star," they walked "another way." You have never really seen "His star" if the vision has not changed your life, if you are not living "another way." This is the message of Christmas.

"A MERRY CHRISTMAS" TO YOU.

Divested of all superstitious trappings, Christmas means that a large part of the world has long believed that the Son of God is come. That is a fact of inestimable importance. The true believer may turn Christmas to good account for the confirmation of faith by the reflection that centuries of Christian testimony and of Christian history unite in acclaiming the wisdom of faith in Christ.

Thus, with renewed confidence we may still tell the children the story of the Babe and His Virgin Mother with all its beautiful accompaniments of singing angels and wondering wise men, and worshipping shepherds. It is particularly the children's season because on the first Christmas morning God smiled upon the world through baby eyes.

So, also, ought it to be the season for kindly deeds and generous gifts. It was at Christmas God gave to men His greatest Gift. This is a cold world. Still little children—God bless them!—in their innocence they come to us like flowers from the heavenly gardens—still they are crowded among the cattle. But the Babe came to make room for other little children in the inn! What inn? As the indirect result of His coming they are received in cradles instead of in a manger. But the Babe came to do much more than open a way from the stable to the inn. That is the scope of that human effort called "social service." The Babe came to open a path from the stable to His own Heavenly Home, for all mothers and fathers, and for all babes of mothers born.

Yes, and it is fitting that Christmas should be observed as a time of family reunion. Some of us remember how we turned home again always at Christmas and so easily forgot that we were no longer children. Now, alas, for many the

centre of the home is gone. But the Babe came to make the divine family complete. We read of one who was long absent, but after many a bitter experience of want, turned his weary steps and wearier heart toward home. And though he had not written to say he was coming, his father saw him "while he was yet a great way off." And when he came home "they began to be merry." Yes, it was the Babe Who told the matchless story, for He came to make His Father's house ring with merriment at last.

Some mothers and fathers will be lonely this Christmas time—oh, so lonely! And children, too, will mourn for one who was Santa Claus every day of the year. But he will not come this year! It may be father, or mother, or sister, or brother, but the last train is in, and the Christmas dinner must be eaten with one member of the family absent. Nor will that loved one ever sit again at the family board until the Babe shall come again!

But He will come again. "They are dead which sought the young Child's life." Some day all murder and hatred, and envy and all forms of selfishness and whatsoever loveth and maketh a life will have passed away—and the Babe will be the centre—though not then a Babe, but an infinitely glorious Bridegroom—of a completed household in a sinless, painless, tearless, deathless, shadowless City, and with all the family having come home to stay we shall keep the Christmas feast through all eternity. Hallelujah!

THE WHOLE BIBLE S. S. LESSON COURSE.

LESSON XIII.

DECEMBER 30, 1923.

JOSEPH HATED AND REJECTED—Gen. 37. 39. 40.

Our Lord Jesus said concerning the Scriptures, "They are they which testify of me." In the study of the Bible, therefore, we must always find our way to Christ. As the New Jerusalem needs no candle, neither light of the sun to shine in it, because the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof; so the entire Bible is lighted up by the face of Christ. And among all the types and illustrations of the character and ministry of the Lord Jesus, perhaps there is not one which has greater illustrative value than the life story of Joseph.

1. We may regard Joseph, first, as a Type of Christ in His Substitutionary Work for Sinners. 1. Joseph was like Christ in that he loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and therefore was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows (Psa. 45: 7; Heb. 1: 8, 9). This, we believe, is the explanation of Ch. 37: 2. Joseph was not a malicious talebearer, but sought to save his brethren from their sins. 2. He was like Christ, also, in that he was greatly beloved of his father (vs. 3, 4). There is a point of contrast here, however; Christ was more than a favourite Son; He was born as no other was born, and is described as God's only begotten Son. 3. Like Christ, Joseph had a foreknowledge by means of his visions and dreams of his own divinely appointed pre-eminence (vs. 6-11). 4. On all these accounts, like Christ, he was envied and hated of his brethren. Jealousy is the cruellest of all human passions. The Jews had a legend that it was when Satan learned that God designed to make a man in His own image and bring him to the throne, that he made his first move in heaven. Thus jealousy would appear to be the mother of all iniquity. Joseph was sent of his father to seek the welfare of his brethren. Thus, "I sent not my Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved" (vs. 12-17). 6. While engaged on his errand of mercy, those whose good he sought conspired to kill him, and sold him

silver. Thus was it through the earthly ministry of our Lord Jesus (vs. 18-23). Jacob was bereaved of his well-beloved, and Joseph was separated from his father. In a deeper and more terrible sense, sin effected a separation between God the Father and His Well-Beloved; and whereas Jacob imagined his son to be dead, God the Father saw Him die. 8. Joseph enjoyed a temporary popularity and prosperity in the house of Potiphar. So also in the earthly ministry of Christ, there was a time when men cried, "Hosanna in the highest!" (Ch. 39: 1-4). 9. Joseph, like his great antitype, endured and resisted temptation (Ch. 39: 7-20). 10. Like Christ, Joseph was numbered with the transgressors. Jesus was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law. It was by entering into the prison that Joseph brought liberty to the captives. 11. Here, too, Joseph exercised the office of the prophet in the interests of his fellow-prisoners. We must not forget that while our Lord came to die "The just for the unjust to bring us to God." He was a Prophet as well as a Priest. He is the Truth, as well as the Way and the Life. We are to give heed, therefore, to His prophetic teaching.

III. The story of Joseph may be studied As Affording an Example to All Who Would Do the Will of God, Even as Our Lord Jesus, Who, in addition to making atonement for our sins, left an example, that we should follow in His steps. 1. Joseph in his relations to his brethren, like Christ and His followers in relation to the world about them, was hated. We cannot testify against evil without incurring the wrath of evil-doers. 2. In seeking the welfare of others, Joseph encountered only the opposition of those whose good he sought. So, too, Peter and John (Acts Chs. 3 and 4) were persecuted and prosecuted for "the good deed done to the impotent man." So will it always be. 3. It is inspiring to observe that God's kings cannot be put down. Even the prison by His providence is made but a half-way house to the palace. 4. A good man can be destroyed only by his own departure from righteousness. False accusations cannot permanently injure a true man (Psa. 37: 5, 6). 5. The most adverse conditions only multiplied Joseph's opportunities for service. Thus difficulties are made for true men to overcome. 6. Joseph's worst enemies were providentially compelled to minister to his highest good. So will it ever be with God's chosen: "For we know that all things work together to them that love God, to them that are the called, according to his purpose."

A GREAT TIME FOR THE GOSPEL WITNESS.

Subscriptions have been pouring in. So also have appreciative letters. We should like to reply to every one of them, but the Editor, with the pastorate of a great church on his hands, the production of this paper (it is not large, but the Editor has more original material to write than the Editor of any weekly paper in Toronto, most of whom give their entire time to their papers), and, besides all this, the Presidency of the Baptist Bible Union of North America, involving a voluminous correspondence, so that he cannot always do what he would like to do. He therefore ventures here to express his deep appreciation of the many kind letters received, and also of the splendid help voluntarily offered by the many friends who are, individually, sending in new subscriptions. God bless them every one.

"A CALL TO ARMS."

This is the title of a 46-page booklet issued by the Executive Committee of The Baptist Bible Union of North America. It sets forth in clear language the menace of Modernism among Baptists of America, and the plan of the

Bible Union to deal with this plague. We should like every Baptist in America to read this booklet. Send ten cents to Miss Edith Rehman, Secretary of the Baptist Bible Union, 130 Gerrard St. E., Toronto; and a copy will be mailed you at once. When you have read it, if you approve, help us to circulate it by sending us an order for your friends.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Last Sunday was another great day. A great congregation in the evening every seat in the great auditorium was occupied. There were conversions at both services. The evening sermon appears in this issue of *The Witness*.

Tuesday Evening. A great crowd at the prayer meeting and Bible lecture, which filled the Lecture Hall.

Wednesday Evening. More than a crowd, a swarm of lovely children and their parents, both at supper; later, in the Lecture Hall for the entertainment, a capacity crowd. Yet this was only the Primary, Beginners and Cradle Roll departments.

FROM THE PASTOR AND MRS. SHIELDS.

The Pastor and his wife desire, through the medium of this paper, with all their hearts to wish every member of Jarvis Street Church a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

CHRISTMAS MORNING SERVICE.

In response to many requests it has been decided to hold a Christmas morning service at eleven o'clock, when the Pastor will preach. This will take the place of the Tuesday evening meeting. The Bible Lecture will be given Thursday evening. Saturday evening prayer meeting as usual.

JARVIS STREET CHURCH DIRECTORY.

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The Church Calendar

Sunday. For the week beginning Dec. 23rd, 1923.
 9.45—Bible School, including an Intercessory Class. W. J. Hutchinson, Sup.
 11.00—Public Worship. Dr. T. T. Shields will preach.
 6.00—Prayer Meeting in Church Parlor.
 6.30—Communion Service.
 7.00—Public Worship. Dr. T. T. Shields will preach. Baptism as usual.
 Bible Lecture.
Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, 8—Prayer Meeting.
Tuesday—11.00—Christmas Service. The Pastor will preach.
Wednesday—7.15—Junior Gospel Lantern Service.
The Parliament St. Branch, 250 Parliament St. Sunday: Bible School,
 Evangelistic Service, 7.00—Rev. W. L. McKay.
Monday—8.00—Young People's Meeting.
Wednesday—8.00—Prayer Meeting.
Friday—7.15—Junior Meeting—Mr. F. Turney and Mr. W. J. Hutchin