

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.

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

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

Vol. 3.

TORONTO, MAY 22nd, 1924.

No. 2

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"MORE THAN CONQUERORS"

A Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church.

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."—Romans 8: 37.

Last Sunday morning I tried to show you that when faith is full grown, and is in exuberant health, it is not content to maintain a defensive attitude toward its foes; but, growing bold from experience, becomes defiant, and flings down the gauntlet to all the powers of darkness, in the abounding confidence that no possible combination of powers can separate the believing soul from the love of Christ.

But even as I spoke some of you may have felt that, while plausible enough in speech, the actual experiences of the Christian life sometimes appear to be incompatible with the theory of a sovereign love.

And that aspect of Christian experience is given due consideration in our text; for the assertion that "we are more than conquerors" is made in contrast with, and opposition to the complaint that the children of faith are "accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Hence you have here three distinct truths affirmed: The apparent defeat of the faithful; secondly, The real ascendancy of grace; and thirdly, The Sovereign Saviourhood of Christ.

I.

It is here assumed That Faith Is Often Apparently Defeated.

The enemies whose impotence we found affirmed in the text of last Sunday morning are not imaginary foes. "Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, sword" are very real. And that they often appear to be victorious is evident from this quotation from the Old Testament, which describes the experiences of the children of faith in ancient times: "For thy sake we are killed all the day long;

we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." It may be admitted, therefore, that it is not always apparent that believers are more favoured than other people; nor does it always appear that "godliness is profitable unto all things".

Even in those experiences which cannot be traced to human agencies, the believer shares the common ills of life. The record of Job shows that within the limits of divine permission Satan has a fearful power even over our bodies: "So went Satan forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown." And certainly many afflictions come to the children of God which must be attributed to other than human agencies. Indeed, it sometimes seems that, of this class of affliction some of the Lord's children get more than their share. The theory that there is no necessity for the children of faith to suffer from disease, or to be subject to physical infirmity of any sort, cannot be supported either by Scripture or Christian experience. "Tribulation" comes to the children of faith as to all others; and we cannot be "more than conquerors" by keeping ourselves out of the battle, for in our fight with "tribulation" we are all conscripts.

Nor are the ordinary circumstances of life kinder to Christian people than to others. On the contrary it is the wicked who seem to enjoy a singular immunity. It was a matter of ancient and inspired observation that "they are not in trouble as other men"; but "their eyes stand out with fatness; they have more than heart could wish". But the way of faith is often the way of straitness and distress. If we conquer, therefore, it will not be because we have a wide field in which to out-manoeuvre the enemy. For, like Samaria, we are often straitly shut up, so that none can go out nor come in. And thus the believer is not infrequently reduced to sore distress. In fact, in those things we often appear to be overwhelmed. Without controversy, the way of faith at times appears to be most unattractive.

Furthermore, in those aspects of life which are peculiarly and distinctly Christian, the believer often seems to be at a disadvantage. The "persecutions" to which Paul here refers appear to be altogether victorious. Our very relationship to Christ exposes us to special perils, so that it seems at times as though the powers of darkness were mightier than the forces of light. The spectacle of the children of Israel under the whips of Egyptian task-masters, the picture of David hiding in a cave from Saul, of the Hebrews cast into the furnace of fire, of Daniel thrown to the lions, of Joseph and Mary fleeing with the Young Child into Egypt, of Stephen dying beneath the stones of his persecutors, of James the brother of John slain by Herod's sword; and, above all, of the sinless and vicarious Victim on the Cross on Calvary—all these illustrate this saying, "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter". It is still true that the children of faith must often feel themselves to be the prey of the mighty.

Only because time forbids further particularization, let me group these four—"famine, nakedness, peril, sword"—and enquire whether they do not represent forces before which Christians seem to fall. We are certainly not exempt from these things; nor, when they are imme-

diately in prospect, do we face them without fear. We shall never understand the profound truth of our text by superficial observation. Christian flesh and blood are like any other flesh and blood; and however willing the spirit, Christian flesh is often weak, and from the pains of poverty, the humiliation of sin's disclosure, and from all that is represented by perils and sword, we are bound to shrink. Indeed, I have seen not a few of the children of faith, who, amid these conditions, to the superficial observer of outward signs, would seem to be utterly defeated.

Furthermore, our relationship to Christ gives us a special character in the eyes of unbelief—we are as sheep for the slaughter; and it is for His sake we are killed all the day long.

Is it not true that the principles by which the Christian is governed strip him of the defence upon which other men rely? A Christian man's principles may often put him at a disadvantage with his competitor in business. There are some things his principles will not permit him to do: and because he is governed by these principles, he must often find himself as a sheep among wolves, and, at the end of the day's business, feel that he has been "killed all the day long".

Moreover, in other than strictly business relationships, this principle holds. In the proportion in which a man is loyal to his convictions of truth, he will find himself the prey of the devourer. He must often hold his peace, when others speak for themselves. He must be content to be overlooked, when others command attention. He must feel the pinch of famine because he will not illegitimately command stones to become bread. He must appear as naked because he will not cloak himself in insincerity. He must expose himself to unusual perils because he is determined to take the high road which winds about the mountain-side, and skirts the edge of the abyss. He must face and feel the sword because he will not compromise his conscience. And in all these things he may appear to suffer a complete rout.

His very allegiance to the truth will lead him surely to the cross. He will pass through an experience of crucifixion. He may have to suffer a complete eclipse, and the powers of darkness may even dance upon his grave. In all this, however, he follows a path which bears the impress of the feet of Christ.

Let us have done with saying that following Christ is easy, and pleasant, and profitable. Following Christ means going to Calvary; it means crucifixion; it means to be "killed all the day long", to be "accounted as sheep for the slaughter", and, apparently, to suffer overwhelming defeat.

II.

On the other hand, and oh, for the Spirit's power, for His illuminating ministry in our hearts, that we may understand, in the midst of the apparent defeat of faith, that **There Is a Real Ascendancy of Grace.**

We are, of course, all ready to admit that some day in the future we shall be victorious through grace. Some day we shall shake off our chains, and be freed from the prison-house. Some day with airy feet we shall be able eagerly to run to do our Master's bidding. The

world will lose its charm, its fascinations, its bewitching, mesmeric, hold upon us, and we shall be immune to its allurements. Some day we shall have done with "the old man," and all his deeds will be put off, and we shall wear the unstained raiment which will then besit our heavenly station. Oh, yes, there is no doubt about it, that, in the glorious future, we shall be free from all those cramping, crucifying circumstances with which we are now surrounded! That is the prospect of faith; and it is comparatively easy to write our victories in the future.

But that is not what the text affirms. It positively asserts that "we are more than conquerors". It affirms a present overwhelmingly victorious life.

Someone may say: This surely must refer to another realm of experience. It must be that there is for the Christian another life of the Spirit, which is entirely divorced from this common life; and it is in that upper realm that the Christian wins the day. But what saith the text? Where is the battlefield? Who are the foes? We are here told that it is "in all these things"—the very things in which we seem to be "killed all the day long"—that it is in and through these experiences "we are more than conquerors". This is the truth which is here affirmed: that there is for the Christian a real and present victory in the things wherein we seem to be defeated.

Let us examine a little more carefully the phrase, "more than conquerors". What does it mean? Does it mean that we are assured an easy victory; that we shall be endowed with a surplus of energy, so that when the victory is accomplished there will still be power in reserve? Does it suggest the figure of battalions of power which have never been called into action? All this may in some sense be true—it is true, indeed, of divine reserves; for "the chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels".

But that is not the exact significance of the text. Here we are promised the career of conquerors, who will find themselves, when the battle is over, all the richer for the conflict. It means, simply, that the believer will be enriched with the spoils of conquest. When Moab, and Ammon, and others besides the Ammonites came against Jehoshaphat to battle, the king put the matter before the Lord, and the Lord answered through Jahaziel, "Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's. To-morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel. Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed, to-morrow go out against them; for the Lord will be with you. And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground; and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the Lord, worshipping the Lord. And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud voice on high. . . . And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were

come against Judah; and they were smitten. . . . And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and precious jewels, which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much". Thus they not only were victorious, they were "more than conquerors" in the sense that they were inestimably richer than they would have been had they never gone to the battle.

And that is what is meant by this text. Most of us are disposed to choose the paved roads, the path that lies through the quiet meadows, where the sheep browse, where the daisies grow. We are afraid of the stony road and the steep hill. It is, perhaps, natural to prefer to drift with the tide, rather than to stem the torrent; to carry a flag of truce, rather than to wield the sword. But the divine programme requires us to go to the battle; albeit the Christian never goes to a warfare at his own charges: the Lord goes before him, and fights his battles for him; while the Christian warrior finds himself made wealthy by the spoils of conflict. Grace, indeed, indemnifies the sinner; grace wrings the indemnity from the powers of darkness.

During the progress of the Great War, the Allies repeatedly declared they would continue the conflict until they were "more than conquerors". They insisted that the terms of peace should be "restitution, reparation, and guarantees". The Allied governments announced that they would compel the enemy to restore that which he had taken away, to repair that which he had destroyed, and to give security that his victims should never suffer at his hands again. No doubt these resolutions were made in good faith; but, as the world now knows, the victorious Allies found their victory in the end perhaps quite as costly as their enemies found defeat to be. Yet that is, indeed, the programme of divine grace—to compel restitution, reparation, and guarantees.

Observe how this programme is wrought out. Paul by inspiration in this same epistle says: "We glory in tribulation also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

I have before me just now the character of one whom I knew intimately for some years. I have often thought of him as the righteous man for whom scarcely anyone would die. He was just in all his dealings with his fellows, and strictly upright in all his walk and conversation; but he had been a stranger to trouble, to tribulations of any kind; with the result that he was equally a stranger to sympathy, and to all the tender qualities of a Christian spirit. On the other hand, I can think of many chosen in the furnace of affliction, who have passed through innumerable tribulations, and whose characters exemplified the truth: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory". Thus, "in all these things", from which, were we permitted to do so, most of us would run away, it is the privilege of faith to find its richest spoil, and to be more than conqueror.

"Distress" is another wheel upon which the divine Lapidary delights to polish His jewels. The world had never been blessed with the matchless story of "Pilgrim's Progress", had not Bunyan been driven to gaol. The immortal dreamer lived in Bedford gaol a larger and richer life than he could have lived had he possessed millions, and all the advantages of modern travel, and liberty to roam the world as he willed.

Thus, too, it is our privilege to be "more than conquerors" in "persecution". Who can read the story of the first Christian martyr without feeling that grace packed into the limited space of his comparatively brief career, the testimony of a whole lifetime? Somewhere I have read that in a public debate between a Christian minister and an infidel, the infidel exclaimed, "What did your God do for Stephen?" to which the minister replied: "He enabled him to look into the opened heavens and see Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and to pray, 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.'" Persecution drives us to prayer; and under its fierce assault many have discovered the secret source of power, and have become thereby "more than conquerors."

"Famine", too, becomes a heavenly messenger bringing us riches from the skies. The widow of Zarephath, had she been richer, had never experienced in her limited store the miracle of increase, nor would her home have been blessed as it was with the prophet's gracious presence. Famine is a messenger with gaunt features, and bony hands, and one whose company none of us would covet; and yet she has often opened the way to the fulness of Joseph's storehouses, and has effected the enrichment of those who would have shunned her presence.

Nor is "nakedness" to be excepted from the number of those grim warriors whom sovereign grace compels to bring riches to the hand of faith. The discovery of our own sin, the revelation of our moral and spiritual shame, becomes the reason for our being gloriously arrayed in "the best robe" from the Father's house.

Few of the servants of the Lord have had experience of greater "perils" than had Paul. But I remind you how, amid the peril of the storm, his true character shines out; and, though a prisoner in chains, he is more than conqueror in that perilous situation.

So David found the "sword" a way to glory. The sharp tongues of his enemies only led him to the discovery of the divine pavilion in which divine grace secretly kept him from the strife of tongues. And in all similar experiences the true believer may find spoil of equal value. Grace takes the very instruments of evil, and transforms them into ornaments of beauty. The Cross which was the symbol of the curse is now the symbol of everything divine; the crown of thorns has been transmuted into the crown of universal diadem.

III.

And all this flows from The Sovereign Saviourhood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us not think of grace as a mere abstraction, but rather let us conceive of it as an active, omnipotent principle—as, indeed, the Spirit of the Lord of grace in action.

Moreover, all this must be traced to its one and only source, the Lord of grace Himself. "We are more than conquerors", not through an institution, nor through a system of ethics, nor through a philosophy of life, but through the Person of Him Who hath loved us. He has, indeed, made our very sins, which aimed to dethrone Him, and to destroy us, the occasion for the display of His greatest glory. He takes our shackles and transmutes them into chains of gold wherewith to bind our hearts to Him for ever; for they who have been forgiven much will also love much. The Lord of grace took not on Him the nature of angels, but rather this very human nature, by which He was betrayed, and by whose instrumentality He was crucified, and then sovereignly made it the medium of eternal salvation. Thus "in all these things", of which we are most afraid, "we are more than conquerors through him that loved us".

"Mountains by the darkness hidden
Are as real as in the day;
Be, then, unbelief forbidden
In a dreary hour to say,
'God hath left us,
O why hath He gone away?"

"When He folds the cloud about Him,
Firm within it stands His throne;
Wherefore should His children doubt Him,—
Those to whom His love is known?
God is with us,
We are never left alone.

* * *

"Space and time, O Lord, that show Thee
Oft in power veiling good,
Are too vast for us to know Thee
As our trembling spirits would:
But in Jesus,
Father! Thou art understood."

THE BAPTIST BIBLE UNION AND THE NORTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION.

The Annual Meeting of the Baptist Bible Union of North America will be held in Milwaukee, May 26th and 27th and June 4th—two days before and one day after the meeting of the Northern Baptist Convention.

In addition to the discussion of business, on Monday the following addresses will be given: Afternoon, Dr. T. T. Martin, on "The Person, The Passion, and the Power of Christ". Evening, Dr. John Roach Straton, on "The Menace of Modernism on Foreign Mission Fields". Tuesday: Morning, Pastor William Felter, on "How I Discovered Modernism Among American Baptists, and Why I Founded the Russian Missionary Society"; Dr. J. W. Porter, on "The Bible the Only Basis of True Fellowship Among Baptists". Afternoon: Dr. W. B. Riley, "The Liberty of Faith vs. The License of Infidelity". Evening: Dr. T. T. Shields, on "Why Baptists Should Confess Their Faith"; Dr. J. F. Norris, on "Modernism in Our Baptist Schools."

We earnestly solicit the prayers of "Witness" readers that these sessions may be occasions of spiritual power.

THE PASTOR IN MILWAUKEE.

The Pastor will leave for Milwaukee Sunday afternoon, as it is necessary for him to be there by noon on Monday. The evening service will be taken by his brother, Rev. E. E. Shields. He will remain in Milwaukee the greater part of the week, but will return for the service on June 1st, returning to Milwaukee the next week for the conclusion of the Baptist Bible Union Convention on June 4th.

The Pastor will also speak at the World's Christian Fundamentals Conference to be held in the First Baptist Church, Minneapolis, June 8th to 16th. He will also speak at a Baptist Association at Frederick, Maryland, June 24th to 26th. The only Sunday service he will miss in Jarvis Street, however, will be that of the evening of May 25th.

EDITORIAL

DR. W. B. RILEY'S ARTICLE.

Following we print an article by Dr. W. B. Riley of Minneapolis, on matters of interest in connection with the Northern Baptist Convention. We publish it in these pages for two reasons: first, "The Witness" is read by a large number of ministers and others who belong to the Northern Baptist Convention; and secondly, because the principles discussed are of vital importance to the Baptist denomination everywhere. We bespeak for this article a careful and prayerful reading. There is no Convention that is entirely immune to the bacilli of Modernism, whether in their destructive inroads upon the fundamentals of the faith, or in the growth of a parasitic ecclesiasticism which effects the strangulation of the spiritual life of our churches.

FUNDAMENTAL CORRECTIONS FOR MILWAUKEE CONVENTION.

By W. B. Riley.

The Milwaukee Convention is immediately at hand. It is approached with mingled feelings. For the true progress marked in the past year, every Northern Baptist believer ought to be and is grateful. In the problems to be faced, these same men and women ought to be and are interested. It is not the purpose of this writer to review either the victories won or to call attention to the battles lost. The present situation in the Northern Baptist Convention offers many opportunities for praise and it equally affords special occasions for criticism. We shall engage in neither. Not that the first would not be a pleasant exercise, nor yet that the second might not produce profit, but that the past is fixed and represents the practically unalterable. Yesterday can never be the subject of vital interest on the part of progressive men. To-morrow beckons too loudly to them, and to it they rightfully turn.

There may be attendants at the Northern Baptist Convention who have no unselfish interest in the progress of our great and common cause. Such delegates can never contribute ought to the organization or bring any blessing to the denomination. We are inclined to think they are few in number, and we can afford to forget them as inconsequential.

This writer, at least, has nothing against the denomination. He came into it more than forty years ago, from conviction. From that day until this, the Baptist cause has been dear to his heart and Baptist people have constituted the majority of his best friends, and Baptist churches have shown him every conceivable courtesy, occupying as profitably as pleasantly every waking hour of his lifetime. He is not, therefore, of the politically disappointed, or the denominationally discredited, or the ecclesiastically neglected "sore-head" company, and yet, remembering the historic denomination with which he deliberately chose to associate himself, he is convinced that at four important points, the Milwaukee Convention should take such action as to prove that we are the worthy successors of our noble Baptist sires, and that the denominational line not only continues unbroken but also unbent! It is our judgment that that can be best done by four important actions.

First, by the adoption of a

BIBLICAL CONFESSON OF FAITH.

The action at Indianapolis deserves and demands clarification. In the first place, that action was taken without due consideration of its implications. The endorsement of the New Testament as our sufficient creed was either a thoughtless or a deliberate aspersion upon the inspiration of the Old Testament. We are inclined to think that with the majority it was the first, but with some it was the second. It is the only instance on record where Baptists have ever torn the Bible asunder and declared for only a portion of it. That this was deliberate on the part of the leaders seems clear, since after-events have shown that they do not truly respect or faithfully accept even the integrity, much less the inspiration, of that section of the Scriptures for which they argued the Convention into a vote.

But if the entire vote in favor of the New Testament was a decision to be taken at its face value, then the leaders who pled for it and provoked the decision should be called to strict account of conduct when they decry the very

doctrines that are unequivocally found and clearly defended in that sacred document.

The difficulty with the Indianapolis declaration is identical with that which has accompanied all intensely abbreviated creeds or confessions, namely, that of trying to make a safe corral with one, or at most two or three, wires. The sheep of such pastures are neither protected against natural enemies nor secure against straying. Wolves can enter and feed upon the flock at their pleasure, and wandering, even to destruction, has little or no hindrance.

In a lifetime this writer has never seen in print nor heard in tones any such an illogical jumble in mental processes as that which now characterizes ardent denominationalists who are also anti-declarationists. In the name of common sense, what do any people mean who shout "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" and at the same time refuse to say for what Diana stands? In the New Testament instance, two hours of such shouting wore out the throats and interests of those engaged, and certainly so illogical a procedure must speedily pall upon all men who are capable of intellectual processes! If we stand for something, let us say so! If we do not, let us quit business!

But a second subject of great present concern is the

DISFRANCHISEMENT OF SALARIED SERVANTS.

This is advocated from no lack of appreciation of either the stations or service of such officials. This writer believes that a man who serves the Baptist denomination in official station holds an honorable office, and he keenly appreciates the value of such salaried servants. Only men who give much time, yea even practically all of their time, to the greater questions of a movement or organization are its capable leaders. The writer is one of these individuals who deserves no office at the hands of the denomination, for the very simple reason that his time is and has been upon other altars, namely that of a local church, a local school, and an almost ceaseless ministry of Bible teaching and evangelism. What denominational offices he holds he poorly fills, and it would be little short of fatal to great denominational interests to commit them to such hands. The men who sit up until the wee hours of the night to think through denominational problems and work out denominational programmes and conscientiously promote progress are worthy of all praise. This writer at least holds that service in keen appreciation and even in instances where men have received honors and emoluments through the denominational machine that they never could have secured for themselves on the basis of personal merit, he believes they commonly earn their salaries, and like their brother-ministers, are still underpaid.

But to concede all of that is in no sense to suggest an injustice to their disfranchisement. They have deliberately accepted the office of servants of the denomination and as such should not essay to be its masters. They are paid the price of their own naming to perform this service for the denomination, and are not engaged to govern it. The church should be self-governing, not priest-ridden, and a denomination should be self-governed, not pope-ridden or Promotion Board-ruled. The idea of doing these men an injustice by disfranchisement is only conceivable upon the supposed basis that they prefer overlordship to sacrifice, and government to service.

In the organization of the First Baptist Church of Minneapolis, there are twenty-three of us who are salaried servants of the church. I do not know the custom of my collaborators in salaried office, but I know that which I have personally practised for the forty years of my ministerial life and which I have constantly imposed upon every member of my family, is never to cast a vote in the church, no matter how important the issue, and in fact, the more important the issue, the more inexcusable would I count such conduct, and I know that my salaried associates should, and am inclined to think they do, adopt the same course. Our influence as servants in this church is far greater by the adoption of such a policy. One's counsel attended by no political chicanery carries infinitely further than a single vote. If we had not seen in the Northern Convention for ten consecutive years, the solid machine vote and recognized the fact that its political power was counted upon to put over every pre-arranged plan, utterly irrespective of what the most ardent supporters of the denomination desire and even its largest contributors covet, we should not have given such serious consideration to this ethical necessity. Residents of the District of Columbia do not vote. Their proximity to the headquarters of American government is accepted as a sufficient reason for their silence while the states governed speak, and if to-day the Northern Baptist Convention, as such, were

taking the actions it is taking and carrying on the identical programme it is carrying on, independent of salaried officialdom, there would not be one-tenth the restiveness and resentment that reaches from sea to sea and from the Canadian to the Mason-Dixon Lines!

For several years this official "bloc" vote failed to put over the programme that produced the five-year college endowment, mission-destroying scheme, but by adopting the time of the Christian Fundamentals meeting in Philadelphia and taking advantage of the necessary absence of certain conservative leaders, they increased that "bloc" of salaried servants to the point where since that moment their vote has been and is to-day the balance of power in the Northern Baptist Convention, and to make it more solid these salaried servants are multiplied to such an extent that foreign missions and even true evangelism on the home field are being bled to death.

There could be no action taken at Milwaukee that would come so near silencing criticism and resulting in peaceful co-operation as would the kindly and ethical course of asking the salaried servants of the denomination to cease from dictating denominational policies and programmes. The procedure would be as parliamentary as ethical. Presidents and secretaries and other official servants of ordinary organizations are not expected to vote, save when a tie necessitates the same, for decision. We have no disposition whatever to take away from these men their rightful positions nor strip them of any proper prestige, nor deny them the exercise of personal opinion, but if they do not hold sufficiently dear the franchise of the Convention to do as the rest of us do, find their salaries outside of Convention funds, and pay their own way, hotel bills included, why in the name of all that is right should we continue a "bloc" vote, at Convention expense, that predetermines every policy and makes the annual and expensive attendance upon the part of the rest of us a meaningless and necessarily an exasperating experience? Under present conditions, the unofficial pastor and lay-delegate had as well withhold their opinions and burn their ballots. The salaried "bloc" settles every question. We could have a few millions annually for the cause of missions by disbanding the Convention and let the Promotion Board meet and transact our business! Why not do it? And then receive from them, as we are compelled now to do, plans, programmes, method of procedure, extent of expectation—all in tract form!

This matter is so all-important that one hesitates to detract from its attention by the introduction of a third subject, and yet let us frankly confess that this next point is so necessary that we cannot keep silent about it, namely, the

CORRECTION OF THE READING COURSE.

The Reading Course now imposed upon young ministers is a rationalist outrage. When one sits down and gives consideration to the books recommended by the Committee, if he has any respect for the Deity of his Christ, or the inspiration of the Scriptures, his wrath rises with the review of the names and the consideration of the content of the chapters required. Fifty years ago, for a candidate for the ministry to have been found reading such books as are now required for his ordination, would have been to put himself under such suspicion as would have prevented it. Young men who have no doubts as to the authority of the Bible and the Deity of Christ and who are actually engaged in the intellectual pursuits that are calculated to prepare them for the greatest profession to which God ever called a mortal, are given to understand that they cannot preach, without official recommendation and endorsement, until they have been rationalized, materialized and even infidelized! It is a procedure so amazing that some of us who are not regarded as ignoramuses or counted as intellectual or ecclesiastical failures, can no more imagine the denomination endorsing it than we could imagine the same denomination creating for itself a bishopric and electing the Devil to that office.

This writer reads these books and in his maturity of years suffers in nothing from their perusal, save by amazement at their infidelity and weariness of intellect in their lack of logic, but to impose such books upon immature minds is nothing short of a deliberate endeavor to produce "ministers of doubt" and "apostles of infidelity"! The Northern Baptist Convention should bury two-thirds of these books in the oblivion of a never-to-be-opened grave, and every self-respecting student in America who believes God and His Word should say to every examining committee that inquires "I will not put my personal approval upon such an unbiblical and unbaptistic procedure, much less my soul's interests at the mercy of such skeptical material", and in defiance of man-made methods,

make appeal to the great New Testament teaching that the local church and that alone has the right of ordination.

However, that it may be made clear once and forever that evangelical Baptists are not the enemies of education but its advocates instead, we should provide our own reading course for young ministers and in the strength of our maturity and on the basis of Biblical right, as well as in keeping with the spirit of Biblical teaching, we should defy to its face any overlordship that proposes such a propaganda of skepticism and say, "We will educate as highly and equip as perfectly, candidates for the ministry as any man you will ever be able to present, but ours shall be educated and equipped in a knowledge of God's Word and in a familiarity with those books that present truth vs. falsehood, and excite faith vs. infidelity, and tend to make true ministers rather than materialistic socialists.

Finally, the fourth Fundamental action, namely, the

DISFELLOWSHIPING OF THE FEDERAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES.

This Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America is nothing more nor less than the Interchurch World Movement corpse. It had its existence before the Interchurch came into being, to be sure, but like the evil spirits that entered the swine, it found in that movement a desirable frame and for a year or more functioned there. However, a fate akin to that which overtook the swine on the way, fell out to the overfed and rapidly fattening Interchurch, and "it ran violently down a steep place and was choked". In the New Testament we are not told what form these spirits next took, but it is not to be supposed that their personalities changed a whit with exchange of frame.

While the "Interchurch" was in existence, the "Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America" was scarce heard from, or at least it was not speaking in its own name but by its new mouth. The moment, however, that ecclesiastical monstrosity collapsed, its spirit quit the debt-dishonored corpse and taking its old name, commenced business over again. In its officialism, in its worldly minded programmes, in its unjustifiable and papistic attempt to interfere in all political affairs, dominate all state matters, influence all international relations, it has shown patrons and prophets that they believe in a "separation of church and state". Instead of preaching the gospel of the saving grace of God, it puts in its time determining political programmes.

Albert Johnson, Chairman of the House Immigration Committee, Washington, says: "Several years ago we ascertained the steps by which Dr. Gulick imposed his special interest upon the Federal Council, and since then the influence of the body with this Committee has been less than it might otherwise have been."

V. S. McClatchy of Washington (and we think a member of the same Committee) speaks of "the pernicious activity in matters political of the Federal Council of Churches, as indicated in the campaign they are conducting against the exclusion of aliens ineligible to citizenship". He further remarks, "When a number of Dr. Gulick's committee of one thousand learned that he was using this organization for the promotion of the new oriental policy, they repudiated all connection therewith * * * It has always seemed curious to me that the Christian Churches of the United States would permit similar use to be made of their names through the Federal Council for an activity in which I know many of such churches are not sympathetic."

That we should have called home ten great missionary families from foreign fields, each and every one of whom were conservatives, to save an expenditure of \$25,000, and at the same moment should vote that amount out of our mission funds to the use of this modernistic, socialistic, semi-political, anti-evangelistic organization known as the Federal Council of Churches, is an amazement only equalled by that felt over the aforementioned methods of procedure.

Baptist brethren of the Northern Convention, is it not time that we properly appreciated our denominational inheritance, our aforesaid ecclesiastical independence and democracy, our old-time spirit-filled ministry, and our present-time evangelizing mission; and, ceasing from these blunders, went back to the place of belief in the Bible, to the practise of local church autonomy and Associational and Convention democracy, to the teaching of sound words vs. skepticism, and science vs. science falsely so-called, and to the promotion of that God-ordained institution, "the church" vs. that world and church mongrel movement, known as the "Federal Council of Churches"? What say ye?

THE WHOLE BIBLE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON COURSE.

LESSON XXXV. JUNE 1st, 1924.

CALL AND COMMISSION OF SAMUEL.—I. Samuel, 1-3.

I. In This Lesson We Have an Example of Godly Parentage.

(1) Hannah furnishes us an example of believing prayer. In the bitterness of her soul she prayed unto the Lord, and, having laid her burden before the Lord, "The woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad". Thus, faith rests in the assurance that her prayers are heard; and that the love and wisdom of our God will not deny us that which is good. (2) Hannah is also an example of a godly mother who received her son as a gift from God. This story magnifies the ministry of motherhood. (3) Hannah's son was cradled in prayer and was committed to the Lord from before his birth. Who can estimate the influence of such a ministry? (4) Hannah was faithful in the fulfillment of her vow. She had promised that if God would give her a son, she would give him to the Lord all the days of his life; and when her prayer was answered, she paid her vow unto the Lord which her lips had uttered when she was in trouble: she returned to the Lord the son whom she had received from Him by petition. (5) In all this Hannah was supported by her godly husband, who shared his wife's desire in respect to their son, saying, "Only the Lord establish his word".

II. Here Is An Illustration of the Peril of Religious Indecision.

(1) Eli was a priest of the Lord; and, so far as his personal conduct was concerned, appears to have been true to his trust as the Lord's priest. We shall see, however, that no man liveth unto himself. It is impossible for one to ignore his domestic and social obligations without disaster. (2) The story records that Eli had a godless family: "Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord". In this connection we must be careful in our judgment of parents whose children walk not in the ways of the Lord. Eli is not censured, as we shall presently see, primarily, for the wickedness of his house. Many a godly father and mother have had to mourn the ungodliness of their children. It is, therefore, wise to refrain from judging parents whose children go astray. (3) Eli was blamed (ch. 3: 11-14)—not for the iniquity of his sons, but because "he restrained them not". Eli, therefore, was responsible for bearing faithful witness before his children—as all parents are.

III. The Respective Fruits of Two Types of Religion.

(1) Samuel had an ear for the Word of the Lord: "Though he did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord revealed unto him", the Lord called him; and his mother's prayers were answered. He was given the hearing ear and the understanding heart. (2) In the very beginning he was made to feel the solemn responsibility involved in receiving a divine commission. The first word he heard from the Lord was anything but a comfortable message: it was, in fact, a word of judgment passed upon the house of Eli. It was not unnatural that Samuel should be afraid to communicate to Eli the word he had received from the Lord. Notwithstanding, he was faithful to his trust, and withheld nothing of that which God had revealed, but faithfully declared the whole counsel of God. (3) Thus it came to pass, that being faithful to his first trust, "Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord". (4) In contrast to Samuel's splendid example, Eli's sons made merchandise of their religion; and dishonored God in the holiest things of life (ch. 2: 13-17): "Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord; for men abhorred the offering of the Lord". Thus false professors of religion ever give the enemy occasion to blaspheme. In this way, the sons of Eli made themselves vile. (5) The son of the faithful Hannah and Elkanah was commissioned to carry the promise of coming judgment to Eli and his house.

THE FIFTEENTH YEAR.

Last Sunday the Pastor began the fifteenth year of his pastorate in Jarvis Street Church. He desires gratefully to acknowledge the generous expression of the people's affection in the presentation to Mrs. Shields and himself of a magnificent chesterfield, specially made to accommodate something over six feet of pastoral weariness! When on the rare occasions he may have time to recline on its hospitable cushions, he will be reminded of the prayerful support which he enjoys from the membership of the best church in the world.

On Sunday last the platform was beautifully adorned with palms and flowers; and a spirit that can only characterize a happy and united family pervaded the place. In the morning four responded to the invitation and nine in the evening service. In the evening, also, two were baptized.

At the morning service the following address was read by Deacon, Rev. E. A. Brownlee:
Toronto, May 18th, 1924.

Dear Dr. Shields:

On this fourteenth anniversary of your coming to us, we welcome you. Of the esteem and regard in which you and Mrs. Shields are held by the members of Jarvis Street Church and congregation, you are already fully aware; but we cannot let this anniversary pass without a new expression of the deep and abiding love of your people. It is with thanksgiving and joy we contemplate your entrance upon the fifteenth year of your pastorate in this church. Never were the prospects brighter than they are to-day.

Your message of last Tuesday evening, asking us to pray that this fifteenth year of your ministry might be the richest in spiritual blessing of any the church has experienced, echoed the thought of our own hearts. Praise to God, love to you and one another, and prayer for the Spirit's continued power among us are mingled as we ask that you accept of a chesterfield as an expression of our united good-will. It is our hope that it may prove to you a place of rest after many a weary day's work well done. It is not alone the gift of the church, but the Bible School which, according to the desire of your heart you see assembled before you to-day in the morning service, had its part. We unitedly pray for God's richest blessing; and pledge to you our loyal and wholehearted support as together, Pastor and people, we face the spiritual tasks of the coming days.

Signed on behalf of: The Deacons' Board—E. A. Brownlee; The Deaconesses' Board—Carrie J. Holman; The Bible School—W. J. Hutchinson, Fred Turney; Women's Mission Circle—Mrs. John Lillic; Junior Mission Circle—Madeline Shields; Dorcas Society—Mrs. Jas. Kitchener; Junior Dorcas Society—Mrs. Thos. Tims.