

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.

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"THAT IT MIGHT BE FULFILLED."

A Christmas Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in Jarvis St. Church, Thursday Morning, December 25th, 1924.

(Stenographically reported)

"Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet."—Matt. 1: 22.



THE advent of our Lord was not in any sense an accident. The world had long been in preparation for His coming; His coming had long been predicted. And when at last He came, He came in fulfilment of the divine promise. His advent was effected by the divine will: "All this was done,"—all the circumstances of His birth, even to the last detail, came to pass, in order that the will and purpose of our God should be fulfilled.

There is a possibility of our dwelling on the surface in relation to this great event. This season has become a time for the exchange of greetings, for the passing of gifts between friends; and all this is well enough, so far as it goes. But in the midst of all these festivities, there is a danger of our Lord Himself being forgotten; of our reducing this great fact of history—the most tremendous event that has taken place in the history of the human race—of reducing this to an event which has merely pleasing powers,—which help to make this life of the temporal and visible a little more pleasant. But this verse before us relates the advent of our Lord to the eternities. His life did not begin at Bethlehem. The Incarnation was but a parenthesis in His eternal existence; His coming was but a manifestation of God: "Before Abraham was" He was.

I.

And so I ask you to look at this principle set forth in this verse in its spiritual significance and application. First of all, THE TESTIMONY OF THE ADVENT IN RESPECT TO THE REALITY OF THE OBJECTIVE CHRIST,—of the Christ of history. Let us reassure ourselves, or rather be reassured, of the great truth that the Son of God is really come. It is very difficult for one to project himself back through the centuries and to reconstruct a period of history in such a way as to make all the elements of it to become real to us. The passage of years since this great event may possibly make even the fact of it so hazy to us, as

almost to relegate the story of the birth of our Lord to the realm of legend and myth. But if you examine all the circumstances of His coming, you will find that the story of it bears upon its face the testimony to its own reality. Can I make my meaning clear? Truth really needs no credentials; truth requires no one to certify that it is the truth; truth requires no surety, no bondman to guarantee its appearance and its perpetuity. We can do nothing against the truth but for the truth. And because this is a record of truth, it bears its own credentials upon its face. A careful examination of it will show that it is impossible to reject its testimony, with all that that may imply. And if we can put ourselves back this morning among the shepherds, and walk with the wise men, and be convinced afresh of the reality of the star, of the fact that God was in Christ; and that His advent was attended by manifestations of supernatural grace and power, that is was certified from heaven,—it will help us thus to view the objective Christ, first of all.

Well, then, look for a moment at *the shadow that rested upon His birth*. All this was done for a specific purpose. There was a doubt as to His paternity. The record asserts the fact that He was divinely begotten: it does not labour to prove it; it is a truth which will become self-evident, and will prove itself in God's good time. Here we are at the very centre of the Christian revelation; here is the one great fact which is the object of attack to-day. This is the one thing which some of the modernists declare to be absolutely incredible, unthinkable to the modern mind,—that Christ should have been virgin-born. And yet if it were not true, what folly to assert it! And if it be true, how difficult to establish it unless there be that in the fact itself which will defy all contradiction, and by its own inherent powers, establish its own reality! The obscurity of the holy family, too, is really a certificate to the truth of the story. How impossible it seems that one of such humble and obscure origin should ever be able to make any lasting impression upon the world!—A family so poor as to be incapable of commanding the honour and comfort of the little accommodation which the village inn at Bethlehem afforded, crowded out into an outhouse, born in a manger among the cattle! Is this God? Is this the King of Glory? Is He the Creator of all things in Whom all things consist, or hold together?

The years have passed; and this Christmas morning we gather to worship at His feet! The very manner of the advent—that He should have come as a child—certifies to the reality of it. Not thus would the human mind have planned that the Deliverer should come! We should have expected Him to rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might flow down at His presence, as when the melting fire burned. We should not have expected God to come as a little child. I have often gone into a great city to preach,—a city like Chicago, and New York, and many times into Old London—and I have felt the futility of it all. I have said to myself, "How impotent one feels even to make himself heard amid this babel of voices! How can this vast city be moved by any man, or any aggregation of men, toward God?" One feels so useless, so utterly impotent. But when a world is to be redeemed, and hell is to be challenged, and all the powers of darkness to be defeated, who would have planned that such a movement should be inaugurated with the birth of a helpless babe? But there it is, so unique, so utterly different and distinct from anything that the human mind ever conceived, that it bears the stamp of reality upon its face.

Then consider *the relation of this heavenly Visitor to the temporal powers of His day*. I love to think of that proud Caesar, by whose decree all the world, as the Romans knew it, was to be taxed. And in obedience to His imperial will a humble family came to Bethlehem, and there, by Caesar's decree, they were present; and there a Child was born. But "all this was done," not that Caesar might be obeyed, but that the Word of the Lord should be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet. A mightier Will than Caesar's brought it to pass that Jesus should be born in Bethlehem.

Then, on the other hand, there is the rage of Herod; there is the conflict of human ambition with the divine purpose, and the slaughter of the babes. One of our sisters said this to me last week, "I have just been reading the story of 'The Slaughter of the Innocents', and what a terrible tale of blood it is!" The cry of those bereaved mothers! The wholesale slaughter of little children, —lest by any means from among them should come One who should challenge

Herod's supremacy! And yet he missed Him! His sword was not long enough; his arm was not strong enough to terminate that Life divinely begotten.

And so, dear friends, all these improbabilities, these elements which are so contrary to that which the human mind would have devised, lend—I had almost said—probability, let me rather say, give confirmation to the other elements of the story,—the singing of the angels and the attendance of the star. I have not any doubt they saw the star: "He made the stars also": and one of them came to light the path to His manger-cradle, while the angels announced His coming, and the multitude of the heavenly host sang with gladness, and the glory of the Lord shone round about,—take all these elements of the story together and what have you? Just this: that the name of Jesus stands for truth and reality and absolutely indisputable fact. He came; and we know that the Son of God is come.

II.

And now I want to turn and make another application of this principle. The circumstances of the advent testified to THE REALITY OF THE SUBJECTIVE CHRIST,—the Christ of Christian experience as distinct from and yet the same as the Christ of history. It will profit me nothing to read of the Lord Jesus in a book, to know that at such a time He was born in Bethlehem of Judaea, unless He be born within my own heart, unless I am brought into vital relationship to Him. Sometimes even the Lord's people find their sky overcast; it is not always as bright and sunny as it is this Christmas morning. Sometimes the modern Thomases mourn because of the absence of their Lord; sometimes the spouse exclaims: "My beloved hath withdrawn himself, and is gone: I sought him but he could not be found". And it is necessary that we should be reassured again and again of the reality of our own experience of Christ. And I say the circumstances of the advent, rightly interpreted, have a testimony in that direction.

In the first place, *the manner of His coming into our lives*. He came as He came to Bethlehem; and we did not expect Him to come in that way. If I were to stop preaching now and ask for your testimonies, I have no doubt there are many here this morning whose testimony would agree with the preacher's. I had thought He would rend the heavens and come down; I had expected some marvellous supernatural manifestation of power; I had expected some kind of revolution, some sensible entrance of God into human life. But quietly He came,—came when He was scarcely wanted, came where He was not welcomed by everyone, came even into this life when it was like Bethlehem,—so crowded that there was no room for Him in the inn. Oh, marvellous condescension of grace that stooped to take the second place, if only He might come in!—the beginning of Something from heaven in here, the birth within of a new Light, and a new Life, and a new Power, which no one could explain, so small in the beginning, so inconspicuous, so obscure.

Is that not how Christ came to you? There was a time when you looked upon Him, and you saw His smiling face. There was a time when you saw "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ". But the beginnings of your Christian experience were very much like this story: there was a star, a light from somewhere, no one could explain because it was heaven-born. It was a gleam of the glory that came by some means that you have never been able fully to explain. And there were the shepherds keeping their flocks, there came a touch of God upon you, even as you went about your daily occupation. Somehow or another you began to feel that earth was, after all, remotely related to Heaven, that Heaven was stooping down to earth, and doing something which no one could explain. The divine element had entered into your life, and the Christ was born.

Is there not, too, a striking analogy in this further fact that *within our hearts the Herod principle is found*, that here too there was that which was opposed to the advent of Christ? Later we learned what first of all we could not understand, that "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other". But, oh, the inward struggles—you young Christians know whereof I speak—when self raged as Herod raged, when the human will was so slow to bend and surrender to the sovereign sceptre of the new King! And perhaps you had to sing like Newton—

I know some people mock at Newton's saying, but it is true to Christian experience,

"'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought:
Do I love my Lord or no,
Am I His, or am I not?"

There are some who would fain tell us that they hear nothing but the singing of the angels; they see nothing but the stars. But the fact is, that the lamentation of Rachel weeping for her children, the rage of Herod, this fierce conflict between light and darkness, between good and evil—they all have a place in Christian experience.

And sometimes *we are troubled to know why it should be*, that if it be so that these impulses be in us, these holy desires, these heavenly aspirations—if, indeed, they are from God, why should not this child within, this new life, if it be from God,—why should it not be allowed to develop and to grow, and to come to ultimate perfection without all this opposition? Ah, my brethren, Jesus was born in Bethlehem amid strange circumstances,—“in the days of Herod the king”. An examination of your experience will testify to the fact that your survival as a Christian unto this hour is a miracle. “They are dead which sought the young child’s life”. Notwithstanding all the opposition of all the powers of darkness, we have to say to-day, “By the grace of God I am what I am”. I am not what I ought to be; I am not what I might be; I am not what I want to be, “by the grace of God I am what I am”. The child survives; the candle is not blown out; the light from heaven still shines; the immortal spirit is there, and we know that the subjective Christ,—the Christ of our experience—is just as real as the Christ of history. And we can say, “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day”.

III.

And then, just this, very briefly. This principle has a testimony also in this direction: **IT ASSURES US OF THE ULTIMATE REALIZATION OF PERSONAL CHRISTLIKENESS, AND CONFORMITY TO THE IMAGE OF CHRIST.** There are some things we have tried to learn in life, and we have found them very difficult, even on the natural plane. I remember trying to learn to drive a motor car, and after a little experience I wanted to give the thing away. And we have tried to learn a great many other things, and have found learning very difficult. Yet all these matters have been easy in comparison with the inward struggle toward conformity to the will of God. That has not been easy, has it, for any one of us?

Again I say, I know there are superficial characters—I say superficial because it is more complimentary to say superficial than artificial—but there are some who suddenly attain to perfection, some who at least flatter themselves that they have so attained. In every instance that I have ever known, they have always enjoyed the monopoly of that opinion. No one else shared it with them. But if we will be true to ourselves, true to the facts of Christian experience, while we know that by the promise of God’s abounding grace, we are saved and saved for ever, yet we know that we are, at the same time, being saved. And I delight to think, my friends, that just as surely as Jesus was divinely begotten, just as surely as He was made, “not after the power of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an indissoluble life,” which no sword could kill, no fire destroy, just so surely that hope within me has been divinely begotten. “All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord”. Hallelujah! That which was spoken by the Lord must be fulfilled, though all hell oppose. And we are begotten “by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever”.

Some people seem to try to persuade themselves that they made themselves Christians. Perhaps that is hardly a correct statement; they speak, at least, as though they had become Christians by their own will. Personally I should have no hope of continuance, or of ultimate victory and coronation, if my conversion originated in my own will. You see, there is so much to be done; and I want to know that all that needs to be done shall be done, that it may be fulfilled which God has promised. “But as many as received him, to them

gave he power"—or right, or authority—"to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born"—not of bloods, not by the union of bloods: the miracle of the virgin birth was repeated in your experience, in your conversion—"which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." That is why you became a Christian. And behind and in the beginning of that new life, there was the sovereign will of God, the creative power of the Lord God Himself. And when I look upon the Babe in the manger, and know all that He had to face, and the seeming impossibility of His ever accomplishing His task, it reassures me, and leads me to hope, nay, to rest in the assurance that thus it shall be in the believer's experience also: we shall be changed "from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord".

So you see, my friends, it means, as we read this story, but the unfolding of the divine purpose of God in the life of a helpless Child, a defenseless Child,—just the flickering of a little light which any unfriendly wind might have blown out, had it not been that the hand of God sheltered it. I say, when we look upon that, it should reassure us as we remember all our own difficulties, and all the stormy path which we must traverse, and all the enemies whom we must meet. Yet may we be assured that as at last He triumphed, so shall we; for all this shall be done that it may be fulfilled which is spoken of the Lord.

The fulfilment of Scripture was not confined to the circumstances of His birth; very specially *the circumstances attending His death were ordered that what had been spoken by the Lord might be fulfilled*. He was born to die. His birth could have had no meaning for us, had He not also "died for our sins according to the Scriptures". Just as we must go back into the Old Testament with Jesus if we would find it a gloriously illuminated Temple of heavenly truth, so we must meet Christ at the empty grave rather than at Bethlehem, and learn that he was slain for our offenses and raised again for our justification: we shall experience the light, and beauty, and songfulness of Bethlehem, only as we understand the darkness, and agony, and subsequent silence of the cross. It is true the Babe did not die in Bethlehem—but as a Man He died—"the just for the unjust to bring us to God", that we might also be born from above.

And all this was done—not only that He might be born, but also that He might die, and rise again and become the first begotten from the dead that in all things He might have the pre-eminence—and all that that which was spoken of the Lord by the prophets might be fulfilled.

And so, in your thought, just briefly look at Him in the manger, as He goes down into Egypt, and then into Nazareth, and up to Capernaum at last; and then to the cross of sacrifice and expiation by blood; until, by and by, His earthly pilgrimage ended, He goes down into the grave, and up into the glory. And mark this, will you? From the manger, among the cattle, to the throne of God! All this that it might be fulfilled! Do you see? And if we are in the manger to-day, with all the sordid circumstances of earth; even if anyone should say: "O wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from the body of this death?" I bring you news of One Who is a Saviour, Who is Christ the Lord. He shall deliver you by His blood. And He will bring us from the manger to the throne. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate"—to be saved from hell, to be saved to heaven? Hell, while it is objective and literal, I verily believe, is found in ungodliness, unchristlikeness. Heaven! While that too is objective and literal, yet it is subjective and experimental also. And heaven is found in union with God, and in likeness to Him.—"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified"—there, in the manger—"and whom he justified, them he also glorified". And there is no break in the chain.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way,
With painful steps and slow,

Look up! for glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing:
O rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on,
By prophet bards foretold,
When, with the ever-circling years,
Comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendours fling,
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing!

May the Lord bless you every one, and make every day and every hour in the deepest and truest sense, a Merry Christmas!

THE GOSPEL WITNESS LEAPS AHEAD.

The Gospel Witness is only three years and seven months old, but if the present rate of progress continues it will soon take rank among the most widely circulated religious papers of the country. For some time now new subscriptions have been coming in at the rate of more than a hundred a day. This week began well with one hundred and twenty-six new subscriptions on Monday, and still they continue to pour in.

The Gospel Witness was never happier than it is to-day, because every day is bringing us a multitude of new friends.

Our regular readers are lending the paper to others, and in churches all over the land people are discussing what *The Witness* contains, and the resultant flow of new subscriptions shows that an ever-growing number of people recognize that the Baptist denomination needs this paper's testimony.

Many are taking the paper upon their hearts as a great educational and missionary enterprise. The Hamilton Convention opened the eyes of hosts of Baptists to the perils of the hour, and they are looking to *The Gospel Witness* as never before as a paper that is set for the defense of the gospel.

The Hamilton Convention has made as many new subscribers for *The Gospel Witness* in two months as *The Witness* was able to secure in the preceding twelve months.

Some Interesting Incidents.

One lady from Western Canada recently sent a cheque for \$100.00. A brother from a district which we will not name about the middle of October also sent us a cheque for \$100.00. Last week the same brother sent 24 new subscriptions at one dollar each, and 18 renewals at \$2.00 each—making \$60.00. With this he encloses a cheque for \$100.00 telling us to put the extra \$40.00 to *The Witness* Fund. This generous brother requests that no intimation be given of the locality in which he resides and says the money he sends is the Lord's. We are very thankful to the Lord and to His servant for this generous contribution.

Another brother sends \$10.00 for one new subscription, while not a few others send \$5.00 and \$6.00 and \$7.00. It is by such support as this the publication of *The Witness* is made possible.

We must save other interesting *Witness* items and announcements for other issues for want of space. We shall appreciate the help of every *Witness* reader in extending our circulation.

Remember, the offer of *The Gospel Witness* for one year for one dollar still holds—except in Toronto where the price is \$1.50 on account of postage. Will not pastors and others take this to heart, and send us hundreds of subscriptions from the churches of Ontario and Quebec between now and Jan. 31st. *The Witness* has many enemies as every uncompromising witness must have; but it has many friends, and we appeal to our friends to begin to-day by telephone and in other ways to endeavour to secure five new subscriptions or over.

EDITORIAL

"HIS STAR."

"His star." That is a new language. We have heard of a millionaire: we speak of his house, his railroad, his mines, his millions; we have read of kings, of their armies, their jewels, their crowns, and their kingdoms; but 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 telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names." Then 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 the 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 new 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. "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera;" but "in their courses," without 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 differeth from another star in glory." "The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind." "He will give grace and glory"—subjective grace for objective glory, the opened 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; but 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 call it 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 literary vivisectionists whose favourite subject is the Bible. They call themselves "scholars," and think they know all about the Book because they have cut it in pieces; while the fact is, they are as ignorant of the beauty and value of 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 lily 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.

"THE CANADIAN BAPTISTS" POSITION.

We quote the following editorial from *The Canadian Baptist* of December 17th:

"OUR POSITION"

"Now we know where *The Canadian Baptist* stands.' So wrote one recently. There should be, however, no need for any prolonged study of this paper to reach such a conclusion. For *The Canadian Baptist* has always made its position clear on all the problems of religion and of the Baptist Church.

"*The Canadian Baptist* stands four-square for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. It stands for the Bible, the Word of God to mankind; for the Christ—Son of God, Son of man—who was made flesh to dwell amongst us; for His virgin birth; His sinless life; His substitutionary death on the Cross—the just for the unjust; His resurrection from the dead; His ascension to Heaven—as the Mediator between God and man; His second coming from Heaven.

"It stands for orthodoxy of the Word and orthodoxy of spirit. It believes that the test of Christian life is love—not works only. It accepts 'by this shall all men know ye are My disciples, if ye love the brethren.' It seeks to establish and to maintain a *Canadian Baptist* family spirit of love. This is best for the individual and best for the work of the Kingdom. War leaves behind it always a heritage of sickness, disease, wreck, ruin and death. It delights not in conflict with its attendant doubts, suspicions, wounds and tragedies.

"It stands for the organized Canadian Baptist church work as an organ of information and inspiration. It seeks not to impose its will upon the churches, but rather to interpret the will of the brethren as expressed at the annual Convention of the churches.

"For many months it has advocated constantly a policy of evangelism for all the churches, believing that such a course will lead many to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, do more than anything else to heal the breaches in our church front line of battle, and give to those who lead in all denominational activities the support they deserve and to which they are entitled."

This is an exceedingly interesting statement, but one which needs examination. For instance, in the first paragraph we read, "*The Canadian Baptist* has always made its position clear on all the problems of religion and of the Baptist Church." That our contemporary has not always been in accord with the Denomination is demonstrated by the fact that at the Ottawa Convention a resolution was passed by the Convention declaring "its disapproval of the editorial in *The Canadian Baptist* of October 2nd, entitled, 'The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture', on the ground that in its representative character as the organ of the Convention, *The Canadian Baptist* in the said editorial commends to its readers some new vague view of the Scriptures different from that to which the Convention declared its adherence in 1910, and upon which the denominational University is declared to be founded." It is doubtful whether, in the history of Canadian Baptists, any article in any periodical was ever so overwhelmingly repudiated as was the editorial in *The Canadian Baptist* to which this resolution referred.

To this some may reply that that was before the present Editor took charge, but the resolution to which we have referred recognized that the Editor of that day was not responsible for that particular editorial: it was published by the will of the Editor, and with the approval of the Publication Board of that day. By consulting the Year Books of 1918 and 1924, we find that six out of

the twelve members constituting the present Board of Publication were members of the same Board in 1918, and if Major Wilcox, who takes the place of Principal Wearing of Woodstock, be counted (and we assume that he was elected because of his position) it means there are seven. In any event, at least half the members of the Publication Board whose action the Convention so overwhelmingly repudiated in 1919 are still in office. Yet *The Canadian Baptist* says it "has always made its position clear on all the problems of religion and of the Baptist Church"! Will the Editor tell us what "the Baptist Church" is? We should expect accuracy in the editorial columns of *The Canadian Baptist*. We had better send the writer to McMaster University to learn a little bit of Baptist polity!

"*The Canadian Baptist* stands four-square for the faith once for all delivered to the saints"; yet two or three weeks ago *The Canadian Baptist* published on its front page a sermon that was so full of deadly poison that it had no proper place in any "Baptist" publication.

Again: we are informed that *The Canadian Baptist* "stands for orthodoxy of the Word and orthodoxy of spirit". It certainly has not "always" stood for orthodoxy of word,—and what does it mean by orthodoxy of spirit? Is it the spirit of true Baptist orthodoxy to be absolutely one-sided, to close its columns to any other than one side of the question? That has been *The Baptist's* attitude for some years: it has been a special pleader for McMaster University. Not a few correspondents have complained to us of sending their letters to *The Baptist*, and having them returned or otherwise denied publication. Is it the spirit of "Baptist" orthodoxy to conduct a controversy in such a fashion as any secular journal in the country would be ashamed of?

We have never anywhere met with a more brazen misrepresentation of fact than that expressed in the editorial columns of last week's *Canadian Baptist*. Of course, we desire to excuse the Editor; for unless we are greatly mistaken it is some time since the Editor has spoken in the editorial pulpit. Anybody who knows anything at all knows that the utterances of *The Canadian Baptist* since the Convention have not been the utterances of Rev. Lewis F. Kipp. But we pass this on to our readers for what it is worth. We have before expressed our sympathy for Brother Kipp; we are surprised that he does not seek a real man's job instead of being subject to a Board absolutely dominated by McMaster influences.

REV. W. J. H. BROWN ON PROFESSOR MARSHALL.

Several of the Toronto papers have carried reports of a sermon preached by Rev. W. J. H. Brown, Pastor of Annette Street Church, last Sunday morning. Some of the reports did not fairly represent what Mr. Brown said, but we publish the following with the assurance that it is an accurate report of what Mr. Brown actually said:

Rev. W. J. H. Brown in preaching Sunday morning last at the Annette Street, Baptist Church on the "Mediatorship of Christ" and showing how it provided expiation for sin, made reference to the crisis that has arisen in the Baptist denomination, over the appointment of Professor L. M. Marshall to the position of Professor of Pastoral Theology in McMaster University. It is not pleasant to mention names, but when principles become embodied in individuals and when controversy centers about an individual, it is unavoidable. Did not Paul make mention of the names of individuals who said "That the resurrection was past already and who had overthrown the faith of some?"

At the Convention last October, Professor Marshall posed as a thoroughly orthodox man. His doctrinal statement was accepted by the great majority of the Convention as satisfactory. But he has been doing considerable preaching since and from statements he has made, it has become a lively question in Baptist circles as to whether after all this man preaches the gospel that Paul preached or whether he is a Modernist.

Personally I feel very keenly on this matter. There are few churches in our Convention which, according to the size of their membership, are making a larger contribution of young men to the University as students for the gospel ministry than this church is, and I personally encouraged these young men to attend the University. Very naturally I am interested.

I was much amused the other day in hearing that the pastor of this church has weakened in his position in relation to the fundamentals, but the devil always has been the accuser of the brethren. I am sure the time has come when every pastor in the Convention ought to speak out and let the people know what the situation is.

I am not a fighter. I do not like controversy, but I feel honesty compels me to speak.

In *The Canadian Baptist* of November 26th, a sermon of Professor Marshall's was published that had been preached in Toronto, in which he declared that there is potential sainthood in every sinner; the "new man" waiting the opportunity to throw the "old man" off. That beneath the ashes of collapsed human nature, Christ saw that there were yet the sparks of celestial fire, that there was something divine in the human heart and he likened it to the germ of life in some seeds which cannot be destroyed without destroying the seed itself.

We frankly confess that we do not so interpret the teaching of scriptures. If such were the truth concerning human nature, why the need of the new birth? The scriptures teach the doctrine of total depravity. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." "We are by nature the children of wrath."

On the first of November Professor Marshall preached in Hamilton on the subject of "Coming to Christ." In the course of his sermon he said "To really come to Christ we must get His view of life, His standard of values. We may have the simple wholesome pleasures of life and still be good Christians; but when we become selfish with these, that is when we do not belong to Christ. When a young person chooses a vocation in which the powers God has given are used to the utmost, then he can truly say he has come to Christ. We must have less snobbishness. We must learn to regard man as man; not as a mercenary standard. When we can give services to humanity and help any organization laboring in the cause of Christianity, then we can say we have come to Christ."

I ask is this the gospel? Is it thus a lost sinner is to come to Christ for salvation? I do not claim the intellectual culture of the learned Professor by any means; but I do know what the gospel is; and I know that the people of this church know what the gospel is. I ask you is what I have read to you of Professor Marshall's sermon the gospel? ("No, No".) You are right, there is not an atom of gospel in it, nor has Dr. Marshall given out any gospel message publicly, so far as we know, since he came to our midst. I know at the Convention he said he believed in vicarious atonement and in the inspiration of the scriptures, but I know whereof I speak when I say that he does not believe that the story of Jonah and the great fish, confirmed by Christ, is literal fact, nor does he believe that Jesus Christ died as the sinner's substitute. In his Hamilton sermon referred to he said "To prove to ourselves if we have really come to Christ, let us ask ourselves the question: is my love of Christ so strong that I could refuse the benefit of ill-gotten gains for His sake?"

Knowing what we do now of what the Professor believes, we naturally ask the question—Is it not receiving ill-gotten gains for him to retain his position as Professor in McMaster University, when his own views are so utterly out of harmony with those held by our Canadian Baptists on so vital a question as the atonement?

THE CANADIAN BAPTIST AND FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The Canadian Baptist displays prominently on the editorial page of last week's issue a copy of a statement issued by the Foreign Mission Board of the Northern Baptist Convention. No other possible construction can be put upon this action than that *The Canadian Baptist* endorses the Foreign Mission Board of the Northern Baptist Convention. We wish to inform our Canadian readers that beyond all peradventure the Foreign Mission Board referred to has lost the confidence of tens of thousands of Baptists throughout the Northern Baptist Convention, who are now absolutely refusing to entrust that Board with a dollar of their money. The debt of that Board with which it met the Convention at Seattle would nearly equal the total income of the Canadian Foreign Mission

Board for ten years. We are reasonably certain that the Seattle Convention will ultimately have the effect of reducing its income still further.

We had hoped that our Canadian Baptist Board would keep to the King's highway. We venture to offer this advice respecting the Foreign Mission Board of the Northern Convention to *The Canadian Baptist*: "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone." It appears that those in control of the Foreign Mission interests of the Northern Convention are determined to pursue what they call their "inclusive" policy, and send out modernists and fundamentalists alike. Is the antipathy of *The Canadian Baptist* toward the Editor of *The Gospel Witness* of such a character that that paper is determined to champion everything and anything which *The Gospel Witness* ventures to oppose? We still believe in our Canadian Foreign Mission enterprise, and we should be sorry to have our people's confidence in its administration shaken; but once again we venture to suggest that that will be the inevitable result of the continuance of such a policy as is at present being pursued.

SUNDAY'S SERVICES.

The attendance at the School last Sunday morning numbered 1,153. There was a large congregation, and a good number confessed Christ. In the evening the Pastor preached on "Can Masonry Save The Soul?"—a sermon which will appear in *The Gospel Witness* in due course. The church was crowded in every part. Nine believers were baptized; and following the sermon, twenty responded to the invitation and came to the front. The after-meeting was an excursion into the heavenlies. Not a few of those who had been converted gave their testimonies, and there were so many who desired to tell of the wonders of grace in their own experience that it was impossible to close the service until 10.20.

JARVIS STREET CHURCH NEWS.

WATCH-NIGHT SERVICE.

There will be a watch-night service in the church Thursday evening from 10.30 to 12.05.

NEW YEAR'S MORNING SERVICE.

For more than fifty years the New Year's morning service of Jarvis Street Church has been a feature of our church life. The last few years the services have been more largely attended than ever. January 1st we shall meet at ten o'clock in the morning, and the service will continue until noon. The first part of the service will be given to prayer, and the latter part to testimony. We hope to have the greatest New Year's Service of our history.

OPENING OF NEW BUILDING.

The opening of our new building has been delayed beyond our expectation because it has been impossible to get the various trades to complete their work. We are able to announce now, however, that the building will be opened on New Year's day. All members of the church, and all friends who are interested, are hereby invited to come Friday afternoon at four o'clock, and bring a basket lunch with them. Tea and coffee will be provided. The entire church building will be open, and all the rooms heated; and it is hoped that every member of the church will endeavour to be present.

The three hours from four to seven will be spent in the most informal way getting acquainted with each other. At five o'clock there will be a prayer of dedication offered by the Pastor; and, following that, members and friends will be free to find any place they like in the church to be comfortable to eat their lunch, and to go to the dining-room in the B. D. Thomas Hall for tea and coffee. At seven o'clock there will a great meeting in the auditorium, when we hope to have a very large representation of the church membership for a great thanksgiving and consecration service. We urge every member of the church to make every possible effort to be present. This will be one of the great days of our history, and will be prophetic of the greater and more glorious days that are immediately before us.

(2) Christ commands it:

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. Matthew 28: 18-20.

(3) The Apostles commanded and administered it in His name:

Acts 2: 37-38. Acts 10: 47-48.

Miscellaneous Passages Referring to Baptism

Under this head every such passage in the New Testament is given. The chapters are given in Roman numerals and the verses in figures.

Matt. iii., 6, 7, 11, 13-16; xx., 22-23; xxi., 25; xxviii., 19. Mark i., 4, 5, 8, 9; x., 38, 39; xii., 30. Luke iii., 3, 7, 12, 16, 21; vii., 29, 30; xii., 50; xx., 4. John i., 25, 26, 28, 31, 33; iii., 22, 23, 26; iv., 1, 2; x., 40. Acts i., 5, 22; ii., 38-42; viii., 12-16, 36-38; ix., 18; x., 37, 47, 48; xi., 16; xiii., 24; xvi., 15, 33; xviii., 8, 25; xix., 3-5; xxii., 16. Rom. vi., 3-5. I Cor. i., 13-17; x., 2; xii., 13; xv., 29. Eph. iv., 5. Col. ii., 12. Hebrews vi., 2. I Peter iii., 21.

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Lesson 4

FIRST QUARTER

Jan. 24, 1926

THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST

LESSON TEXT: Fourth chapter of Matthew.

To be studied in harmony with lesson text: (Mark 1: 12-14 and 1: 16-20 and (1:35-39 and Luke 3:23 to 5:11.

The Lord took on Him the seed of Abraham; He was made of a woman, made under the law. He came to be our great High Priest, and to make reconciliation for the sins of the people (Hebrews 5: 1-4; Hebrews 2: 14-18). The tempter of all humankind is here identified as the Devil. The book of Job tells us of Satan's presence among the sons of God; but here is a meeting between man's chief adversary and man's only true Champion and Saviour.

I. THE DEVIL MAKES HIS FIRST ASSAULT UPON THE PHYSICAL NATURE.

1. He takes advantage of certain physical conditions which would render his intended victim peculiarly susceptible to temptation: it was when Christ was hungry Satan suggested that He use His superhuman power to make stones into bread. The Devil is a merciless adversary: he knows nothing of fair fighting; he is an unscrupulous foe, and ever seeks to take men at a disadvantage. 2. The essence of the temptation is that Christ is urged to use His spiritual power for His own physical needs, and to violate a law of His spiritual nature for the relief of His body. It is thus the Devil is ever seeking to bring the spiritual nature under the domination of the flesh. The mind may be carnal or spiritual: it is the servant of the one or the other. 3. Christ reinforces His physical nature by the resources of the spirit: (a) He quotes Scripture in His own defence—and that from the book of Deuteronomy against which the critics fulminate so constantly. But what a testimony is here to the value of Scripture! We are all disposed to be especially careful in the presence of experts; but it is inconceivable that an infallible Christ would quote a fallible Scripture in His own defence to such an expert as the Devil; (b) our Lord's conduct on this occasion affords a sublime example of His unwavering faith in God and His Word. He knew that the Word of God is the sword of the Spirit, and that even the Devil himself would be unable to parry its thrust.

II. THE DEVIL NEXT MAKES HIS ASSAULT UPON THE SPIRIT. (verses 5, 6.)

1. He bids Christ throw Himself from the pinnacle of the temple, that he might thereby prove the promise of angel guardianship. But in this he proposed that Christ should violate the law of His physical in order that He might exhibit the superiority of the spiritual. In the temptation of Christ we probably have

the germ of all temptation: the Devil's endeavour is always to divide man's soul against itself. Scores of illustration will suggest themselves as to how men now do violence to the law of God in the name of religion, and expect some miraculous intervention to prevent their reaping what they have sown. 2. Our Lord reinforces His spiritual nature by refusing to violate the laws of the physical. Such a course as the Devil proposed would involve tempting God. 3. Again He finds His defence in the Word of God: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God", which, being interpreted, means that we are forbidden to break God's law in any realm of our being and presume to expect His interference.

III. THE DEVIL NOW TEMPTS THE LORD IN THE REALM OF THE MIND.

1. He shows Christ the kingdoms of the world and their glory. We are not to suppose that the tempter presented to Him a material representation of the kingdoms of the world: rather it was an appeal to the imagination to dream of world-power and world-glory,—a vision which the Devil has also set before other men since that time: Napoleon doubtless was promised the kingdoms of the world and their glory, on certain terms; the war lords of Germany, perhaps chiefly the Kaiser, must have had the same temptation. And in some degree the temptation comes to every one to get all that he can of the possessions and plaudits of the world. "The people imagine a vain thing." In the realm of the imagination many evils are born, and others are multiplied. 2. These temporalities were offered on the condition that the Devil should occupy God's place, that he should be worshipped instead of God. And that is ever the temptation—to relegate God to some other than the first place, and to permit a usurper to take His throne. 3. Our Lord found His strength in ascribing pre-eminence to God: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve". Only as we give God the first place can the other elements of life find their proper place. 4. Again the Lord Jesus finds His guiding principle in Scripture. If He in Whom dwell all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2: 3) fashioned His life by the precepts and principles and promises of Scripture, and thereby was victorious, we may well take the same course.

IV. EVEN OUR LORD WAS MADE STRONG THROUGH TEMPTATION.

1. The Devil left Him, and angels ministered to Him. As we resist the Devil he will flee from us, and we shall be blessed with the company of angels. Every temptation resisted reacts in an accession of strength to resist the temptations of the future. 2. Luke tells us that Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee. Our choice for ever is between the spirit of light and the spirit of darkness, the spirit of good and the spirit of evil, between the Holy Spirit and the Devil; and when the Devil is resisted, not only the angels, but the Holy Spirit Himself comes with added power to fortify us for the future.

V. JESUS ENTERS UPON HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY.

1. His first step to Capernaum is a fulfilment of Scripture (*vs.* 13-16). Again the principle which we shall observe throughout our studies: everything related to Christ is "according to the scriptures". 2. Jesus, like John, preached repentance (*v.* 17). In this He is true to His character, for He came to save His people from their sins. 3. He calls His four disciples: Peter and Andrew; James and John. The parallel passages should be studied carefully with these. Here it is enough to note that they all left what they were doing, and straightway followed Him. So ought we to do. 4. The character of His public ministry is described: it consisted in preaching and teaching and healing; it resulted in spreading abroad His fame, and in general blessing to all the multitudes who followed Him.

ILLUSTRATION AND APPLICATION

1. Temptations in the realm of the physical. It was here the first man and woman fell: he took of the fruit of the tree and did eat. The body is designed to be the Temple of the Holy Ghost. The appetites of the body are God-given. The senses may be and ought to be instruments of righteousness. Seeing, and hearing, and tasting, and smelling, and feeling, all these senses are Divinely implanted and ought to be used for God's glory. Instead of being so used, however, they have all been turned to evil uses. Eve used her ears to listen to the serpent, she used her eyes to look upon the forbidden fruit, she used her

hands to feel it and pluck it, and to give to her husband, and very probably the fruit had a pleasant smell, and then she took it and ate it. Thus all the senses participated in the first sin.

It was through the flesh the devil tempted Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright (*Gen. 27: 1-46; Heb. 12: 17*).

It was through the physical senses the devil tempted Israel in the wilderness. They wanted flesh and water, and sighed for the flesh-pots of Egypt (*Exod. 16*). It was through the senses the devil accomplished David's downfall (*II Sam. 11*). We are not to suppose, however, that drunkenness, and gluttony and impurity are the only sins of the flesh. The love of physical ease, sheer indolence or laziness, too much sleep and too little work—these sins are equally of the tempter's inspiration.

2. Religious temptations. People are tempted to abuse the body in the name of religion as surely as Jesus was. Some religious people want to live on miracles, and assume one may break the laws of the physical realm and depend upon God to work a miracle to avert the consequences. This is the temptation which Christian Science presents: it runs in the face of physical law. The same subtle temptation is involved in the modern public healing campaigns. They propose to use the body for a spectacular display of miraculous power. To take any course which involves the violation of God's law in expectation that God will intervene to save us from the penalty, is to tempt God.

3. Intellectual temptations. Adam and Eve were promised that the forbidden fruit, if eaten, would make them wise, and open their eyes so that they would be as gods. The temptation to pride in this direction is always with us. The present religious movement we call Modernism, ministers to human pride of intellect. It suggests we may be wise independently of God, and that all the kingdoms of the world and their glory a man may possess for himself. But the price is always the same: they who would possess them must put the devil in God's place. The only safe course is to worship God as God, and then we shall be willing, like little children, to listen to His Word and be made wise unto salvation.

The Whole Bible S. S. Lesson Course

The foregoing lessons are reprints of the Lessons published by The Union Gospel Press, Cleveland, Ohio. Another series based upon the same text and written by the same author but adapted for Junior and Primary classes is issued by the same publishers, and at the same prices. Send to Union Gospel Press, Cleveland, Ohio, for sample copies.

Note.—Last week and this *The Witness* has carried two lessons in order to catch up with time so as to be able to publish each lesson four weeks in advance. Beginning with the next issue this paper will publish one lesson weekly, with possibly one sample of the Junior and Primary series.