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The Gospel Witness

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T. T. SHIELDS, *Pastor and Editor.*

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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

BORN TO BLEED!

A Sermon by Rev. W. M. Robertson, of Liverpool, Eng., preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, July 11, 1926.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons".—Gal. 4: 4-5. These words are a striking and significant summary of the process and purpose of God in Incarnation. They need to be pondered and proclaimed with renewed emphasis in our day. Men seldom exalt one aspect of truth without, perhaps unconsciously, depreciating another. So with the doctrine of the Incarnation. It is being so magnified to-day as to minimize the Atonement. That "Christ has for us the religious value of God" is a shibboleth of Modernist theology. A now notorious McMaster professor preached some time ago on this text and stopped half way through it making the Incarnation merely a magnificent incentive to human endeavour. The apostle however in this scripture joins the Incarnation and the Atonement together in such a way as to make them stand or fall together. The Incarnation without the Atonement is incomplete; the Atonement without the Incarnation is inconceivable. Christ was born to bleed.

I. THE PERIOD. "When the fulness of the time was come God sent forth His Son." "God sent" is the most frequent form of speech with reference to the Incarnation. It is a phrase of real import. It suggests the idea that the person sent belonged intimately to the place or society of the person who sent him. The birth of Jesus in Bethlehem was not the beginning of His being. He *was* before He was *sent*. He is the Eternal Son. The Son existed as a divine Person before he came to be made of a woman. Nor did He come without a commission, for the Father sent Him. There is no sense of unwillingness in His coming. To do His Father's will was His delight and so

we read "I came forth from God". In all the movements of the Trinity for our salvation there is perfect harmony.

"The fulness of the time". Men have often asked the question—"Why did not Christ come sooner"? To all such questions we can but reply—"God knows". Haste and hurry are elements in our human existence but God is great enough to move with unhurried and unerring motion across the stage of time. Whatever may have been the Divine motive in allowing the years to pass, we know that the passage of time but served to demonstrate the helplessness of man to recover what sin had destroyed. "Until the time appointed of the Father" is ever the governing principle in God's dealings with men. Our Lord came at the fittest moment. The world had arrived at mature age. Politically it was the fulness of time. The Roman Empire had flung its far-spreading influence abroad upon the world and exercised a universal sovereignty. Free intercourse was established between all parts of the world and there were no political barriers to impede the progress of the Gospel. The Greek language also—the most perfect vehicle of thought ever known, had made the earth to be in great measure of one tongue. Prophetically it was the fulness of the time. There was the expectation, throbbing in the heart of every good Jew that the Deliverer was at hand. Simeon was but typical of many others who "waited for the consolation of Israel". Morally, also it was the fulness of the time. At the birth of Christ the moral condition of the world was deplorable in the extreme. The dreadful picture of the early chapters of Romans is no darker than that of Pagan writers. Moralists like Seneca, satirists like Juvenal and historians like Tacitus all combined to paint the picture in most dreadful colours. The old religions were utterly powerless to check the desperate tendencies of human nature—

"On that hard Pagan world, disgust and secret loathing fell
Deep weariness and sated lust, made human life a hell."

Let those modern professors who grow eloquent over the inherent divinity of men and who talk of "celestial sparks" in human nature correct their folly by an appeal to history. "The world by wisdom knew not God". The Incarnation was a pre-destined event—it happened just when it ought to have happened. It was that toward which all that went before was moving, and from which all after-time is dated. "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world". Let us not grow impatient because of the seeming slowness of God's movements. Omnipotence has eternity to work in.

II. THE PROCESS. "Born of a woman made under the law": "Born of a woman"—The words are significant not only in what they affirm but in what they deny. There is nothing said of another earthly parent. The Virgin Birth of our Lord—a thing increasingly denied—is a fundamental doctrine of Christianity. The only alternative to a logical mind is that Christ was an illegitimate. No plausible reasoning can evade the implication. Either Christ was Virgin Born or He was a son of shame. Had he been the product of those forces that inhere in the production of other men He must then have Himself been a sinner. No one with the taint of sin in his being could have been a Saviour of sinners. The Lamb must be without blemish and without spot. "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call His name Immanuel"—Is. 7: 14. Attempts to prove that the word "virgin" has another meaning than that usually received have been completely shattered by Prof. Robert Dick Wilson of Princeton, who has established with true scholarly

insight the ancient interpretation of the passage. How eloquent is the language of Matt. 1: 16 as bearing on this point. All through the chapter it has been "so-an-so begat so-and-so" but in verse 10 we read—"And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus who is called Christ". He was the "Seed of the Woman". Joseph did not beget Jesus. "That Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God"—Luke 1: 35. If there were no human paternity then the Virgin Birth could only take place if Mary were the passive agent of the Holy Spirit. God alone can give life and since the ordinary channel of procreation was set aside—then it must be by creation—the creative act of God Himself.

"Made under the law." He who was the Son of God—voluntarily took His place under the law to fulfil its obligation and for us to pay its penalty. We were born under law as creatures. He took His place under law for the ends of suretyship. O measureless love—unspeakable grace! The Eternal Son of God became a bondservant for us! His meritorious obedience both in precept and penalty are our salvation. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us."

"Then the spirit of the Highest on a virgin meek came down,
And He burdened her with blessing and He pained her with renown,
For she bare the Lord's anointed, for His cross and for His crown."

III. THE PURPOSE—"To redeem them that were under the law". This is the grand culmination. Calvary was the place of conquest. He was born to bleed! Ferocious professors tell their students these days that the substitutionary theory of the Atonement is "crude". The preaching of the Cross has always offended the carnal mind! "The preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness". The offence of the cross has not ceased. Men want a Saviour they can measure by their own standards. Our Lord did not come merely to educate men nor to eliminate misery. He came to redeem. To Him man is much more than a creature in an imperfect state of development—he is a bond-slave to sin tied hand and foot. It is not enough if you would help a prisoner, to go to him and say—"Friend I come to instruct you, to amuse you, to help you to pass the time". What he wants is not to have his captivity made more tolerable, but to be set free. And our Lord came to make us free. "If the Son therefore shall make you free—ye shall be free indeed". We were bond-slaves to sin and Satan and He purchased our freedom at the infinite cost of His own precious blood. "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree".

Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
In my place condemned He stood,
Sealed my pardon with His blood,
Hallelujah—What a Saviour!

It is idle for men to reason that God can receive sinful men back into fellowship with Himself without the sacrifice of Christ. There is a Divine justice to be vindicated as well as a Divine mercy to be satisfied. A recognition of this is a primary essential in any scriptural view of Atonement. We cannot rid ourselves of the belief in a moral order—we know that an injury done lasts and that once we have committed sin we are as helpless as trapped birds. Only God can succour us. We must pay the penalty ourselves or Another must bear it for us. And He has! It is by His stripes we are healed. It is not what man can do but what God has done. Our sins are forgiven and the chain we have forged around ourselves is shattered because God has taken

the great task upon Himself. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself". All that needed to be done—all the law's demands, all that the severest sense of justice could require has been accomplished by the matchless, measureless love of God Himself. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God—how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out". The work of God in Christ is not merely the work of forgiveness but of redemption. The cost of that redemption to the love and holiness of God is such that we have no standards by which to measure it. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities—the chastisement of our peace was upon Him and with His stripes we are healed".

IV. THE PROMOTION—"That we might receive the adoption of sons". This really embraces everything. What can a child in a father's house have more than his full place there? Position, privilege, prospects, are all ours because "if children then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ." The modern assumption that all men by nature are "sons of God" negatives and nullifies the whole testimony of the Gospel. What need for adoption into God's family if we are there already by nature. The new birth would then be an impertinence. "We were by nature children of wrath even as others". Alas, many professing Christians are living more like foundlings than the children of the living God. Let us possess our possessions. We are not our own we have been bought with a price, let us therefore glorify God in our bodies and in our spirits which are His. It is related that when Brutus, the assassinator of Caesar, sat in his tent at dead of night—a huge shadowy form stood beside him. He asked, "Who art thou?" and the form seemed to answer, "I am thine evil genius, Brutus, we shall meet again." Every sinner has his evil genius at his elbow wherever he goes. You cannot escape from it. To those of you present this morning still without Christ I would now appeal. "How shall ye escape if you neglect so great salvation". Only the blood of Christ can give you peace. He is mighty to save. Having been delivered for our offences He was raised again for our justification and is able to save them to the uttermost who come into God through Him. Come to Him this morning. Trust Him implicitly, trust Him sincerely, for—

Soon as your all you venture
On the atoning blood,
The Holy Spirit enters
And you have peace with God.

THE GOSPEL WITNESS

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HOW MEN OF GOD ARE FEARED.

A Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, July 6th, 1924.

(Stenographically Reported.)

"And Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him, and was departed from Saul."—I Samuel 18:12.



A SPIRIT of pride and of jealousy took complete possession of Saul; and, notwithstanding the splendid and heroic service which David had rendered both the king and the state, because the women of Israel sang, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands . . . Saul eyed David from that day and forward." What a significant verse that is!—"And Saul eyed David from that day forward." And the result of his observation was to discover that the Lord was with David. "Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him, and was departed from Saul." I want you to examine that text a little while this morning.

I.

To begin with, here is the simple fact that **IT IS POSSIBLE FOR A MAN TO HAVE GOD WITH HIM.** That is a simple fact; and yet it is a statement of the most profound significance. Nothing more wonderful could possibly be stated than that—that it is possible for sinful men, for you and for me, to have God with us. And it is more important to have God with us than to be rich; than to be favoured by the world; than to occupy an exalted position of any sort: it is the greatest of all privileges which can come to any one—to have God with him. Some years ago there was a certain man in the United States who was a private citizen. He occupied no official position whatever; but he was known as a confidential friend of the President. And from obscurity, he suddenly became a world figure, only because it was known that he kept company with the President of the United States. During the time of the war, we had many heroes. There were thousands of men who distinguished themselves in various forms of service. But when any one of them was commanded to come into the presence of the king, and it was known that he enjoyed the king's favour; that the king had said to him, "Well done", for a certain piece of service, his name was published throughout the world as a man who had come before the king. And yet here is the truth, that it is not only possible for us to come before the King: it is possible for us to live with the King, to walk with the King, to talk with the King, to have God with us all the time.

Now, let us remark that *that is not true of any one naturally.* God is not with the natural man; for "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." I confess that there are a great many people that I would not like to live with. I don't mind meeting them: I would be glad to be of service to them. But I have met people whose tastes were so radically different from mine, whose whole view of life was so contrary to mine, that I was perfectly sure that I could not walk and talk with them long and be in agreement. Two cannot walk together unless they be agreed; and it is impossible for a man or woman or boy or girl to have God with him, and to walk with Him, unless there be some agreement between our spirits and the Spirit of God. And naturally there is no such agreement. Our tastes are different from His; our desires are contrary to His will. The whole set and bias of our life is in opposition to God; and there is no one of us who can have God with him until we have by the Spirit of God been brought to

repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now there are some people, I said, I would not care to live with; and I cannot conceive of any change that could possibly come to them that would make them agreeable companions. I do not mean to say that we should quarrel with them; nor that we should not be on good terms with those who are not naturally agreeable to us: there is a sense in which the Spirit of God can make us to love everybody, but not with the kind of love that could desire their daily companionship. You know what I mean: that there are people who in their very nature and constitution are mutually opposite. The wonder is that we, who are by nature so contrary to God, can be made over again so that God can really find pleasure in us and delight in our companionship. And that is the truth, the simple foundation truth that I bring to you to begin with; because I feel that I should do this always, lest there should be someone who is not converted.

The thing that separates us from God has been laid upon Jesus Christ. There is therefore no reason why, simply on the ground of our sinfulness, we should not walk with God; because He has made it possible for us to have our sins removed, cleansed away by the precious blood; our hearts made new by the power of His Spirit; and the whole man brought into agreement with God. Let me make that very plain to all you young people here this morning, and to those who are older. There is that one point of difference, of disagreement between every one of us and God, until the matter of sin is settled. There is one thing upon which we must agree with God; and when we agree with Him on that point, we may have God with us—and that is, in God's estimate of His Son. Supposing some one were to walk down street with one of you who is a father, to-morrow, as you were going to business, and say, "Good morning, Mr. So-and-so! How are you this morning?" You talk pleasantly about the weather and other things, until that man expresses an opinion about your son, if you have one. He tells you that he does not believe in your son; that he has no confidence in him, in his integrity; he speaks disrespectfully of your son. I am sure that the moment he expressed that view there would be disagreement between you; and I rather expect you would turn at the next corner, and say, "Good morning! I don't want to walk any farther with anybody who thinks of my son in that way."

God has said that Jesus Christ is His well-beloved Son. God says that Jesus came into the world to die for your sins and mine. God says that when Jesus died on the cross, He paid the debt of every one of us. God says that He was raised again from the dead; that He ascended into the glory; and that He is there interceding for such as come unto God by Him. And God says that everybody who believes on His Son; accepts His estimate of His Son; takes up the same attitude toward His Son that He has; believes in Him as God believes in Him; depends upon His sacrifice as an atonement for sin, as God accepts that sacrifice; looks to Him to intercede for him, even as God hears His intercession,—that the moment we believe with God, receiving Jesus Christ, we can walk together. Isn't that wonderful? I have put it that way so as to make it very simple.

"What think ye of Christ? is the test

To try both your plan and your scheme:

You cannot be right in the rest,

Unless you think rightly of Him."

And when you think rightly of Christ, you may, like David, have God with you. I pray that every one of us may leave this building this morning with the assurance that we go in step with God, in agreement with God; because we believe in the Name of His only begotten Son.

II.

A word or two about THE ADVANTAGES OF THIS DIVINE COMRADESHIP. What does it mean to have God with us? That is salvation. Salvation does not mean church membership; salvation is not in religious ordinances: it is in the Person of Christ Himself. And just as those two disciples walked the Emmaus road with Him, and talked with Him, and He opened their understanding, and at the same time opened to them the Scriptures, it is possible for us to have God with us in our homes, in our businesses, in all the relationships and occupations of life—to have God with us every day.

Now what advantages accrue to those who thus have God with them?

Look at this story; and you will find, that it meant to David, first of all, that *he was endowed with a superhuman wisdom*. Again and again we are told in this chapter that "David behaved himself wisely". He was under divine instruction, so that every step he took was taken in the will of God; and he was saved from taking wrong courses, and from doing wrong things, because, having God with him, he was endowed with a wisdom that was more than human. Is there anything we need more than that? We cannot see even into to-morrow. I have no doubt there are business men, who in their business would give almost any amount of money if only they could forecast business conditions for three months; if they could only know what to buy, how much to buy, and how to plan for the future. Do you remember how the Word of God says, "Go to, now, ye that say, To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. . . . For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that." We all have to-morrow before us—the duties of to-morrow; the problems of to-morrow; the difficulties of to-morrow; the burdens of to-morrow. We think we know something of what to-morrow will bring; but "boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." Before this sun shall set, the greatest surprise of your life may come to you; the greatest joy, or the greatest sorrow; the greatest problem; the greatest burden; the greatest difficulty. "Who is sufficient for these things?"

Your young people,—What are you going to be? What are you going to do with your lives? By and by, you will have to shoulder your share of the burdens of life. You will have to determine what your occupation should be, and to what particular form of service you will give your life. You will have to discover what your natural aptitudes are. How are you going to know what you ought to be, and where you ought to walk? Do you not see that above all things you need a Counsellor, Who can see your path of life right straight through to the end? If some human friend could come to you and tell you, "Your life is as an open book to me, with every page open," would you not be disposed to listen to such an one's counsel? But that is impossible on the human plane; but just as the life of David was an open book to God, and as He came to David and said: "David, I will walk with you, and I will direct every step all the way through", so He will come to us and He will direct our steps. How will He do it? That is what the Bible is for: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word." "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Those who are Christians have a divine Counsellor; and we can bring all our affairs to Him. If I were to stop preaching now and turn this into a testimony meeting, there are men and women here, I am sure, who could occupy the rest of the morning telling us how, when they came to life's cross-roads, and they did not know which turn to take,—they were in the fog, in the mist, and did not know which direction their life should take,—they looked to God; and, from the Word of the Lord, there came the word of divine wisdom, directing them in their path. These are simple things; but, my friends, what I want every one of you to learn is this: the Bible is to be a daily companion; its principles are to mould our conduct, and shape our character, and direct us in all our ways—just as David was directed when God was with him. But you cannot really have the direction of the Word of God without having God Himself.

Having God with him, *David was endowed with a superhuman strength*.

He was but a youth, ruddy, and of a fair countenance. And yet we heard last Sunday how the Lord was with him in the day of stress; and how he slew the lion and the bear, and later, the great giant of Gath. Now, the simple truth is this: that we none of us can live life successfully in our own strength. We all need the mighty power of God. I heard one of our young members say the other day, about examination time, that she had asked the Lord to help her through her examinations; and that He had done it. Do you think that is true? Do you think the Lord hears the prayer of a little child attending school? Do you believe the Lord opens their understanding? Do you believe He can make a boy or a girl strong in the hour of temptation? Do you believe He makes a man strong in the stressful hour of business? Is it really true that you and I, in all our human weakness, can enjoy an accession of divine strength that will make it possible for us to do the things that, in our own strength, are entirely impossible? That is the teaching of the Word of God: When we walk with Him, we live supernaturally; the power of the Holy Spirit is given to every one. And I beg of you young Christians, to give careful heed to the teaching of Scripture. Read for yourselves, in God's Holy Word, what He says of the possibilities of life in the Spirit. The Holy Spirit will take possession of us, and help us to live worthily and victoriously by the power of our God.

David was also endowed with a *superhuman patience*. If I were to ask you this morning: "When was David mightiest? when did he exemplify in his career the greatest measure of divine power?" I dare say some of you would answer: "He was a mighty man when he slew the lion and the bear; but I think he was mightiest of all when he went out and slew Goliath. That is what I should like to do. I should like to be strong enough to beat a giant." I do not think that was the mightiest time; I do not think that was the time when David experienced the greatest measure of divine power. There are a lot of returned soldiers here this morning. You remember your experience in the battle: you needed a good deal of courage, a good deal of real strength when you went over the top,—when you were in motion; when you were in attack. But didn't you find the hardest thing was just to be quiet under fire and do nothing? Wasn't that even more trying to the nerves than to be actually engaged in an assault upon the enemy? I do not believe David had his greatest difficulty with the Philistine: his greatest difficulty was Saul. I think David exemplified the mighty power of God as in no other time in his life when he came into the cave, and discovered that in utter helplessness there lay his worst enemy—there was Saul fast asleep. "And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily. And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt. And he said unto his men, The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord." David quietly retired from the cave; and when Saul was waking, David called to him from a safe distance, and he held up that little piece of drapery, and he said: "Do you see? I was close enough to you to cut off a piece of your robe; and you have been pursuing me as though I were your enemy. I hold this up now only as proof that I had you in my power, and I could have killed you if I had wanted to. But because you were the Lord's anointed, I refused to touch a hair of your head."

What is the greatest manifestation of divine power the world has ever seen? Do you say, it was in the life of the Lord Jesus? Yes: "God was manifest in the flesh". Bring His life before you, and tell me when was Jesus Christ the mightiest. Someone may say, "I think it must have been when He stood up in the boat, and said to the wind and the waves, 'Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.'" I do not think so. "Well, was it when He said to the leper, 'I will; be thou clean.'?" No! "When He opened the eyes of the blind?" No! "When He stood at the grave of Lazarus, and said, 'Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, 'Loose him, and let him go'?" No, not then! Look at Him in the Garden! A great band of soldiers come with swords and with staves;

and Peter says, "Now is the time to fight." He unsheaths his sword, and cuts off the ear of a servant of the high priest. "Then Jesus said unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath." It takes a good deal more power to put the sword into the sheath than to take it out; a great deal more might to refuse to fight than to fight. Pilate said: "Knowest thou not—proud of his power—that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." When was Jesus the mightiest? When at last they reached the summit of Calvary, the rough soldiers came, and laid hands on Jesus, and took Him—the Incarnation of Omnipotence; the Embodiment of all the power by which all worlds were made. He had said: "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" And you see Jesus allowing those rough soldiers to lay Him upon His back, and without resistance spread abroad His arms; drive the nails through His hands and through His feet; put a crown of thorns upon His brow; and then to lift that cross into a perpendicular position, and let it drop into the socket prepared for it, until the weight of His precious body rested upon the cruel nails—and the Incarnate God never resisted it! Will you tell me what engineer could dam back the power of Niagara, and command its mighty thunders to sleep? No engineer in the world would attempt it: it would be an utter impossibility with the weight of all those mighty natural reservoirs behind it. Listen! It required Omnipotence to control omnipotence. Only Almightyness could thus meekly have yielded to the Cross! And David was just a little bit—not much, but just a little bit—like great David's greater Son, when he endured Saul's persecution; and when he refused to stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed.

Why do we need the power of God? To enable us to endure, to be patient, to control our tongues. Do you know if some people could, by superhuman power, be enabled to hold their tongues, it would be one of the most stupendous miracles of modern times? There is nothing in the world that would glorify God so much as for people, sometimes, to be silent—just to stop talking.

"O for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise!"

Thank God some people haven't a thousand tongues! You may use the tongue you have a thousand times as much to praise God with; but let us every one pray God for the mighty power of God to be silent when He wants us to be silent!

A dear young girl said to me last night: "I have begun to feel a little uncomfortable in the prayer-meeting." "Why?" "Because I cannot speak. I used to praise the Lord, and say 'Amen' in my heart when I heard the testimony of others; but I cannot overcome that native timidity." I am not going to put a premium upon silence when we ought to witness for the Lord; but, on the other hand, let us remember that the talking Christian is not necessarily the one who brings most glory to God. Sometimes we should, like David, hold our peace; and, by the power of God's Spirit, stand in the presence of a great injustice and say nothing. It is a great thing to have a divine Companion; because you can be sure then, as David was, that everything will work out well in the end. He had not the slightest doubt that all the obstacles would be cleared; and that ultimately he would come to the throne. Thus, my dear friends, if God is with us, "all things work together for good to them that love God."

III.

Just this word, and I have done. DAVID ESPECIALLY NEEDED THE LORD WITH HIM BECAUSE SAUL WAS AGAINST HIM. And you and I especially need a friend; because we all have our enemy—"your adversary the devil." Saul is a type of that Prince from whom God's Spirit has been taken; and from whose hand the kingdom has departed: it is our David, and not the Devil, Who is ultimately to rule in this world. But for the present, Saul is recognized by many as the master.

And here is a wonderful saying: "Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him, and was departed from Saul." There is a world of sound theology in that hymn we sometimes sing:

"Restraining prayer, we cease to fight;
Prayer makes the Christian's armour bright;
And Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees."

It is literally true that the Devil himself is afraid of a man who has God with him. What a wonderful thing that it is possible, by the power of the Spirit of God, to inspire even the Devil himself with fear! "The devils also believe, and tremble." When I was in Minneapolis the other day, I heard Dr. Munhall, that great old warrior, that veteran in the things of God, speak. He is only eighty-two. He has never spent a day in bed in his life; and he has been preaching—I do not know how long: I think it must have been from the beginning, almost. But I heard him speak one evening on "The Devil." And he said: "I am going to tell you a parable of a traveller who went into a certain town; and, as he walked down the street, he came to a magnificent church. Architecturally, it was fine. He went inside; and it was splendidly furnished. No service was being held at the time; and so he walked through all the rooms of the place. At last he found the door into the belfry. He climbed up into the belfry, because he thought he would like to see everything; and there, up in the tower, he found a little imp—a little devil—fast asleep, curled up like a pussy cat on the hearth. He did not disturb him. He walked out, and down the street. Just on the outskirts of the town, the traveller found a little log cabin; and he was amazed to discover that there were devils on the roof, and looking in at the window, and keeping guard at the door, and the garden all around was filled with them—a great congregation of evil spirits. He wondered what in the world could have attracted so many of the friends of the pit to this little log cabin; and he ventured to address one who seemed to be standing guard at the gate. He said: 'What are you doing here? Who lives here?' And he mentioned the name. It was an old negro woman of seventy or eighty years of age, who had been bed-ridden for many years. She was lying on her back, and could not move at all. The traveller said: 'Well, why are you here? I passed a church just now; and I explored the whole building. There was nobody there, and I went up into the tower and there was just one little devil keeping guard over that whole establishment.' And this devil said: 'He has not half a job either. One is quite enough to look after that church. They do not have any prayer-meetings; they do not have any gospel services; they do not have any daily witness for Christ: that church is not disturbing us very much. Just to make assurance doubly sure, we have one on guard there; but he has not anything to do.' 'Well,' said the traveller, 'I should think one would be enough to look after this old woman, and send the others up there.' 'Oh, no,' he said, 'she keeps us all busy.' 'How is that? She is on her bed; she cannot get out to work.' 'No, she just prays; and I tell you when she begins to pray we all have our hands full. We cannot keep her in order at all'."

Well, it is only a parable, but there is a great principle. "Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him"; and if the Lord is really with you, evil men will be afraid of you, too. They will say all sorts of things against you. They won't love you, but they will respect you. They will say: "We have got something to reckon with when we deal with that man, or with that woman." If God is with you, you need not be afraid of anybody. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" And, my friends, that is true of a church. I think that a praying church is likely to keep the Devil busy; he is not likely to take a vacation. As long as a church keeps on praying, he will be busy. And he will be busy with all the church members; he will try to find some way of getting hold of you, one way or the other. But I beg of you, let us learn more and more perfectly to walk with God, and let Him have the first place! Then we shall triumph in all things; and every evil power will be afraid of us. In apostolic days, such divine power was manifested in the ministry of those apostolic preachers, that, at one time, great fear fell upon all the people. And I

think we ought to be able, by the blessing of God, to inspire men and women, not with fear of ourselves, but with "the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom."

IV.

But there is A TERRIBLE WARNING here: "The Lord . . . was departed from Saul." Saul's history is one of the tragedies of all time. How splendidly he began! With what promise he set out upon his royal career! How humble, how modest in the beginning! He had almost to be dragged into public view. Who would have dreamed that lurking in the folds of the heart of that modest man was a pride which would by and by defy God to His face? If you would know what human nature really is, if you would know the depths and totality of human depravity, study the life of Saul, the son of Kish.

What splendid natural qualities he possessed—what physical perfection, what sagacity, what courage, what powers of leadership in general!

And what opportunities to serve his own generation by the will of God. The nation was crying out for a champion, when the crown was put upon the brow of Saul and the sceptre in his hand.

But the success of another was Saul's undoing. He could not endure to hear David praised. Envy and jealousy, like a deadly cancer gripped his soul. His humility was swallowed up by pride; his modesty was destroyed by his passion for applause. The glory of the temporal blinded him to spiritual realities. The Babel voices of time drowned the still small voice of God's word, until all spiritual faculties were atrophied and he was left guideless by the awful silence of the skies. He was no longer on speaking terms with God! And while still occupying his high position attended by all the pomp and splendour which surrounded the throne, "The Lord . . . was departed from Saul." Oh, terrible fate! To be forsaken of God! While still on earth in the body, honoured and even lauded by men,—forsaken of God! While David enjoyed a foretaste, an earnest of heaven, in the abiding presence of the Lord with him, Saul had a foretaste of the outer darkness because "the Lord was departed from him."

Shall we not heed this solemn warning? How sadly possible for men to occupy official position in the church and the denomination; and yet to permit the love of the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, to close the heart against the Spirit of God. If thus the heart is opened to pride and envy and jealousy, a terrible harvest of remorse is in prospect.

Surely this can never be true of a truly regenerate soul, but it may be of one who has professed to be of the company of the Lord's anointed. Then the teacher is powerless before his class, the preacher is but as a sounding brass in the pulpit, and church and denominational officials appear as only lifeless machines. And forthwith they gnash their teeth at every David with whom God in His abounding grace abides.

May God in His mercy save us from such a fall, and from such forsakenness. For still, alas! alas, with melancholy appropriateness of some it may be said: "The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places; how are the mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. Ye mountains of Gilboa let there be no dew neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful: passing the love of women. How are the mighty fallen and the weapons of war perished!"

Editorial.

ALTON BAPTIST CHURCH.

On Saturday, August 14, 1926, the corner stone of the new Alton Baptist Church was laid. About 100 people motored out from Jarvis Street. The stonework of the new church was laid half way up the windows of main auditorium and the corner stone was laid at the corner of the vestibule of the church. Photographs of the crowds attending were taken during the ceremony, some of which we hope to reproduce next week. The corner stone was laid by the Rev. C. J. Cameron, B.A., Secretary of Home Missions, who gave an appropriate address on "What Baptists Stand For". Mayor Gruetzner, of Hespeler, a friend of the church and a generous contributor to its building fund, spoke briefly; and prayer was offered by the Rev. W. M. Robertson, of Liverpool, after which an address was given by the Editor of *The Gospel Witness*. The collection taken in the open air meeting amounted to about two hundred and thirty dollars. *The Gospel Witness* has received for the Alton church a little over seven hundred dollars to date. We are sure that thousands of our readers intend sometime to make a contribution. When the pictures are seen they will be still further stimulated to forward their gifts. But this note is to request that contributions be forwarded at once. Several gifts of \$25.00, one of \$50.00, and two of \$100.00 each have been received, and the rest of the \$700.00 has been made up by smaller amounts.

Pastor McGinlay is having his first experience at church building. The building will be of stone, and the stone is costing nothing beyond the cost of hauling it to the place.

It was a great sight, as the photographs will show, to see the village street crowded with interested spectators, while a deep spiritual tone characterized the services—and all this in a village where, a year ago, religion was at such a low ebb, that nobody seemed to care for men's souls. We ask our readers to think of this young Pastor daring to venture upon this great enterprise at the beginning of his ministry. About five years ago he had never been in a place of worship. Invited by a friend, the Lord soon laid hold upon him and brought him to himself. Thrust forth as a labourer into the vineyard he finds himself wonderfully used of God. But now he is having a new experience—responding to contractors' demands and looking for money to pay the bills. Let us all help this young man and help him now. We only wish our readers could have felt the thrill we felt to see the great company of people gathered in a village street, to witness the corner stone laying of a new Baptist church which had been born in a revival in our time! Send in a thankoffering for this demonstration that the gospel is still the power of God with salvation to every one that believeth.

A VISITING GLASGOW PREACHER.

Rev. R. J. Smithson, B.Th., Pastor of Victoria Place Baptist Church, Glasgow, has been supplying the pulpit of the Parkdale Church for a few Sundays. We are informed that Mr. Smithson would like to settle in Canada. He spent a short time in Canada some years ago, receiving the degree of B.Th. from McMaster University. In a letter to *The Canadian Baptist* some months ago,

among those to whom he said he "owed a debt he could never repay", he named Professor I. G. Matthews, the man who was chiefly responsible for sowing the seeds of Modernism in this Convention. In the same letter Mr. Smithson quoted Dr. James Moffat as having remarked on his return from America that he "was greatly perplexed by the situation", saying that "he found Fundamentalists who had five points—five points that would have shut the Lord Jesus out of His own church!" Mr. Smithson evidently has no love for Fundamentalists. We have been told that when Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick visited Glasgow, Mr. Smithson recommended his people to go and hear him as one of the world's greatest preachers.

We understand Mr. Smithson is a man of considerable ability, and any church in the Convention that it not opposed to the teaching of Dr. Fosdick might find in Mr. Smithson a pastor after its own heart.

A GREAT DAY IN JARVIS STREET.

Sunday last was a day of marvellous blessing in Jarvis Street. Mr. Robertson's morning sermon was on the Church as the Body of Christ. It was a mighty plea for the recognition of the Headship of Christ, showing that only by such recognition could "the church which is His body" express the mind of Christ. In the evening we had a double-header. The Rev. J. W. Kemp, now of Auckland, N.Z., always a welcome visitor in Jarvis Street, preached on the Second Coming of Christ to a congregation that filled the house, after which Rev. W. M. Robertson preached to about 2,000 out of doors on the church grounds on "The Great Salvation", and this was again followed by another brief address from Mr. Kemp. It was a fine sight to see the great mass of people assembled at the open air service—hundreds of men standing shoulder to shoulder as close as they could stand, among them, doubtless, large numbers who never attend a place of worship. We are sure many hearts were touched, and we believe many were saved.

CONVERSION OF C. H. SPURGEON.

Who Led the Great Preacher to Christ?

Editorial Note.—In a sermon published some time ago in *The Gospel Witness*, we referred to the conversion of Rev. C. H. Spurgeon. The Rev. W. J. Mayers, of Bournemouth, England, writes us under date of August 6th, saying that our account of the matter was not correct. We have read several versions of Spurgeon's conversion and have long wished that the various accounts might be critically investigated and the facts in the case established. This Mr. Mayers seems to have done, and we are grateful for the account which we publish below, and which was published in *The Christian* (London), April 1st, 1926.

We venture to suggest that a useful purpose would be served if other papers would reprint Mr. Mayer's article. Everything relating to the life of the greatest preacher of all time is of perennial interest.

One of the many charms of Mr. Fearce Carey's biography of his illustrious great-grandfather, lies in its dedication. It runs thus: "To the memory of John Warr, of Yardley Gobion, Potters Pury, the fellow-apprentice to whose importunity Carey owned his early quest for God." Though having been hidden for long years, Mr. Carey delights in the discovery of this name, and most appropriately acknowledges its importance, and gives it a place of honour in his book.

No such honour has been given to the man who led to Christ, by his earnest call to "Look unto Him," the preacher who in his day repeated the clarion note and led many thousands into spiritual liberty and peace. One searches in vain all C. H. Spurgeon's biographies for the name of his "father in Christ," and yet on many occasions he gave, with impressive detail, the story of his conversion, and furnished evidence which, if consistently followed up, must lead to only one conclusion, that the man so signally honoured was Rev. Robert Eaglen, Primitive Methodist minister, of Ipswich, who laboured in the circuit of which Colchester was a branch, from 1849 to 1851. This honoured servant of Christ never presented to the public his claim to being Spurgeon's spiritual father, nor did he ever boastfully put himself to the front in the matter. It was left to his son-in-law, Rev. Danzy Sheen (who read and approved this article just before his recent home-call) to bring to light the facts of the case, and to print them some years ago. But many have never seen the printed page, and others have forgotten what they read, yet it is not too late to bring the subject forward again, and to do tardy justice to a humble but faithful man, long since passed to his reward, whose labour on that Sunday morning in January, 1850, brought such a blessing to the whole world.

A Snowy Day.

On only one occasion was Mr. Eaglen introduced to Mr. Spurgeon, who, looking at him, said: "No, I don't think this is the man;" but when referring to the arousing sentence which wrought such wonders in his soul, the great preacher more than once said: "I know not what else he said; I did not take much notice of it, I was so possessed with that one thought."

Evidently the words of the Primitive Methodist preacher had impressed him more than his person. On that he remarked, on the occasion just referred to: "The man I heard was as pale as death, and as thin as a skeleton," but he might have found out how wonderfully Mr. Eaglen recovered from his pale and emaciated condition of 1850, and at the time in question (some eight or nine years after) had put on flesh and had the glow of health in his face. But let us look at some of the items of evidence, and in this we are able to use Mr. Spurgeon's own references to the happy event, given in New Park Street Chapel, at Exeter Hall, at a great open-air meeting in Hackney, at the very chapel in Colchester in which he was converted, and possibly in many other places.

(1) Mr. Spurgeon mentions that the day was snowy, that the preacher was late, that the place was the Primitive Methodist Chapel, Colchester, the date January 6th, 1850, and that the text was Isaiah 45:22. All this was clearly in Mr. Eaglen's recollection, his being due to preach at Colchester at the time named, his being made late by the snowstorm, and the text he took on the occasion. In fact, the notes of the very sermon he preached were preserved. Of these Mr. Spurgeon remarked, when they were brought to his notice: "It may be so, but we do not think it." But this must be taken with his other remark, already referred to; "I did not take much notice of it" (i.e., the sermon).

(2) The conversion of the lad of fifteen was freely spoken of at the very time in the town and district, and no doubt was cast upon Mr. Eaglen's being the preacher. Several members of the Primitive Methodist communion testified that they were present at the service, and that Mr. Eaglen was the preacher, and the fact of C. H. Spurgeon so soon leaping into fame led them to recall the memorable occasion. Indeed, one of these good men declared that he saw Mr. Spurgeon at the service, and a young man who knew both C. H. Spurgeon

and Mr. Eaglen said: "There's another feather in Mr. Eaglen's cap: young Spurgeon has got converted under his preaching."

Robert Eaglen.

(3) One local preacher of the time was foreman of the coal yard where Mr. John Spurgeon (father of C. H. Spurgeon) was then manager. He afterward became a Congregational minister. He stated that in answer to Mr. John Spurgeon's question as to who had preached on the occasion of his son's conversion, he made the confident reply that it was Mr. Eaglen. It is true that Mr. Spurgeon's father afterward stated that it was "a local preacher from Great Bromley" who occupied the Primitive Methodist pulpit on that day, but this statement is entirely refuted by the facts that the only local preacher at Bromley was a woman, and the place itself was not in the Colchester circuit. C. H. Spurgeon did mention the man as a local preacher, but he also stated that "the minister rose in his pulpit," etc.; and indeed the status of the preacher cannot be counted as of any importance. In one account, Mr. Spurgeon spoke of the preacher as "a poor man, a shoemaker, a tailor or something of that sort, who was really stupid, and did not even pronounce his words rightly, but that did not matter." Of the first part of this statement Spurgeon could not possibly have had any knowledge, and as to the latter part it is certain that the preacher pronounced rightly the words which fixed the young man's attention and found their way to his heart.

(4) I do not know if Mr. Spurgeon's biographers examined this evidence, but in Mrs. Spurgeon's life of her husband, on the page (105) which gives the account of the conversion, there is a footnote stating that three persons had claimed to be the preacher. No names are given, nor any evidential ground for the claims made. Mr. Robert Eaglen's name stands alone, and no attempt has ever been made to refute the arguments by which that name occupies the place of honour. It is passing strange that a marble tablet should have been erected in the Colchester Primitive Methodist Chapel to mark the spot where the great preacher's eye of faith fell upon the Crucified One, and that the old pulpit from which the potent cry went forth should have been purchased and placed in the orphanage which Spurgeon founded, but the man whom God so honoured has been almost ignored.

In some aspects the matter is one of small importance; in others it is not so. We have the authority of Scripture for revering the names of men who led others to Christ—Andrew and Simon Peter, Philip and Nathanael, Paul and Timothy, to wit. Those of us who are Gospel preachers rejoice when we are told of those we have influenced for eternity by our efforts. Let no exception be made in the case of so notable a convert as C. H. Spurgeon. Let us give glory to God, and thank Him that, by His Spirit, He so signally and efficaciously used His servant, Robert Eaglen.

W. J. M.

BAPTIST BIBLE UNION SENIOR LESSON LEAF

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Lesson 10 THIRD QUARTER September 5, 1926

THE WATER OF LIFE.

LESSON TEXT: John, chapter 7.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink" (John 7:37).

I. THE UNKNOWN CHRIST—Vss. 1-9.

1. It is sometimes assumed that the things of Christ should be so popular that everybody may understand and appreciate them; but Christ was unknown even to His own brethren. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, neither can flesh and blood understand the things of the Spirit. Mere fleshly relationships count for nothing in religion. 2. His brethren bade Him

show Himself and His work. It is the mark of weakness to be impatient to advertise one's self: a truly great man is not impatient to be known. So Christ awaited His own hour.

II. JESUS GOES UP TO THE TEMPLE.

1. Men will never be unanimous respecting Christ (vs. 12). The teaching of Jesus showed Him to be more than man. The Jews marveled saying, "How knoweth this Man letters, having never learned"? 3. Christ teaches that belief is the function of the will rather than of the intellect (vss. 16, 17). Only the Spirit of God can change the will. Men believe what they want to believe. 4. His enemies are indignant when He reveals to them their design to kill Him, and repudiate the idea. In a certain university senate of which the writer is a member, he made his protest against certain modernistic tendencies in the institution; and when criticized for his protest he said that if any other member of the senate offered a suggestion it would be listened to. Whereupon the senate became unanimously indignant that its honor and impartiality should have been impugned. It is the same principle which operates always where the Word of God is at stake: when Christ told the Jews what they knew was a fact, that they were seeking to kill Him, they answered, "Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill Thee?" 5. The implacability of the human mind is here illustrated (vss. 21-23). When the heart is full of hatred and the will is set in opposition, it is useless to inform the mind: nothing that even Christ Himself could say changed the attitude of His enemies who were determined to kill Him. The charge which they denied—that they sought to kill Him—is now confirmed by popular report (vss. 25, 26). 6. The invulnerability of truth and righteousness, however, as incarnated in Christ here appears (vs. 30): Christ chose His own time and place to die, and until His hour was come no man could touch Him.

III. THE PHARISEES AND CHIEF PRIESTS TRY TO TAKE HIM—Vss. 32-45.

1. Jesus offered no resistance but His word. His word, whether in His lips or ours, is the Sword of the Spirit, and the most effective, indeed the only effective weapon in battling for the truth. 2. Christ predicted the descent of the Spirit (vss. 37-39). He came not only to be a blessing to men, but to make men channels of blessing to others. This promise found its fulfilment on the day of Pentecost; and may now be fulfilled in the experience of every believer. 3. Varying views of Christ (vss. 40-42). Some said He was a prophet; others, the Christ; other quoted Scripture to prove that He was neither; whereas the very Scripture they quoted found its fulfilment in Him. Thus it appears that it is possible to know the letter of Scripture, even to search the Scripture, and not find Christ. 4. There was a division among the people because of Him (vs. 43). This is a verse we do well to ponder in this day when men seek to compel, if not union, unanimity; and succeed only in effecting divisions. The truth is, Christ is the great Divider, and He will divide, at last, the people of all nations as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. The Christian Church is a divisive force: it separates—or should separate—believers from unbelievers.

IV. THE DISAPPOINTED PHARISEES.

1. The very officers who were sent to arrest Christ, when they returned empty-handed and were asked by their masters why they had not brought Him, replied: "Never man spake like this Man." We should expect a record like this of Him Who is called "the Word", and Who, in the beginning, was God. 2. The Pharisees mockingly enquired, "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him"? They might have said, "What is the consensus of scholarship? What is the attitude of the educated mind? What do the people of place and station say about Christ"? In a former lesson we observed His Word, "I receive not testimony from men". The Incarnate Word, the Son of God, who is God the Son, is independent of the consensus of scholarship, and of the attitude of the wise and the noble and the mighty. 3. Poor middle-of-the-road Nicodemus—and his record is again charged against him, "He that came to Jesus by night"—meekly asked a question; but, being rebuked, he lapses again into silence. Yet he, of all men, was then competent to answer the question, "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him"? What would have happened if Nicodemus had boldly answered, "Yes, I believe"!