

# The Gospel Witness

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T. T. SHIELDS, *Editor.*

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

Address correspondence: THE GOSPEL WITNESS, 130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto.

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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

### HOW A RELIGIOUS OFFICIAL SOLD HIS SOUL

A Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, November 14, 1926  
 (Stenographically Reported.)

"He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night."  
 —John 13: 30.



THINK I can compress what I have now to say—for what has preceded was the strange work of which I spoke in the beginning (referring to the address on Prohibition)—I want now to preach the gospel, for all the prohibition in the world is only an outward regulation, and it cannot change the hearts of men,—

"None but Jesus  
 Can do helpless sinners good."

Notwithstanding, I would rather preach to a sober man than a drunken one.  
 "He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night."  
 The text is about Judas, one of the twelve, and I ask you to note this evening four steps which this man took to destruction.

I.

In the first place, it is said of him that he was a thief, that is, *he cherished in his heart, he entertained in his heart, a covetous desire.* His fellow-disciples did not know he was a thief: he passed among men as a perfectly respectable man. Not only so, he was numbered with a company of religious men, and he sat at the feet of the greatest religious Teacher the world has ever known; he kept company, indeed, with the incarnate God, listened to the gracious words which proceedeth out of His mouth, witnessed the manifestations of miraculous power which characterized His ministry; but through it all he had received into his heart, had given hospitality to, an evil desire—not what some men would call a very sinful desire, for someone will say, "It is surely legitimate for a man to want to increase his bank account, to have a passion for making money and for getting on. That is perfectly legitimate"—yes, it is perfectly legitimate within limits. But here was a man who coveted that which was another's; he was a potential thief, because he had set his heart upon that which was not his own; and that desire, mark you, so mastered him as to render him unresponsive even to the appeal of Jesus Christ.

Why is it people do not accept Christ? Why is it He is crowded out of

human life? There are men and women here this evening who are not Christians, and yet if one should follow you from Monday morning until Sunday night, they would observe nothing in your outward character with which he could find fault. You may be a dutiful citizen, you may be an honourable man in business, whether as an employer or employee, you may be a good father and husband, and all that—but there is no place for Christ in your life. Why is there not? Why have you hitherto steeled your heart against Him? I remember years ago preaching in a little country place, helping a pastor, and there was one man who rose one evening indicating his desire after Christ. He was the principal of the public school in that community, and he came to see me the next day. He said, "Under the influence of the meeting last night I rose, but I cannot accept your Saviour." I said, "Why not, Mr. So-and-So?" "Because," he said, "I have marked out a path for myself through life, I have set before me a certain ambition; I am a man of strong will, and I am determined to realize that ambition. When I have attained my goal, then I may give consideration to the matter of which you speak; but at present the acceptance of Christ, and submission to Him, would run right across my plan and purpose, and prevent the realization of my ambition. I thought I would come and tell you that, though I stood up last night under the influence of the meeting, in my calmer moments I have definitely and finally decided to pursue my own course." Ah, yes! What became of him, I do not know; but it is this principle I must emphasize: there was something in his heart incompatible with a walk with Christ, and he determined to maintain that, although outwardly it had no effect in the way of making him a subject of remark even among his religious friends. That is point one—I am going to be simple and direct—the entertainment of a covetous desire which so mastered him as to effect the exclusion of Jesus Christ from his heart.

## II.

What follows? In this chapter you will find it is said—and this is a step further—"The devil having now put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him"—first of all, Judas cherished this desire for money, property, worldly advancement, he nourished that until it mastered him; and then Satan came knocking at his door and said, "I have come to tell you *how you can realize your desire.*" Judas did not know that he was preparing to entertain the Devil, not for a moment: he was merely entertaining what he would have called a "legitimate desire" for money, for temporal good; but he so yielded himself to that, that at last the Devil came and whispered to him, making that an occasion for the temptation, "I will tell you how you can realize your desire." Now I doubt not that he had already realized it in part: the Scripture says, "This he said . . . because he was a thief, and had the bag." He had already been helping himself out of the treasury of the disciples—and Jesus knew it. He had not parted company with them, probably he intended to put it back again.

He had been helping himself, and perhaps he had surrendered some things in the interests of that desire. But listen: *there came a time when that desire came into competition with Jesus Christ, and Satan said, "You can realize your desire by selling Him—but you cannot have that and Christ: you can have that or Christ, but you cannot have both. Which will you have?"* That time comes in the life of every man: whatever the evil thing may be, he has at last to make choice between Christ and Barabbas.

There is someone here to-night who has to do that—and this may be the final choice for you. Oh, I fear I have seen men in prominent positions religiously sell their Lord for worldly advantage, and for popular applause. The passion for the spotlight, the passion for human favour,—“perfectly legitimate”, someone will say. In the beginning mother was wont to praise the lad, and say, "He is a fine boy." When he came home from school with his record she told all the neighbours about it. Then the circle widened and all said, "He is a fine boy, he is doing so well at high school." And when he went to college he had a pleasing personality, and people began to pat him on the back and say, "He has a great future." So the poor boy's head was turned, and he began to seek honour such as this world can give, and he said in his heart, "I must have-it."

I heard of one saying about a certain preacher, "He cannot preach unless he is appreciated"! Well, the preacher who cannot preach without appreciation

ought to stop preaching at once, for if he is faithful to his trust, he will have to preach some time without anyone's appreciation. By and by, popular applause, standing well with the crowd, becomes as the very breath of his nostrils, he cannot live without it; and then there comes that hour when he has to take his stand with reference to Jesus Christ. Will you turn your back upon the world, and the things of the world, daring to go without the camp with Him, or will you cling to the world's "Well done", and sacrifice your Lord? Satan put it into Judas' heart to betray Him, and he parleyed with the Devil and said, "That is a good idea. I never thought I could make money out of my religion before, but that is first rate!"—and already his hands were itching for the thirty pieces of silver!

### III.

Now the third step: you remember the story. Jesus looked out upon His disciples and said, "One of you shall betray me." And they began to ask, "Lord, is it I?"—but no one pointed a finger at Judas and said, "There is the man." He had so covered up his true character that even the disciples did not know that he was the man, not one of them ever imagined it. And Jesus said, "He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon." Even then the disciples did not understand, for as He gave it to him He said, "That thou doest, do quickly." And they thought that He had told Judas to go and buy something for the feast! They did not discern the meaning of it. But the Scripture implies that Jesus looked into the very soul of Judas and said, "Judas, I know what you have planned to do, I know that you have planned to sell Me for thirty pieces of silver, I know that you have been to the high priest, and you have made a contract; and I am giving you this sop that you may know that your Lord and Master knows what you are going to do. Now that thou doest, do quickly." And Judas took the sop, and I suppose that just for a fraction of a second he may have said, "Shall I?", and as he put the sop to his lips, "Satan entered into him"—*not an idea, but Satan himself! Judas locked his heart against the Lord God, and the Devil came in to take possession of it: he took charge of his memory and he could no longer remember Christ's goodness; took charge of his understanding, blinded his mind, possessed his judgment and his reason, drugged his conscience, shackled his will, and said, "I have got you body and soul." Of course he had!—"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey."*

And, my friends, it is possible to entertain an evil thought until it takes possession of the whole mind; and by and by the enemy comes knocking at the door with promise of reward, and as you listen to him he is like a book-agent, he puts his foot inside, and presently he is inside the house, and the door is shut behind him, and he says, "I am master here."

### IV.

"He then having received the sop went immediately out"—he turned his back upon Jesus Christ. He received the sop and he went immediately out, and the door closed behind him, and outside—oh, the pregnant words of Scripture—"IT WAS NIGHT"! Yes, it is night-time when a man turns his back upon the Light of the world. It is possible, my friends, to say "no" to Jesus Christ for the last time; it is possible to receive the sop, to reject the testimony of the Word of God, and go out from the presence of the Saviour of sinners; and when any man does that, he goes out into the night. Oh, what a night it is! To Judas it was a *night of remorse*, for when he had got outside, although I suppose there was not a star in the sky, he began to repent, and when later he saw that Jesus was condemned, he came back with the thirty pieces of silver,—I read the other day of a man who had employed some boys to work for him and he promised to pay them for the day's work with a few cents. He put the coppers in a frying pan and made them hot, and when the boys came for their pay he gave them coppers that were nearly red hot, and their hands were burned, and they threw them down—the Devil always pays his dupes with money heated in the flames of hell, and you cannot keep it if you want to. Judas brought his thirty pieces of silver and flung them down, saying, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. Here is your money." And they said, "We don't want it. What is that to us? See thou to that." But he threw it down, ringing upon the temple floor—and he had to see to it!

Not always, my friends, will the gospel be preached:

"There is a line by us unseen,  
That crosses every path;  
The hidden boundary between  
God's patience and His wrath.

"To pass that limit is to die,  
To die as if by stealth,  
It does not quench the beaming eye,  
Nor pale the glow of health.

"How long may we go on to sin?  
How long will God forbear?  
Where does hope end, and where begin  
The confines of despair?"

"An answer from the skies is sent,  
'Ye that from God depart,  
While it is called to-day, repent,  
And harden not your heart!'"

It was a *night of despair*: Judas saw, that having shut his heart against Christ, there was no hope; and you remember he went out and hanged himself; and the Scripture says that he went "to his own place". And it is possible for some man here to turn his back upon Christ, to leave this building to-night, to go out into the night which, spiritually, can know no morning. Oh, how graciously tender and patient our loving Lord is! He knew it all the time, and even after Judas had taken the money, when he met Him in the garden, Jesus made a last appeal: as he came saying, "Hail, master", the suffering and infinitely patient Saviour said, "Friend—friend, wherefore art thou come? Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? Is it too late, Judas? Here in the garden, with blood upon your soul, oh, will you take the backward step and say, 'I will not do it?'" Judas came to Him and said, "Hail, master!"—and the deed was done, the die was cast, and the son of perdition was lost. *He went—listen, listen!—he went from the Communion Table, went from the midst of a religious assembly, went out from the presence of the Lord of life and of glory, and went straight to "his own place" in hell.*

Shall we trust Christ to-night? Shall we heed His call to-night? Shall we repent of our sin to-night? Shall we heed His call to-night? Shall we repent of our sin to-night? because there may be never another night, never another day, for any of us. God help us to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved.

When I was converted the Lord gave me a child's verse, and I pass it on to you: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." I say, it is a child's verse, because it is the simplest verse I know. An obscure preacher quoted it; I don't remember anything he said in his sermon—I fear I was rather tired of the sermon,—but he quoted the text, and then he said this, "That is the Word of God; and if you confess your sins, God will forgive you, and when you have confessed them, one of two things has taken place: either you are a Christian, or God has become a liar." "Oh", I said to myself, "God could not be a liar. Then if I confess my sins they will be forgiven this minute", and just simply in my pew I looked up to the Lord and said, "Lord, I confess my sins and I dare to believe that they are all blotted out, washed away by His precious blood." Will you do that to-night as we bow in His presence for a moment's silent prayer all over the house? I appeal to every man and to every woman who is without assurance of salvation, here and now, lest this be your last opportunity, to pray this prayer, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

Let us bow in prayer: O Lord our God, "a broken and a contrite heart", Thy Word tells us, "Thou wilt not despise", and we need Thee so much this evening. By Thy Holy Spirit wilt Thou help every man and woman, and boy and girl, here this evening, who has not done so up to this hour, to breathe this prayer, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." Thou hast said that "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Work in the hearts of all such the faith that lays hold of Christ, and give to every one full assurance of faith to-night. Then, Lord, wilt Thou give courage to any who have thus yielded to Thee, to confess Thee, here and now openly to acknowledge Jesus as Saviour and Lord. We ask it in Thy name, Lord Jesus, Amen.

## McMASTER UNIVERSITY AND DR. J. FRANK NORRIS.

*The Gospel Witness* has refrained from referring to the sad experience of Dr. J. Frank Norris since the publication of our telegram shortly after the Texas tragedy had occurred. McMaster defenders, thinking to injure the Editor of this paper, have not scrupled to make use of that terrible event for their own base purposes. Professor A. L. McCrimmon, Chancellor H. P. Whidden, and Dr. John MacNeill, all referred to it on the floor of the Convention. And now *The Canadian Baptist*, on its editorial page, refers to it in these words:

"A Southern Baptist pastor—now facing trial for murder in his state—in his own private journal says:

'Modernism wins temporary victory in Canadian Convention.'

Ontario and Quebec Baptists regard his comments upon the recent Convention as an impertinence; ordinary decency would suggest that one against whom there is an indictment for murder is ill fitted to lecture on Fundamentalism—in fact, he seems much more "modern" than Fundamental—"modern" of the wild and woolly type that was once common in the West but which is now almost as extinct as the mastodon."

"For instance, Rev. J. Frank Norris, of Texas shooting fame", etc.

Let us examine this matter a little. Let us begin by supposing, for the sake of argument, that Dr. J. Frank Norris is altogether a bad man. Let us suppose him to be a thousand times worse than most of the men confined in penitentiaries. In the eyes of British law, a man is innocent until he is proved guilty. Let us suppose that even the ugly word "murderer" is rightly applied to this case. What then? It is a case that has not yet been settled in the courts. By any decent journalist in the world, who has an infinitesimal fraction of regard for fair play, the matter would be looked upon as sub judice, and therefore not open to discussion.

But let us look at it from a Christian standpoint. Still assuming that Dr. Norris is a very bad man, he has stood before the world as a Christian minister. If this tragedy could be regarded as marking the revelation of a character other than Christian, a Christian man or journal would scarcely gloat over his fall. We should expect infidel journals and leud fellows of the baser sort to try to make capital of such events against the cause of Christ, but one might suppose a Christian would regard it with profound regret, if not actually with tears. Instead of that, the defenders of McMaster, including *The Canadian Baptist*, have seemed to revel in the tragedy, and as we used to hear one brother say in his prayer in the prayer-meeting, "roll it as a sweet morsel under their tongue." Even on the assumption that Dr. Norris was absolutely without justification for his act, we are ashamed that anyone calling himself a decent man, to say nothing of a Christian minister, professor, or editor, should descend to such levels as these men have done.

But let us look at it from another point of view. Personally, we have sorrowed over this tragedy scarcely less than Dr. Norris himself. We know that it has been used all over the Continent by the enemies of the truth, but what are the known facts? The tragedy occurred in Dr. Norris' study. A man but a few moments before had telephoned threatening to kill him. Almost certainly Dr. Norris paid little heed to the threat, for the reason that intending murderers do not often warn their victims in advance. He probably dismissed it from his mind, as we ourselves have dismissed many threats which were almost as bad. It was not until the man burst into his study, threatening him with violence, that the telephone conversation obtained any real significance. Immediately he must have known that he had to do with a desperate character. We have known Dr. Norris for some years. A man who held himself more perfectly under control we have never known. He seemed to be always, even under the most trying circumstances, master of himself. We do not believe that Dr. Norris would have taken a weapon of any sort in his hand had he not himself been thoroughly persuaded that his life was in jeopardy. The questions we have to ask are these, Why did the man telephone if he did not mean what he said?

What right had he in Dr. Norris' office? All the circumstances of the case prove Dr. Norris' assailant to have been the aggressor. What followed? We do not now, for the moment, view it from the strictly Christian standpoint, but ask our readers to look at the legal aspect of this matter. Legally, if Dr. Norris can show that he had reasonable ground for believing his life to be in jeopardy, he was justified in defending himself,—understand, we said the legal aspect of it, that the law recognized that a man has a right to defend himself against one who would take his life. That being so, the ugly word "murder" ought not to be applied to this case at all, and whatever may be said about a Christian minister's right to defend himself, we think all the circumstances of the case show that Dr. Norris acted in self-defence.

Looking at the matter, therefore, from this point of view, what shall we say of the attitude of *The Canadian Baptist*, of Professor McCrimmon, of Chancellor Whidden, of Dr. John MacNeill? Their cause must be badly in need of justification when they would drag this Texas tragedy before the Canadian public, while the case is still untried, thinking thereby to discredit one who had been known as Dr. Norris' friend.

Once more, even his worst enemies do not suggest that Dr. Norris bore any malice toward his assailant. So far as we know, they had never met before. But what shall we say of the "spirit" of *The Canadian Baptist*, of Dr. John MacNeill, of Chancellor H. P. Whidden, of Professor A. L. McCrimmon and others? What shall be said of the "spirit" of Dr. A. J. Vining, of Dr. Bowley Green? Those who were present at the First Avenue Convention, and those who read in *The Canadian Baptist* Dr. John MacNeill's address, so strangely entitled "The Ongoings of God", will know whether in any of the speeches of those who defended McMaster, or in the address referred to, there is anything in keeping with the Spirit of God. Such hatred as these men manifested might easily lead to murder, and we remind the editor of *The Canadian Baptist*, and Dr. John MacNeill, and Professor A. L. McCrimmon, and Chancellor H. P. Whidden, and Dr. J. H. Farmer, that the Scripture says, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer".

We love Dr. J. Frank Norris. We have esteemed him highly in love for his works' sake. We shall never cease to regret, even as he will never cease to regret, this awful tragedy; but we cannot believe that he was actuated by any other motive than that of sheer self-defence. Whether he was right in defending himself, from a Christian point of view, is another question. In such matters it is always easy to form a judgment of what somebody else ought to have done.

### LETTER FROM MRS. H. C. RUSSELL.

We very gladly insert the following letter at the writer's request. Mrs. Russell's name was attached to the "Call to Baptist Women" which appeared in the first three pages of this paper last week. When our readers have carefully read Mrs. Russell's note, we are sure they will desire to read what we have to say about it:

20 Bain Ave.,  
Toronto, November 20th, 1926.

"To the Editor,  
*The Gospel Witness*,  
Toronto, Ont.

Dear Sir,—

"With regard to the matter contained in pages 1, 2, 3 of the "Gospel Witness" of Nov. 18th, I wish to state that I had no idea I would be subscribing to what is practically a vote of censure of Professor Marshall or McMaster University. I believe Professor Marshall has stated his views in sufficiently clear English to convey his meaning, and do not feel qualified to read into them any other than his own interpretation of his statements. I could not, moreover, if I would, endorse any expression of belief in modernistic teaching of McMaster, without including my own revered pastor, Dr. W. T. Graham, than whom there is no more fundamental preacher and teacher in the denomination.

"I wish further to exonerate any and every member of the Committee which prepared this resolution (or call) from even the remotest suggestion of duplicity or underhand methods. I believe them all to be women of devoted Christian character,—but must admit I was mistaken in my own thought of the matter.

"I hope, dear Mr. Editor, that you will make a place for this in your next issue,—and please let it speak for itself.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) MRS. H. C. RUSSELL."

We hope the request in Mrs. Russell's letter, "Please let it speak for itself", did not imply a request that we should publish it without comment. We do not believe Mrs. Russell would, for a moment, countenance any departure from the faith. We accept the implication of her statement that she did not understand, namely, that she did not understand that the formation of a new Women's Missionary Society implied any censure upon Professor Marshall, McMaster University, or her own Pastor, Dr. W. T. Graham. Obviously, Mrs. Russell did not see that the various actions of the Women's Convention had any direct relation to McMaster University. We appreciate Mrs. Russell's assumption that Professor Marshall has spoken clearly, and that his statements should be accepted at their face value. Nor do we wonder that Mrs. Russell should find it difficult to associate any sort of doctrinal departure with her Pastor, Dr. Graham. We have ourselves always believed in the doctrinal soundness of Dr. Graham's views, and have rejoiced in his personal loyalty to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We deeply regret to hear that Dr. Graham is unwell, and earnestly pray that he may be speedily restored to his church and his work.

There is one passage in Mrs. Russell's letter that we cannot allow to pass without comment,—it is that which implies there is no modernistic teaching in McMaster. Since Mrs. Russell says that she wholly misunderstood the implication of the "Women's Call", it becomes our duty to offer some explanation, and we have to begin with a confession. In 1910 we also assumed that words spoken by Christian men in a Christian assembly should be taken at their face value; but by a very painful experience we have learned that a modernist always uses words of double meaning, and that his statements must never be taken "at par". Because this is so, many modernists deny their modernism, but one who has had experience of the utter deceitfulness of this philosophy will always be on his guard.

It is now absolutely certain that Professor Marshall does not accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as being the inspired and infallible Word of God. We have printed his statements again and again on this point until we have wearied of their plurality. His denial of the historicity of Jonah, in view of Christ's endorsement of its historical character, proves that he not only does not accept the Old Testament as being altogether divinely inspired, but that he does not regard our Lord Himself as being infallible. In an article on, "Baptists and Church Membership", written for the *Baptist Times and Freeman*, London, perhaps six months before his coming to Canada, he makes the following statement:

"To regard baptism as essential to salvation or even to membership in the Christian Church is to ascribe to the baptismal rite a crucial importance for which there is no warrant in the New Testament, or in any truly spiritual interpretation of the Gospel, or in common sense."

In his famous pamphlet, written in his own defense, Professor Marshall actually has the audacity to say that in this passage he was speaking of membership in the church universal! We have discussed the utter untenability of such an interpretation several times already: we have only to say here that Professor Marshall's daring attempt to square his teaching in England with his Canadian professions marks him as a man who will go to any length to justify himself. Professor Marshall has wearied, we should suppose, even his English admirers with his oft-repeated boast of being an Englishman; and as such, on more than one occasion, has implied that the level of culture in this country is much lower than that of England. We have only to say that Professor Marshall puts a very low estimate upon the intelligence of Canadians when he expects them to believe that his attempt in Canada to justify his

teaching in England in regard to baptism could be accepted, or believed. Frankly, we do not believe it; and are persuaded that it marks him as a man who is at no pains to be consistent.

In the sermon published last week we dealt with Professor Marshall's quotation from Dr. Denney, and insisted that if Professor Marshall's position does not involve the repudiation of the cardinal doctrine of Protestantism, then language no longer has any value under the sun.

We have known that Modernism was rife in McMaster University for years. In the Theology Department it was more or less hidden, except as it found expression in Professor I. G. Matthews, until recently; and it is our profound conviction that the only orthodoxy left in McMaster is an orthodoxy of speech which is utterly divorced from the Spirit of God, and is allied with the spirit that will deny, and when expedient, destroy the truth of God.

All who know Mrs. Russell's record, know her to be a sincere and devoted Christian lady, and in view of the conviction she expresses in this letter, we believe she did the only consistent thing possible in withdrawing her name from the Call printed in these pages last week. But a time of painful disillusionment awaits Mrs. Russell in the future. The Modernism of McMaster will yet effect the spiritual paralysis of that part of the Denomination which is subject to its influence.

## THE WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF REGULAR BAPTISTS OF CANADA.

By the President, Mrs. C. J. Holman.

We are deeply grateful to the genial Editor of *The Gospel Witness* for according us so much space in his excellent journal, not only printing our "Call", but even publishing for us the whole of our Constitution, a kindness for which we scarcely dared to hope. We take these kindnesses as evidence of "the good hand of our God upon us", and rejoice in hope of further privileges, but we shall try not to over-burden the Editor as from time to time we report progress.

You will wish to know if we have appointed all our officers. The essential ones are already secured, and you will agree they are fine ones:

Treasurer: Mrs. E. J. Taylor, 464 Armadale Ave., Toronto 9.

Corresponding Secretary: Mrs. E. A. Brownlee, 150 St. George St., Toronto 5.

Subscription Agent for Periodical: Mrs. I. S. Clubine, 195 Danforth Ave., Toronto 6.

"Comfort Box" Work: Mrs. R. K. Gonder, Stratford, Ont. -

The other officers will be announced presently, the above being elected at a Board Meeting held immediately after the organization meeting of this Society.

At this Board Meeting, several important matters were discussed. The fields to be undertaken will be decided as time goes on, but for work in Canada there were presented for consideration: Grande Ligne, the West, Northern Ontario, and the Jews. As to Foreign work, the minds of the Board members seemed to turn to Africa and China as being fields where Canadian Baptists should long ago have had their own independent work, and where, if we entered in, we would not be competing with the other Foreign work of Canadian Baptists. We ask the prayers of the readers of this paper that special guidance may be given the Board as time goes on in their selection of fields.

On the administrative side, two or three special matters were decided upon, and one tentatively. These were as follows:

1. That in addition to its regular Business Meetings and Prayer Circles, the Board should have open meetings of the Society monthly in eight months of the year, these meetings to be given largely to prayer and conference at first as the work is forming. While not intending as a usual thing to have any such meeting in the month of December, it was thought wise this year, in view of the many problems confronting individuals and Circle members, to hold the first of these meetings on Tuesday, December 14th, from 10.30 in the morning to 3.00 in the afternoon. Annette Street Church has kindly offered us their



building, and we trust a large number of women will gather for prayer and conference. To make this meeting really profitable, will those ladies who have problems that trouble them in regard to the Organization in their Circles, or difficulties arising from their position, kindly send in to our Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. Brownlee, prior to that meeting, their questions or problems, that they may be considered and wisely answered at that meeting. Please heed this request, and come praying for a great blessing, and for God's own guidance in the solution of difficulties. The meeting extending beyond the noon hour, the ladies of Annette Street will furnish tea and coffee, but those who attend the meeting are requested to bring their own sandwiches.

Remember the date, Tuesday, December 14th, at Annette Street Baptist Church, 10.30 to 3.00. Take Dundas car north to High Park Avenue, and walk one block south.

2. Do you wish a letter sent you after the meeting, telling you what was done and giving an account of the meeting? It is our plan to send such a letter to those desiring it after each open meeting of the Society. If you, or your Auxiliary, desire such a letter, kindly notify our Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. E. A. Brownlee, at once.

3. Constitutions, both of the Society itself and for use by Auxiliaries, are being issued. Those desiring them kindly communicate with Mrs. Brownlee as to this matter also.

4. Now a word about a periodical for the Society. We are so happy to be able to send news and notices to you all so promptly through this friendly paper, but we could not trespass upon the space of *The Gospel Witness* for all the many things that successful Women's work demands, so we have been considering the establishment of our own paper. If the price settled upon should be 50c, and this seems a proper amount, it would be necessary to have at least twelve hundred subscribers (or its equivalent in income) in order to issue an eight-page paper once a month (six hundred subscribers would enable us to issue it once in two months.) We feel there are enough women (and we are sure the brethren are equally interested) to ensure this number of subscribers at once. Every family in the churches which have taken their stand as upholding this Society, and every individual in other churches supporting us, should at once subscribe for the paper. We believe it will be an easy matter to secure the required number if our women become immediately active. Agents should be appointed for churches or groups, while individuals can send their subscriptions direct. Send all subscriptions to Mrs. I. S. Clubine, 195 Danforth Ave., Toronto 6, as soon as possible, that we may know our prospects.

Thank you for your attention to all of these matters. More anon!

One last request: Will you remember in prayer continually this infant Society and its officers and Board, that they may continue in the will of God and be led of Him in solving wisely all the difficulties of the situation.

## THE ONLY ARGUMENT CERTAIN BOARDS CAN UNDERSTAND.

We have at last come in Ontario and Quebec to a situation which our brethren in the Northern Baptist Convention have long been facing. The cancer of unbelief, generally called Modernism, does not confine itself to one member of the body, but stretches out its tentacles until every vital organ is affected. Hence, it is not surprising that the Home Mission Board and the Foreign Mission Board, and the Boards of the women's societies as well as the so-called Religious Education Board, should have come under the influence of this malignant disease.

The Secretary of Foreign Missions has, for some years, been an outspoken champion and defender of this tendency in McMaster, and a bitter opponent of those who stand uncompromisingly for the fundamentals of the faith. This may not represent the Secretary's principles, but it certainly represents his policy. The Home Mission Board has become entirely subject to McMaster's influence. The Religious Education Board has long ceased to exercise any

useful ministry in the Convention. Money given to its support, it is no exaggeration to say, might be more profitably invested in the deep waters of Lake Ontario. The Sunday School Board of eighteen or twenty years ago did really exercise a useful ministry; but the usefulness of its successor with a more pretentious name has long since ceased.

Modernism beyond all question is in the ascendancy in the official life of the Denomination. It has accomplished its work thus far by identifying its opposition with one man, and then instituting a campaign of slander and abuse, with a view to discrediting his testimony. It has then endeavoured to smother every expression of conviction by nicknaming every such opponent of Modernism with the name of the one man whom they have slandered. Few men would deliberately choose to be a lot to go wherever Abraham goes; hence this campaign of misrepresentation instigated by McMaster has insulted every man of conviction in the Denomination by labelling him somebody's follower. The Editor of this paper has made no attempt to exercise any sort of leadership; he has expressed the conviction of his soul. A number of brave spirits, who were discerning enough to see the purpose of the enemy, have dared to stand by their convictions even though they were called by another man's name. Not a few, of course, have fallen by the way, and in their determination not to be called the follower of any man, some have become the abject slaves of McMaster.

What is the present situation? Professor Marshall's modernism is endorsed and defended by every member of the Faculty of McMaster and by the entire Governing body. Professor Marshall's modernism, as thus endorsed by the University, has been endorsed by the Convention of Ontario and Quebec. Every Board in that Convention is now subject to McMaster's influence, and most of them have become the instruments of its deadly propaganda. We believe it is practically certain that money given to any of the Boards will be used, directly or indirectly, to further McMaster's interests. The church of which this writer is Pastor, by resolution, has decided not to entrust another dollar to any one of the Convention Boards. Of all the Boards, the Superannuated Ministers' Board at the moment, we believe, is most deserving of support, except for the fact that its Chairman is a professor of McMaster. We believe an exception might be made in the case of this particular Board so long, at least, as it does the work for which it was created; but we believe nothing will bring the other Boards to their senses short of cutting off supplies.

We would remind individual Baptists who are members of churches which, as organizations, are subject to McMaster's influence, that the money they give to missions week by week on the budget plan will be used by the Boards to coerce missionaries under their direction to an acceptance of the new standards as represented by Professor Marshall. If we were a member of such a church we would cease from this hour to give another dollar that could pass into the hands of the Treasurer of any of these Boards. But the question will be asked, What shall we do with our money? *We believe that in a very short time announcement will be made of the calling of a Convention for the organization of another Missionary Society within the Convention that will do both Home and Foreign Mission work, and we believe orthodox Baptists will be well advised to save their money until that Missionary Society is organized.*

And further, appeals have been made for people who have a little money to leave for missions, but who must have the interest of that money during their lifetime, to hand over their bequests to the Boards now and the Boards will pay them interest while they live. With the greatest possible earnestness, we would suggest to every Baptist in Ontario and Quebec, or anywhere else, who has some of the Lord's money to leave to do the Lord's work, that they should not leave a dollar of it to any of our Mission Boards in Ontario and Quebec until some better assurance than is now obtainable is given that the money will be used for the propagation of the gospel. At the rapid rate at which things are now moving, unless God should send us a revival to check the present movement, it will not be long before Ontario and Quebec is as bad as the Northern Baptist Convention. Mr. Urquhart, in a recent issue of *The Gospel Witness*, called attention to this matter and said he knew of at least one or two persons who had changed their wills; and, as we must give account of ourselves to God for the use of our money, we suggest that if any money is left to any of these Boards, it would be well for orthodox Baptists to change their wills at once.

### THE CONVENTION NUMBER OF "THE GOSPEL WITNESS".

Every day we are receiving orders for copies of the big Convention number of *The Gospel Witness*. We have been greatly encouraged also by the financial help which some of our readers have sent us. One subscriber who tells us he is a farmer some place in Missouri, sent us \$10.00 for the special number; two others, husband and wife, who are Arts graduates of McMaster, sent us a cheque for \$28.75 to spread the Convention number; a Baptist minister in the State of West Virginia sent \$35.00 with the request that it be used for circulating that number; one lady who attended the Convention sent us \$100.00 immediately afterword to send the Convention number among Baptist people; a lady came into our office with a crisp new \$100.00 bill, saying half was for *The Gospel Witness*, and half for the new college; another brother from a distant city has been sending for several weeks \$1.00, \$2.00, or \$3.00, and recently sent a cheque for \$25.00, and a few days later a postal note for \$3.00; while scores of others have sent gifts ranging from \$2.00 to \$20.00.

These notes are being hastily written Monday night before catching a train to go to Indianapolis for a few days to a Baptists Bible Union meeting. Had we time to digest the mass of mail that has reached us, we could publish some very interesting correspondence; but we publish below some extracts from a letter from one of the most prominent men in the South. It will serve to show what impression the stenographic report of the Convention debate has produced. This is a typical letter, and we use these excerpts with the writer's consent:

\_\_\_\_\_, November 22nd, 1926.

Dear Dr. Shields:

At this distance I may not speak with intimate knowledge, but I have a feeling that the unspeakable humiliation, the bitter and relentless hate on the part of your enemies which they sought to mete out to you in the Convention, was quite beyond anything I have read in my life and which seemed to be utterly without bounds in its relentlessness, but I am sure it will be used by the Lord for the furtherance of His truth.

I am confident that any dispassionate reader who takes time to go through that issue of *The Witness* will catch from the cold type a true measure of the situation. Your mild, but yet firm and unquailing stand in the midst of the unmeasured bitterness of attack which sometimes stooped to Billingsgate and vulgarity, cannot fail to get across. Their relentless use of the majority they knew they had packed in the Convention, even after they knew they had humiliated you by going on and on by bitter abuse seeking further humiliations for you, as I said, is quite beyond anything I ever read.

Many Baptists down South are deeply embarrassed that at least one of their own recognized leaders stayed there and saw that thing done, while, at the same time, accepting courtesies of the dominant body, present as a distinguished brother in Christ representing Southern Baptists. For my own part I blush with shame. How long some of us can keep quiet while we are betrayed by such subtle means by men we trust with leadership—how long we can keep our mouths shut while they are honoured as fearless conservatives among us, and then betray us by their alliance away from home—I do not know.

There are those in the South who feel that the fact that so many men, against the contempt and odium of the dominant element there, stood with you as they did, spells the downfall of the group who seem to crow over the humiliation almost as did the Jerusalem ecclesiastics over the crucifixion of our Lord. If I know anything from history, such a defeat is no defeat at all. God honours men who walk in the way of pain and humiliation, and the derision of men, for the safe-guarding of the precious truth of Christ who bore the penalty of our sins on the cross.

May the Lord bless and strengthen you in these days, and give great courage and wisdom to every Baptist in Canada who believes that full-length loyalty to Jesus Christ and the Holy Scriptures are of infinitely more worth than the favour of men whose life is like that of the grass and passeth away.

Fraternally yours,  
(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_

## ANOTHER SOUTHERN BAPTIST'S JUDGMENT.

\_\_\_\_\_, Texas,  
November 9th, 1926.

Dr. T. T. Shields,  
Toronto, Canada.

Dear Doctor:—

I am enclosing herewith a copy of a letter that I mailed to Dr. Scarborough a few days ago. I just want you to know that you have at least one sympathizer even away down in Texas. I know you are on the right side, and while your battle in your Convention seemed to be lost, yet before God it was a victory, for you stood firm against an overwhelming majority. Truth and righteousness will prevail in the end. The Modernists and their comforters will reap what they are sowing—our Southern Baptists are already reaping to the great hurt of the cause.

I am not sending this letter for publication—just to let you know that *some* of the Texas laymen know what is going on even in the bounds of the N.B. Convention and in Canada, and to encourage you as best I can in the brave fight you are making. I have been for some time reading your sermons as I can get hold of them, and other writings of yours.

With every good wish and with my humble prayers, I am,

Faithfully yours,

(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_

P.S.—While as suggested above, this is not sent for publication, yet feel at liberty to use it as you please. I am a deacon in the \_\_\_\_\_ church and have been one of the trustees of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist College for more than twenty years, which, I am glad to say, is sound in the faith.

\_\_\_\_\_, Texas, Nov. 4th, 1926.

Dr. L. R. Scarborough,  
Seminary Hill, Texas.

Dear Brother In Christ:—

I have read your report of the Canadian convention, with interest. I have been keeping up with conditions in spiritual matters in both the North and South as best I can from information given out through the religious magazines. I am receiving and reading a half dozen or more of these publications from both the North and the South.

Kindly let me say that I am familiar with the controversy that has been going on for some time over McMaster. If statements quoted from Dr. Marshall's own words are true, he is a Modernist in the strict sense of the word, and there is no apparent reason to doubt the correctness of these many quotations from his mouth and pen. Therefore it appears that we have another instance where the big majority is wrong in their decision; and think about it! in matters where the correct interpretation of God's Word is involved and the eternal destiny of souls is at stake! The Fosdickites and all other Modernists of the North and elsewhere, are laughing in their sleeves over this, another victory for their satanic cause.

I am reasonably well informed as to our own conditions in Texas. Sad they are indeed, to the point of tragedy. I love my brethren and the great cause they represent, and especially sympathize with those of you upon whose shoulders has fallen the responsibility of leadership. The burdens are heavy, almost to the crushing point. I was for the 75 million campaign and contributed till it hurt, but rejoiced in the privilege. I am still for the cause. It is ever the same. Have been tithing my little income and reading the Standard approximately thirty years. Now I am afflicted and no longer able to earn but a meagre pittance in support of myself and wife, who is also suffering in bodily afflictions. I can no longer, to my regret, make contributions as in the past.

Our good brethren have had much to say from the pulpit and have written much for publication as to the cause of our present financial distress in Texts, and also as to a remedy. Will you permit me to state frankly the cause (as I believe), and also to suggest the only remedy, and still feel kindly toward me as a sympathizing brother?

The very thing that has come to pass in the Canadian Convention, as you

depict it, has been repeated from time to time in our Texas conventions, and also in our S. B. Convention. Our good brethren, our strong, influential leaders such as yourself and Dr. Mullins, together with many others of our leading pastors under your influence, and school men as well, have straddled on this awful heresy of Modernism. You have shown a disposition to cover it up, and have lent comfort to its persistent, aggressive leaders by refusing or failing to come out in the open in an aggressive offensive battle, that we might take off the head of this bigoted Philistine, who is seeking to come to us "as an angel of light." Not only this, but you and the other leaders have done what you could to destroy the power and influence of the only strong men of God who have been, and are now, fighting aggressively this destructive, deceptive, Christless enemy of all truth.

It has been a mystery to this humble, obscure layman why you (our leaders) have done so, and continue this ruinous course. Dr. Shields has been a fearless giant in this fight, especially in the North, where the enemy has already captured the N. B. Convention, and is sweeping on from victory to victory—for the Devil, yet you would make it appear that he is a disturber of the peace of Zion in the field of his labor. You and your fellow-labourers in the battle for God and His Truth, have failed or refused to "come to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty,"—(except in a passive way). The Fosdickites and his hosts who are "going the way of Cain," count it all a victory for their cause.

It is true as you say, a big majority voted to give Dr. Marshall a clean bill of health, pronounced him orthodox in every respect, but as is a well-known fact, majorities are often—very often—wrong in their verdicts. It is unquestionably so in this instance.

Going back to the cause and the remedy for our present "financial jam," as Dr. Jeff D. Ray puts it, I wish to say kindly and as nearly as I know how in the spirit of Christ, that the cause lies first at the door of our leaders for reasons already stated. Our Baptist people of Texas are good followers, and they have without question for years, followed their leaders in the Lord's cause. They have ever stood ready to give sacrificially when they have assurance that their contributions will be applied where it will honour our Lord.

But sad to say, their confidence in their leaders has been shaken; the masses, a large body of them, know that this enemy, Modernism, has been going up and down the earth, "seeking whom it may devour," and they have begun to feel that you good brethren have not kept faith with them as you should, since you refuse to admit the prevalence of this blighting heresy in our churches and schools, especially in the North, and sneakily seeking and gaining a foothold in some of our Southern institutions. It will not do to say this is not so. The intelligent reading Baptists know better.

So long as these conditions obtain, we need not expect material improvement in the finances of our kingdom work. The only remedy is to come back to God, whose cause He has intrusted to us, get on our knees, confess our sins, and restore confidence to our beloved Zion in Texas, and in the South, join hands with the forces who are, and have been aggressive in exposing and denouncing this bold, bigoted, boasting Philistine who is defying the God of Israel.

Now, Brother Scarborough, while you read these simple suggestions, please keep your mind off of Dr. Norris. Just eliminate him from this whole matter. The Lord knows he is not the issue, nor is he the cause of our dire distress. Look closer home and see if we do not find evidence of our own weakness and failures as kindly suggested in the foregoing. The remedy:

"If my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sins and will heal their land."

I know you are a very busy and much burdened man. I am sure your heart is bowed down under the heavy load that is upon you, as it appears by the appointment of God. I would not purposely add one straw to the weight of this burden. My humble suggestions are meant, if possible, to help rather than hinder. I feel that the remedy suggested is the only remedy for our financial straits and the spiritual blessings we all so much crave. It is not

God's will that conditions should remain as they are. He is jealous for His truth "As it was once delivered to the saints," and expects us to guard it at any cost, and proclaim it to the ends of the earth in all its purity and simplicity.

May His choicest blessings be upon you and all the faithful of our Lord.

Most Sincerely Yours,

(Signed) \_\_\_\_\_

#### A LETTER FROM MONTREAL.

We regret that owing to the mass of material we had to publish before and since the Convention, we have been unable to give space to the following letter which was received October 15th. The letter deals with a statement we made concerning the work in Montreal, when we spoke of the First Church having gone out of business. This letter is self-explanatory.

It really does not much matter which of the two churches has ceased to exist as a separate organization,—the fact is, that where there were two churches there is now only one. In 1915 in the two churches there was a total membership of 895; there is now in the First Church worshipping in what was once the Olivet Church, a total membership of 698. Thus we have one church less with a membership of 197,—and this in ten years. We still believe there ought to be a way of avoiding such decrease. We gladly, however, publish the letter of explanation below, and only regret that lack of space has prevented its having an earlier appearance:

"Verdun, P.Q.

October 14th, 1926.

Editor, *Gospel Witness*,  
Toronto, Ont.

Dear Dr. Shields:

At a meeting of the Montreal Baptist Ministerial Association held on the 11th inst., the attention of the brethren was called to a report in your paper of the meeting held in Montreal by yourself and party. Appearing in that report is a statement that First Baptist Church had gone out of existence.

It was felt that this is a presentation of the matter that will give a decidedly wrong impression of the facts. First Church and Olivet Church merged, and First Church people went en masse into the amalgamation which was made in the best interests of Baptist work in this difficult field of Montreal.

A correction would be much appreciated.

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed) WILLIAM RICE, Sec'y."

#### NOTES ABOUT THE COLLEGE.

Arrangements for the opening of our new college are rapidly progressing, but we do not expect to have our full organization until next fall. We have secured the consent of one who will serve as Acting Dean, and of others who will assist. From January to the end of May we hope to provide an intensive course for young men who desire to go out evangelizing the towns and villages round-about. Beginning next fall, we shall expect to have completer courses and a fuller staff, and to undertake the work in earnest; but we shall be glad to hear from all who desire to take advantage of the course provided from January to May.

We have no very large gifts to report. One day last week someone called who promised us \$200.00 a year for five years. We were very grateful for this promise, and we record it here in the hope that it will be suggestive. Doubtless there are men in all the churches who stand wholeheartedly for the faith, who would be glad to send us a yearly contribution; we hope there may be some churches also who will give the new college a place on their budget. We believe it ought to be possible for us to secure an income for this purpose of \$20,000.00 a year. We ask the Lord's stewards who read this to lay it to heart. So far, we have not asked a single individual for a cent: all the help that has been promised has come to us through reading *The Gospel Witness*.

## BAPTIST BIBLE UNION SENIOR LESSON LEAF

Vol. 2.

T. T. SHIELDS, Editor.

No. 1.

Lesson 1.

First Quarter, 1927.

January 2nd, 1927.

### WAITING FOR THE PROMISE.

Lesson Text: Acts, chapter 1.

#### Introduction to the Acts of the Apostles.

The second treatise, in continuation of the Gospel as recorded by Luke. The style confirms the identity of authorship; also the address to the same person, Theophilus, probably a man of rank, judging from the title "most excellent." The Gospel was the life of Jesus in the flesh, the Acts record His life in the Spirit; Chrysostom calls it "The Gospel of the Holy Spirit." Hence Luke says: "The former treatise I made of all that Jesus began to do and teach;" therefore the Acts give a summary of what Jesus continued to do and teach by His Spirit in His disciples after He was taken up. The book breaks off at the close of St. Paul's imprisonment, A.D. 63, without recording his release; hence it is likely Luke completed it at this date, just before tidings of the apostle's release reached him. There is a progressive development and unity of plan throughout. The key is chapter 1: 8: "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me in (1) Jerusalem, and (2) in all Judea, and (3) in Samaria, and (4) unto the uttermost part of the earth." It begins with Jerusalem, the metropolis of the Jewish dispensation, and ends with Rome, the metropolis of the whole Gentile world. It is divisible into three portions: 1. From the ascension to the close of chap. 11, which describes the rise of the first purely Gentile church, at Antioch, where the disciples consequently were first called CHRISTIANS; 2. Thence down to the special vision at Troas (chap. 16), which carried the gospel, through Paul, to Europe. 3. Thence onward, till it reached Rome. In each of the three periods the church has a distinct aspect: in the first, Jewish; in the second, Gentile, with a strong Jewish admixture; in the third, after the council at Jerusalem (chap. 15), Gentile in a preponderating degree. At first the gospel was preached to the Jews only; then to the Samaritans (8: 1-5); then to the Ethiopian eunuch, a proselyte of righteousness (8: 27); then, after a special revelation as Peter's warrant, to Cornelius, a proselyte of the gate; then to Gentile Greeks (not Grecians, i.e., Greek-speaking Jews, but heathen Greeks, on the whole the best supported reading, 11: 20); then Peter, who, as "the apostle of the circumcision," had been in the first period the foremost preacher, gives place from chap. 13 to Paul, "the apostle of the uncircumcision," who successively proclaimed the word in Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece, and Rome. Luke joined Paul at Troas (about A.D. 53), as appears from the "we" taking the place of "they" at that point in his history (16: 8-10). The repetition of the account of the ascension in chap. 1 shows that an interval of some time had elapsed since writing the more summary account of it at the end of Luke 24; for repetition would have been superfluous unless some time had intervened.

St. Matthew's Gospel, as adapted to Jewish readers, answers to the first period ending about A.D. 40, and was written probably in and for Jerusalem and Judea; St. Mark answers to the second Judea-Gentile period, A.D. 40-50, as his Gospel abounds in Latinisms, and is suited to Gentile converts, such as were the Roman soldiers concentrated at Caesarea, their headquarters in Palestine, the second great centre of gospel preaching, the scene of Cornelius' conversion by Mark's father in the faith, Peter. St. Luke's Gospel has a Greek tinge, and answers to the third period, A.D. 50-63, being suited to Greeks unfamiliar with Palestinian geography; written perhaps at Antioch, the third great centre of gospel diffusion. Antioch is assigned by tradition as his residence (A.D. 52) before joining Paul when entering Europe. Beginning it there, he probably completed it under Paul's guidance, and circulated it from Philippi, where he was left behind, among the Greek churches. Probably St. Paul (A.D. 57) alludes to his Gospel in 2 Cor. 8: 18: "the brother whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches." Certainly he quotes his Gospel as Scripture, and by inspiration stamps it as such in 1 Tim. 5: 18. His having been chosen by the Macedonian churches joint trustee with Paul of their

contributions to Jerusalem implies a long residence, during which he completed and circulated his work. As Acts was the fruit of his second connection, with Paul, whose labours down to his imprisonment in Rome form the chief part of the book, so he wrote the Gospel through the help he got in his first connection with him, from Troas down to Philippi. Jerome says Luke published his Gospel "in the parts of Achaia and Baeotia."

The Book of Acts links itself with the Gospels, by describing the foundation and extension of the church, which Christ in the Gospels promised; and with the Pauline epistles by undesigned, because not obvious, coincidences. It forms with the Gospels a historical Pentateuch, on which the Epistles are the inspired commentary, as the Psalms and Prophets are on the O.T. historical books.

## I. FROM THE RESURRECTION TO THE ASCENSION.

1. By implication, Luke styles this book as a record of what Jesus is continuing to do (v. 1). His earthly ministry was but the beginning of His work. He still lives, and is carrying on. The Acts should therefore be studied as a record of what the ascended Christ does in the lives of men by the power of the Holy Ghost. 2. Christ was seen of his disciples forty days (v. 3). During that time, He showed them "many infallible proofs" of His resurrection. The purpose of His tarrying forty days on earth was to "shew himself alive". As we proceed in our study of this book, we shall see how vitally important the truth of the resurrection is. The proofs of it Luke describes as "infallible". 3. The theme of the forty days' discourse (v. 3). He spoke of things pertaining to the kingdom of God. So we who are risen with Christ should be engaged in heavenly conversation. 4. He forbids His disciples to attempt anything without the Holy Ghost (v. 4). He commanded them not to depart. Surely the prohibition still stands: nothing is more dishonouring to God, and nothing will more certainly result in failure, than the attempt to do God's work in the energy of the flesh. They were required to depend absolutely upon the promise, and to await its fulfilment. 5. There is a certain danger in inactivity (vs. 6 and 7). The disciples were concerned about matters which were beyond their legitimate purview. The knowledge of the time of the Lord's coming is labelled, "It is not for you". Let us therefore be warned. 6. The key-verse of the Acts of the Apostles (v. 8). Here we have the mission of the believer, and the church, to bear witness. The power of the church is the Holy Ghost; the sphere of its activities, "to the uttermost part of the earth". 7. The Ascension (vs. 9 and 10). (a) It was supernatural. It is folly to try to explain it: it was beyond nature; (b) it was visible: "While they beheld, he was taken up."

## II. FROM THE ASCENSION TO PENTECOST.

1. The disciples stood "gazing" (v. 11). Their physical posture was but illustrative of their mental attitude. It was while they stood gazing into heaven, they heard a heavenly voice. So may we; yet there is a certain idle gazing that is not to be commended. 2. They received the promise of Christ's return. (a) He will be the same Jesus when He comes back as He was when He was here; (b) He will return as He was seen to go. Hence, His return will be visible. 3. The attitude of waiting faith. (a) Obedient: they returned to Jerusalem as they had been commanded; (b) It was joyful (Luke 24: 52). 4. The upper room. They continued in prayer. In this instance they prayed for the fulfilment of a particular promise. So may we. But it is always safe to spend our waiting hours or moments in prayer. Thus Peter saw his vision, and carried the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10: 9). We have not now to wait for the descent of the Spirit, for He has come to abide for ever with His people; but the necessity for beginning, continuing, and ending our work in prayer should ever be borne in mind. Important as preaching was, the apostolic church gave first place to prayer. The prayerless church is a powerless church. 5. The apostolic attitude toward the Scriptures (vs. 15-20). These "unlearned" men had but one Book for their guidance, and that Book was to them the Word of God. We do well to take up their attitude. 6. Did they make a mistake in selecting a successor to Judas before the Holy Spirit came? The man whom they appointed is never heard of again. It must be borne in mind, no word of censure is passed upon them for this act, but it is not without significance that the Lord had, in the person of Saul of Tarsus, a true apostle in preparation.