

The Gospel Witness

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T. T. SHIELDS, *Editor.*

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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE NEED OF REVIVAL.

A Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, July 3rd, 1927.
 (Stenographically Reported.)

"Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:
 "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."—Isaiah 59:1, 2.



SHALL speak to you this morning about the need of revival, here and elsewhere. I suppose throughout the churches of Toronto to-day much will be said of the glories of the land in which we are privileged to live,—and I trust we shall not be behind any in our enthusiastic devotion, our utter loyalty, to the country to which we belong—but I have another purpose than to speak of these matters this morning, for there are interests that are even higher than the

interests of the nation, as such.

Very early this morning Mrs. Sloan telephoned me and asked me to come over. She said, "Mr. Sloan thinks he is going home to-day, and he wants to see you." I went over to see him about seven o'clock this morning. He was able to talk; and in a very happy mood he said, "I am ready to go, I think it will be to-day; but there are some things I want to talk to you about before I go." He talked about the joy of the Lord, and of his assurance in Christ. He said to his wife, "There must be no tears. We are Christians, why should there be? I am going home." Turning to me he said, "You know, when God speaks, that settles everything for me. There is no argument at all, and I am resting in that. Will you read me a little?" So I took the Book and went back to the fifty-third of Isaiah and other passages, and every passage to which I turned, I found marked. We read about the many mansions. Then he said, "I think the Lord is coming very soon. I will be going home before He comes, but when He comes I will be with Him, so be

on the lookout for me." I said, "Shall I read about that?" He said, "I wish you would." Then I turned to some of the promises of the Lord's return, and I found them all marked. He said, "I think you will find nearly all the promises of His coming marked in my Book." It was a glorious half hour I had with him this morning. The salvation that is in Christ is so real, I could not help feeling that I must speak of matters of deeper concern, of more abiding moment, than even the interests of our glorious nation. "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

The Old Testament prophets were not often sent with comfortable messages. A man who is supposed to view life somewhat gloomily, is usually described in our day as "Jeremiah"; but they who thus speak do not know the mission of that great prophet, for after all he was a prophet of truth, and his somewhat melancholy task was to tell the people of his day that they had forsaken God. And no man, and no nation, can ever forsake God without paying the awful price of being forsaken of Him. I suppose I might be expected to speak of our glorious nation, but there will be preachers enough engaged in that business to-day; and I state the melancholy fact that there are literally scores of churches into which people will go to-day where they will hear not one solitary word about sin and salvation, no message that will bring men face to face with God; where there is not absolute denial of the realities of the Christian religion, there is the substitution of a mere humanitarianism for the gospel of the grace of God.

Surely it must be admitted that all churches urgently need a divine visitation. In this place we believe the Book, we endeavour to preach it, and to teach it; we believe in prayer. But there is just the possibility of a kind of spiritual pride taking possession of the hearts of the people, and of our becoming smugly complacent, and flattering ourselves that we are living in the fulness of the power and blessing of the Lord. But I am sure that we here in Jarvis Street, every one of us, need a very special visitation from God. And if there are any of you who think you do not, if there should be anybody here this morning complimenting himself on having attained some high spiritual state, then you need the revival most of all! We all need it, and this text which I have read to you this morning assures us that spiritual blessing is still available, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear."

Very much of the record of divine grace is written in the past. There is a retrospective view of this text: it implies that men have had experience of God's faithfulness in hearing their prayers; and then they have seen something of His mighty power when His hand has been outstretched in the salvation of men. Let me remind you of days gone by. Let us pray that we may remember the days of old, in order that we may be able to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." It is well to tell the story of His benefits, and to remind ourselves of what God has done in days gone by, and of what our fathers have told us of His mighty works in their day.

The record of this Word is that it is possible for men to communicate with Heaven, that the ear of God is attentive to the cry of the believing heart. There was a time in human history when men longed for commerce with Heaven, and they said, "Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name." And they set about the building of a tower, hoping, by human effort, to establish a means of

communication with the Sky. And the Babel builders have been many. In all ages of the world's history men have sought by their own efforts to get into communication with God, and to bridge the distance from earth to heaven from the earthward side. That is the heresy of all heresies to-day, even among many professedly orthodox people: they try to persuade themselves that they can build a tower up which they may climb to talk to the ear of God, and, standing upon their own merits, invoke the aid of the hand of God. But it is a vain fancy, it always ends in Babylon, in confusion, in utter human defeat.

There is a better story of a traveller leaving home, who lay down one night with a stone for his pillow. This traveller dreamed a dream, and he saw, not a tower but a ladder; and while it rested upon the earth, the top reached to heaven. It was a ladder let down from the sky, it was not a ladder that was reared upon earth; and up and down that ladder the ministering angels, in his vision, ascended and descended. Our Lord Jesus Himself told us the significance of that, for He said, "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." He is the Ladder, He is the Way, He is the Telegraph Office, the Telephone Wire, the one and only Way of communicating with God. The ear of God, through Jesus Christ, has been open to the cry of men from the beginning; for the Old Testament saints, like Jacob, got in touch with Heaven by means of that Ladder; they prayed through the merit of Him Who was yet to come.

Let us look at the story. What is the record of the Bible? *It is the record of answered prayer.* What is the Bible written for? It is written to tell men that the unseen God, Whom we cannot see and cannot touch, is real; and that it is possible for us to hold commerce with Him, to speak into His ear, and move His hand. What differentiated Abraham from his contemporaries? Just this, that he was a man of prayer, that he communicated with God, that was the difference,—“So Abraham prayed.” He prayed for Lot, and “God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt.” Lot was saved by the “hand of the Lord”; and the hand of the Lord was moved for Lot's help by the prayer of Abraham which entered the ear of the Lord—the man upon earth invoked the powers of Heaven for the deliverance of a human soul. That is the record of the past.

What was the difference between Jacob and Esau? An amiable character was Esau, dutiful toward his parents, generous toward his brother; on the natural plane, having many qualities which distinguished him as a man of character—and yet utterly profane, a man that never had communicated with the ear of God. Jacob—poor, sinful, wretch that he was—was yet redeemed at last because he prayed; and at the end of his life he was able to say, “The Angel”—he had seen angels coming down the ladder, and when he looked upon his life in retrospect and saw how wonderfully he had been led, how rebellious he had been, and yet how touched with grace at every point—“the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads.” That is the record of Genesis.

It is the same story when you touch the life of Moses. Moses was a man who had access to the ear of God. Moses prayed, and because he prayed, the plagues descended; Pharaoh was stricken; the sea was parted; a nation was born, and fed, and nourished, and sustained; and at last, though by another hand, brought triumphantly into the land of promise. But the dis-

tinguishing feature of the whole Hebrew religion is that it is a religion that has found its way to God, and is a proof that God has come into human life in salvation. I know it is popular nowadays to laugh at the sun's standing still at Joshua's command. Napoleon, as he saw the sun westering on the famous and fateful day of Waterloo, apostrophizing the sun, said, "What would not I give for the power of Joshua to retard thy flight for one short hour?" Nevertheless the day was too short, and his empire was destroyed. But our glorious God works in the amplitude of eternity, and He can command the sun to stand still by human lips. I have no hesitation in subscribing to what the Bible says, I have no doubt about it, and I am not at all sure that the astronomers are as exact as they suppose themselves to be.

Time would fail me to touch upon all the outstanding characters of the Old Testament. "When Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house." That was the characteristic of David's life also: it was a life lived in communion with God; the ear and the hand of God were factors in David's life. Then there is the outstanding case of that man of iron, that man who was not afraid of the face of kings, that man whose very name stands in our thought as a synonym for the combination of all masculine human qualities, the man who feared nothing on earth or in hell, Elijah. The distinguishing characteristic of Elijah, according to the New Testament, was that he prayed—not that he preached, not that he was a fearless prophet, but that he prayed that it might not rain; and he shut up the heavens for three and a half years. Then he prayed again, and the rain descended. You remember that story—it is a refreshment to our spirits even to recall it—when God answered Elijah by fire, the ear of God and the hand of God again on Carmel.

So on down through the New Testament. Our Lord Jesus was a Man of prayer; He came to exemplify that fact. He was the very incarnation of the Godhead, and men talked to Him, and He heard them, and answered their prayers. He Himself talked to God in such a way that His disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray."

We have studied for some time the Acts of the Apostles, and I remind you that these two principles go together on every page of the divine record: man speaking into the ear of God, and moving the hand of God. That is how revival came in apostolic time—and since that time. The record is not closed with the conclusion of the Acts of the Apostles. The history of the Christian church is a history of prayer, and of the divine performance in answer to prayer. Call the roll of the great heroes of the Cross: Knox, who made the sovereign tremble on her throne; Luther, who, by means of prayer, broke the iron fetters that bound the men of his day. Think of the Wesleyan people, think of the Moody days, of the great days of Finney, of Spurgeon, and of hundreds of others. And, best of all, think of yourself. It all means nothing unless you have had a personal experience of it.

Did you ever reach the ear of God? Did you? Did you ever reach the ear of God by your cry? How do you know? A friend told me he was in the great Tabernacle once in the days of Spurgeon, and he heard that mighty man of God pray something like this: "Bow down Thine ear, O Lord, for we are poor and needy"; and then he said, "Just a little closer, Lord. Bow down Thine ear a little closer, that we may whisper our desires into the ear of God." Have you ever seen a father stoop down and listen to his little

child, as the child whispered his secret into the father's ear, and you saw by the play upon the father's countenance that the prayer had found its way home? Did you ever have your Father in heaven do that for you, just bow down His ear? And you have said, "I am positive I have talked to heaven to-day." How did you know? Because immediately the hand of God appeared in your life, and He did something for you that nobody else could do. What a day that was when He heard our prayer for pardon!

My brother, you may be a member of the church, but you are not a Christian if you have not had the experience of the luxury of talking with God for yourself. Years ago we had in this church a dear man of God, a Russian Missionary, Mr. Kolesnikoff, and his wife, who was a wonderful woman of prayer. They used to take Slavs into their home to try to lead them to Christ. There was one man who came, and Mrs. Kolesnikoff preached the gospel to him. He did not yield, but said to her, "You pray for me?" "Yes, I will pray for you." Day by day she prayed for him. At last he said to her one day as he had said before, "You pray for me?" "No", replied Mrs. Kolesnikoff, "I will not." "What, you no pray for me?" "No, you will never be saved until you pray for yourself." In sheer terror of being left alone, he got down on his knees and began to pray, and found the ear of God was open, and very soon he felt the touch of the hand of God. The burden was rolled from heart and conscience, and he was set free from sin.

This is a commonplace for you Christians, but go back again and think of your spiritual birthday,—

"O happy day, that fixed my choice
On Thee, my Saviour and my God!
Well may this glowing heart rejoice,
And tell its raptures all abroad."

If you have not talked to the ear of God, then you are not saved; but if you are saved, you have had experience of this truth, that a man or woman, utterly unworthy, can yet reach heaven and move the hand of God.

I could go on and remind you of many experiences since that day. I give it as my testimony, that the most real things in life to me, as I recall them, have been God's distinct and unmistakable answers to prayer. I do not care what anybody says about this Book. For myself, if all the preachers, and all the professors on earth, and all the churches, and all you people, were to turn against it, and say it is not true, I should pity you all and say, "I know it is true. I have spoken to God, and He has answered." And I would not be here to-day if it were not true. Go back now over your history, Christian brother and sister, and give God thanks. You have not time to count them all, but give God thanks for the innumerable instances in which, in answer to your poor prayers, the hand of God has touched you, and you know that the distance is spanned, and that earth and Heaven are married and are for ever one.

I could recount the story, the miraculous story, of blessing in this church. Ah, if there is a church—I have no desire to magnify this church—but if there is a church anywhere on earth that would be absolutely without excuse at the judgment day for departing from the living God, it would be this church, God has witnessed to His faithfulness in this place so many times. He has done for us what no mortal power could do, that we are of all men most sinful if we forget His benefits. It is the thing I fear above everything else,

that we should allow anything to obscure our vision of the goodness of God on the collective ministry of this church.

Yes, there is a record of the past; but, blessed be God, the reservoirs of grace are undiminished. Can you say hallelujah about the present as of the past? "The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear." When my friend Dr. Dixon was preaching for me here once a few years ago, he said, "Can you recommend to me a good ear specialist? I think I am getting a little deaf." I replied, "Yes, I believe I can take you to one." So I took him to a specialist and left him at the office. After a while I returned for him and said as he came out, "Well, what did the doctor say about your hearing? Can he do anything for you?" "Oh," said Dr. Dixon, "he just looked at me and smilingly said, 'Anno Domini'."

I remember my dear friend and predecessor, Dr. Thomas, telling me years ago of a man who was a member of this church. He came to the services here morning and evening, and attended a Bible Class in another part of the city in the afternoon. One Sunday the Bible class teacher asked the members of his class if they could offer any suggestions as to how the life of the class might be made more interesting, and the sessions more profitable. This man's hair was white with age, and he was accustomed to sit with his hand to his ear. "Yes, sir, I can make some suggestions", he replied. "All right, let us have them, brother." "Speak a little louder, I cannot hear you very well. Even my own pastor does not speak as loudly and as distinctly as he used to do"! He was perfectly unconscious that his ear was growing heavy. But though He be the Ancient of Days, and though it be true that from everlasting to everlasting He is God, His ear is not heavy; it is as acute as it ever was. You remember that wonderful description of declining human powers in the twelfth chapter of Ecclesiastes: "In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened. And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low; also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets." But not so with our glorious Lord. He can hear the whisper of a little child as easily to-day as He ever could. That is a simple observation, but I would have you remember that the ear of God is attentive still, and the hand of God is not shortened; He has the same power.

I know that it is quite out-of-date to believe that. I was thinking last evening of the inconsistency of unbelief. How flagrantly, how inexcusably inconsistent it is! How God is multiplying witnesses to the truth of this Word! And side by side with the multiplying evidences of its truth, men's hearts are becoming harder, and their minds more blind than ever. "Oh", says our so-called scientist, "it is of no use to pray." And the preacher reads his magazines and a few books, gets a smattering of these things; and he weaves them, with a lot of other nonsense, into his sermons, and his hearers get to feel that they must do everything. The prayer-meetings are closed, and the people cease to pray, because the preacher has taught them that it is no use to pray; that everything is fixed and inexorable, and it is no use to pray.

I remember years ago when Marconi first transmitted his electric signals across the Atlantic, I preached a sermon on wireless telegraphy. The sermon was published, and a man who saw it came to see me. I did not know who he was, but he said, "I read your sermon, and thought I would come to see you. Is your study in the house or at the church?" "It is in the house, it is right here." "Will you allow me to go to your study?" I said, "Certainly, I shall be glad to", and conducted him upstairs. "Will you tell me where you sat when you wrote that sermon?" I said, "Right there, sir." "This is the desk?" "Yes." "You did not know that you were thronged by spirits, did you?"—and I found that he was the leading spiritualist of the city! I told him I did not know it, and did not want to know it. But there is another sense in which every believer should become a medium of spiritual power. How far we have gone since that day! And this poor blind man that calls himself a scientist gets up in his class and says, "Gentlemen, it is no use to pray." Perhaps the next morning he says, "Did you read yesterday about that miracle, when four men in a machine weighing fifteen hundred—or was it fifteen thousand—pounds set off through the terrifically dense atmosphere, and mounted higher and higher until they were ten thousand feet above the sea, and for nineteen hours they saw neither land nor sea, but plowed their way through the dense fog; and, lost in that wilderness ten thousand feet above the sea level, they tapped their little instruments and talked to the ships on the sea, and the ships on the sea talked to stations on land, and the stations on land talked to the newspapers, and the newspapers printed it; and in a few hours millions of people knew what was happening ten thousand feet above the sea!" Then the great man says, "That is science—that is science"—and if he had but a spark of enlightenment he would know that this Book is full of a profounder science than that; and that it has been telling men that God is, and that He is the Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. The ear of God and the arm of God, the one undimmed, the strength of the other undiminished, are still at the disposal of faith, blessed be His name!

Sinner, here in the preacher is one poor, guilty, bankrupt who confesses that by the abounding grace of God the books in the glory have been changed, and the record of his sins has been blotted out; he is a child of God, and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ, because when he had no money to pay the telegraph bill, he talked with God, and God did the rest. And there is no reason why any man or woman, boy or girl, should leave this building without having his or her sin blotted out, because God can save you.

I have been getting a great many anonymous letters recently—I used to get some that I did not read, just glanced through to get their tenor. I am thankful to say that I have not had that sort for years now—but I am getting anonymous letters from a great many broken-hearted men and women who say, "Once I knew the Lord, once I had an experience of His grace, but I have lost the joy of my salvation. Will you pray for me?" I do not exaggerate when I say—and I know many of you have the same experience—if I did nothing but take these requests before the Lord, I believe I would be busy all the time talking to God about broken-hearted men and women who want to get back home. What a blessing the way is open still to get back! Perhaps some are saying, "Ten years have passed, or twenty, since I have had experience of His redeeming power, and I am afraid I have gone so far that I could not get back again." Listen: "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it can-

not save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear." How far can His hand reach? How low? The arm of His redeeming grace can reach to the level of the nethermost hell and save an utterly lost and ruined sinner, lifting him to heaven. His hand, I say, is not shortened; He has done it ten thousand times, and He can do it still.

I wonder if there is any mother here troubled about a prodigal boy, or a prodigal girl? You say, "He is so far away." Yes, but we read of one who "took his journey into a far country". How far is that—as far as from here to the Coast? from here to China? as far as from here to Thibet? It is a good deal farther than that, it is a distance that cannot be measured geographically at all. Sometimes we speak of "the long arm of the law". A man commits a crime in England, and his description is sent throughout the world, and perhaps in some little town this side of the water he is identified, and at last he is brought into custody, and we see in the paper that "the long arm of the law" has found him. Yes, the arm of human law is long, but I remind you the arm of divine law is very long, too; yet I praise God the arm of divine grace is longer still, and there is no far country that the arm of grace cannot reach, and there is no depth of despondency into which a human soul can sink from which he may not telegraph a message to the ear of God, that, by means of the mercy-seat, he may establish communication with a country far away.

Do you believe that, that the ear and hand of God are at our disposal? There are some of you—I hope you all believe in the coming of the Lord, I hope you all do, but I hope none of you believe in the coming of the Lord in such a way as to find a melancholy delight in every bit of darkness you can discover. I say it frankly, I have not an infinitesimal spark of sympathy with the attitude of people who say that the world is so rapidly getting worse and worse, that it is useless to look for revival. There are some people who find satisfaction in every evidence of apostasy, and say it is a fulfilment of Scripture. So it is, and in spite of all our efforts, I know there will be a great falling away; but I can find no suggestion in the Book of the Lord that at any time before the Lord Himself shall come down the skies, He will have ceased to hear the prayers of His people, or ceased to move His hand in their behalf. There is nothing in the Scripture to say we should not pray for, and expect, revival. Who knows these are the days of the last apostasy? Lord Salisbury once said that much of the bad blood between nations was caused by the habit of certain statesmen of studying small maps. What he meant was that they had not learned to view things relatively. And there are people who have not studied the history of the church, who think there never were any dark days before. If we read the story of the Reformation, it is easy to believe that the world had altogether gone to the devil; and yet the hearts of the people were turned toward God. The days were just as dark at the time of the Wesleyan revival in England, and in the United States in the nineteenth century when deism was as rampant as Modernism is to-day—in fact, it was only Modernism in another form. Read Gordon's "Leaven of the Sadducees", and you will discover that there have been other days at least almost as dark as to-day. I do not know why a world-revival cannot come, for the ear of God is not heavy, nor is the hand of God shortened. He will come in His own good time, and He will put an end to the night and will bring the morning with Him; but it is for us to pray down God's blessing in our day; and if the darkness comes, let it not be because of our failure to testify for Him.

What about the prevailing unbelief? What about it? Is there any chance of its being lightened? I got a letter from a brother whom I highly esteem in the Lord; but he always has a pessimistic note in what he writes. He said, "What is the use of contending for the faith anyhow? I am glad, of course, that there are men who are faithful; but why not simply preach the gospel? You cannot do anything. Preach the gospel, and never mind about the rest." Do not warn anybody! It must have been a terrible day when Saul of Tarsus was loose like a beast of prey. That is a striking description of him, "Breathing out threatenings and slaughter". It reminds me of some modern professors and denominational secretaries, and a good many other people I have known. That is no exaggeration, and if the gentlemen were sitting here I would tell it to their faces. They are thirsting for blood, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter" like the very breath of the pit. What is the use? It is no use, you cannot argue with Saul of Tarsus, you cannot convince the unconverted Saul of Tarsus. No, but the Lord God Himself can stoop from heaven and strike him, and bring him to the ground in humble penitence, so that he will say, "What wilt thou have me to do?" Rev. Paul Kanamori is a case in point. He was a modernist for twenty years, yet was brought back to God. Why should we not pray for our professors? Perhaps I have done my share of contending for the faith, but I shall do more. But over and above it all, I believe that nothing but the arm of God can do it. He can turn back the tide of unbelief, and bring in a day of revival.

Why do we not have it? The ear of God is listening, and the hand of God is waiting to open iron doors, to shake prisons open by an earthquake; "but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." And if you and I do not pray effectually, it is not because God cannot hear, not because His hand has lost its power; but it is because there is an interruption in the communication. His ear is waiting, but we are not getting to His ear because our communion with Heaven has been broken. I read one day of a whole city's being thrown into darkness suddenly. The main electric wires that supplied the town passed under a railway bridge, and were fastened under the bridge, and above there was an arc light. Sand flies, getting singed at this light, fell down between the railway ties on to the beam below, until a pile had accumulated, and falling down between the wires they caused a short circuit and threw the whole town into blackness—all through the aggregation of little flies. That is how people lose power. "We have done no great sin"—you do not need to do a great sin. You can grieve the Spirit of God a thousand times a day by refusing to do His commands, you may refuse to obey in such a way as to be without power wherever you go. "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear"; and if we are not getting the touch of the hand of God in response to our cry to the ear of God, the difficulty is not with Him, it is with us. That is my simple message, over and over again I bring it, the preacher to his own heart, and to yours, all this is available to the people of faith, if only we yield ourselves to God.

Shall we ask Him to enable us so to do? Let us pray: O Lord, we thank Thee that there is no storm that can come upon us, and no enemy that can beset us from without, that can sever our communion with Thee. We thank Thee that that is guarded. But oh, we can admit to our own hearts that which

is alien to the Spirit of God, and we can bring ourselves out of fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We pray that we may search our hearts this morning, that they may be bared before Thee, and that these little things, these worldly pleasures, these indulgences, the habit of sitting at ease in Zion when we ought to be about our Master's business, the unkind and uncharitable thought cherished in the heart toward another, the unforgiving spirit, envy and jealousy, may, by the power of Thy Spirit, be put away, for these are the things that break the soul's communion with Thee. Restore unto every one of us, we pray Thee, the joy of our salvation. Especially we pray if an unconverted soul is here this morning, such an one may just now breathe a prayer heavenward. Wilt Thou hear and answer and forgive their sin; give them eternal life, and grace to confess their allegiance to Thee. Use this service to the glory of Thy name, we pray Thee, because we ask it for Jesus Christ's sake and in His name. Amen.

Editorial

WHITHER RELIGION?

The following article, bearing the above title, is taken from the *National Republic*, August, 1927, whose editorial page bears the following heading:

NATIONAL REPUBLIC.

"Let us raise a standard to which the wise and the honest may repair."
—Washington.

"That government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."—Lincoln.

FOR—Fundamental Americanism—Constitutional Representative Government—Constructive National Policies.

AGAINST—All Subversive Movements Inimical to American Ideals, Traditions and Institutions.

GEORGE B. LOCKWOOD, Editor.

Appearing, as it does in a secular journal, it has a special significance. We heartily commend its perusal to all associated with McMaster University, and we guarantee that it is accurately reproduced from the *National Republic*, even to the last paragraph.

At the opening sessions of a recently held national convention of a prominent American religious body, speakers wearing the cloth of the church in turn condoned so-called "companionate marriage", the overthrow of society as at present organized in this republic and contempt for the Bible and the prayer book of the church.

The right exists in this country to advocate any changes obtainable by an appeal to public opinion. The professed atheist who wishes to attack Christianity, the open libertarian who desires to advocate free love, the socialist or communist who desires to argue in favor of either of these theories without advocating the use of violence in advancing them, has a right to do so, and those who do not wish to listen have the same right to remain away from their company.

For a clergyman to remain within the membership and even the ministry of a church whose doctrines he repudiates, is evidence of a lack of stamina which must fall beneath the contempt of all normal-minded men and women. To be willing to take advantage of the opportunity for a hear-

ing afforded by such profession, and at the same time to use it for the purpose of subverting or destroying the institution to which he ostensibly yields allegiance, is a violation of the tenets of common honesty. To cover such conduct with pious profession is to suggest the lines of Shakespeare in Richard III:

"And thus I clothe my naked villainy
With old odd ends, stolen forth from holy writ:
And seem a saint, when most I play the devil."

We have seen the Judas-plant of disloyalty flourishing in American politics. We have seen public men and organizations catering to every element, however misguided or unpatriotic, in order to achieve a transient popularity. We have seen men in the enjoyment of all the privileges and opportunities of American citizenship engaged in movements to subvert or overthrow the American government. We have seen the decay of discipline, of conviction, of the very sense of right and wrong, in secular organizations. But a church has other objectives than merely that of pleasing the mob, and attracting to it those who do not agree with it by surrendering tenets more right than popular.

Are the churches to become secularized; are they to lower their standards to please those who have wandered from them; are they to permit the substitution as a creed of political and moral licentiousness for certain defined principles of right and wrong, held to through evil as through good report?

If so, what is a somewhat let-down and demoralized world to rally to when the time comes, as it will surely come, when humanity is ready to return to moral and mental sanity, to the knowledge that the world must be made better, not by throwing off all restraint, but by returning to some measure of discipline and restraint, that it must be saved through high standards of private conduct and duty, which churches exist to inculcate, rather than lifted by its boot straps through political processes into an imaginary millennium?

Is it not about time for the rank and file of the churches of this country to rise up and demand that their disloyalists be required to do what honourable men need not be asked to do—get out under their own flag and fight from the side of the breastworks on which they belong, rather than to seek betrayal of the camp from within? Unless such rebellion is raised, vast injury is sure to be done to the cause of religion during the next few years by those who "wear the livery of the Lord to serve the devil in."

A RESOLUTION FROM DALESVILLE CHURCH.

The following resolution, passed by the Dalesville Baptist Church, Quebec, was received some weeks ago, and would have been published earlier but for lack of space. We publish it gladly in this issue. It goes to the root of the whole matter. So far as Jarvis Street Church and its Pastor are concerned, they care nothing about the attitude of the Convention. But if the amending Bill becomes part of the Convention Constitution, it would put an end to all free discussion. Every pastor in the Convention will be like Damocles, one of the courtiers of the elder Dionysius of Syracuse. When he spoke in extravagant terms of the happiness of his sovereign, Dionysius is said to have invited him to a sumptuous banquet, at which he found himself seated under a naked sword suspended by a single hair. Anyone who dares to speak in praise of the great fundamentals of the faith in contrast with the vagaries of Modernism, or who dissents from the Modernistic programme proposed by a little group of unscrupulous ecclesiastical "leaders" will be threatened with the edge of the sword.

Following is the Dalesville resolution:

The undersigned members of the Dalesville Baptist Church hereby express their entire disapproval of the amendment made to the Act incorporating the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, and protest against the adoption of such an amendment by the Convention:

1. Because it gives power to the Convention to dictate to each church how and to what institutions of the Denomination it must make its contributions, thus interfering with the independence of the churches.

2. Because the authority for discipline in the church comes from the Word of God and not from the state, and to seek for and obtain such authority from parliament is to do violence to the historic Baptist principle of entire separation of church and state.

3. Because, from statements made, we are convinced that the purpose of this measure if carried into effect by the Convention is to suppress and exclude those ministers and churches who dare to energetically resist and contend against the inroads being made by Modernists among our Baptist churches.

4. Because the exercise of this power of exclusion, sought for by the Convention, would deprive us of the right to have a voice in the choice of a Board of Governors for McMaster University, a right vested in us by the will of the late Senator McMaster.

PASTOR FETLER'S TABERNACLE.

We have received a letter from Riga, signed by Dr. A. McCaig, Principal Emeritus of Spurgeon's College; William Fetler, General Director of the Russian Missionary Society; and W. A. Phillips, Associate Director of the Russian Missionary Society, informing us that the Salvation Tabernacle in Riga will be dedicated August 7th. The letter is as follows:

Riga, Latvia, 29th June, 1927.

Dr. T. T. Shields,
21 Scarth Road, Toronto, Ontario.

My dear Brother Shields:

We are hearing of the great fights you are having with the denomination in Canada and elsewhere, and also of the great plan of the University. May the Lord indeed bless this forward movement!

The friends of Modernism also in England, we see, are attacking you and your associates, and linking "Pastor Fetler" with you. The Lord is giving us here great victories. It is the same spirit of persecution and un-biblical principles which seem to be animating leaders of denominations in many places. We in the new Latvian Republic, had no other way but to start on our own, and thus the Second Baptist Union of Latvia (Baptist Bible Union) has been formed and acknowledged by the Government on the same basis and with the same rights as the first Baptist Union. Altogether, there are about 80 churches in Latvia, over 30 of which have joined the Second Baptist Union, but we believe the larger proportion of the whole denomination is with us in their sympathies. How we stand here, you will be able to judge from the fact that in the capital of the Republic, Riga, out of the 6 Baptist Churches, 4, representing about 83 per cent. of all the Baptists of Riga, are in our Union, and in the principal Church of the old Union, of which the President of the Union, Dr. Fry, is Pastor, last Sunday, Pastor Fetler had a crowded meeting, a number being unable to get inside.

We are, however, writing this letter on behalf of the Headquarters Council of the Russian Missionary Society. We would have liked so much to have had you with us in August to preach the Dedication Sermon for our new Tabernacle, and Pastor Fetler wrote to that effect to your brother, but we understand that on account of your many present duties, it is impossible for you to come over at that time.

It is really imperative that we meet this need as soon as possible, so as to concentrate our efforts on still wider missionary activities. You will see from the enclosed letter, which we are sending to our constituency, our detailed plan.

The Lord has wonderfully blessed us with regard to the building which will be the largest hall in the city, and it has already proved a centre of religious activity for the whole of our Republic. Now, we are very anxious to open the building free of debt, and we are writing to request the sympathetic co-operation of yourself and your colleagues at this time.

Now, we are wondering whether you, as President of the Baptist Bible Union who have so heartily supported us, could not do something to greatly help us in this uphill work. Perhaps you could find it possible to draw attention to the work in the *Gospel Witness* as well as in the *Baptist Fundamentalist*, and maybe send out a special call to your constituency. Please, dear Brother Shields, do not refuse to be a real Barnabas for us at this time, as we need your help, and the help of all Bible-loving and Bible-believing Baptists of North America. It is not only a question of the Tabernacle, but also of the Missionary Bible Training School which is connected with it, and which during the first two years of its existence has already proved a great blessing. Practically every one of our students has become a revivalist and much blessing is accompanying their labours wherever they go.

If a special urgent letter could be sent out by you to your constituency, or at least a strong statement put in your Magazines, it might greatly help. We are anxious to have the returns by the 7th August so that we might report to the large convocation assembled on that day the joyful news. We are expecting that the President of the Republic will favour us by coming to open the Tabernacle with a silver key on the morning of the 7th August, and to be present with the Prime Minister and the British and American Ambassadors at the opening services. A message from you at this time will be very much appreciated.

Trusting to hear from you in a way that will cheer the hearts of us all,

We are,

Yours in the Lord's service,

A. McCAIG,
Principal Emeritus, Spurgeon's College.

WILLIAM TETLER,
General Director, R.M.S.

W. A. PHILLIPS,
Associate Director.

P.S. Would you, therefore, be so kind as to cable the amount received by you (Cable address: Rumission, Riga) on the 5th or 6th August?

We publish the above letter most gladly, and with great heartiness appeal to the friends of missions everywhere who may read this *Witness* to respond as liberally as they can to Pastor Fetler's appeal. The Editor of this paper will, as Mr. Fetler suggests, send a word of greeting to be read at the dedication service; and we should like also to be able to inform Pastor Fetler of a large amount of money received for his Tabernacle. Will all our friends who read this, who are within a few days' mailing distance of Toronto, send us their contributions at once. Those who live on the Pacific Coast might send us their contributions either by air mail or by telegraph, or, otherwise, wire that it is coming and forward later by mail. Then we will put the amounts together, and advise Pastor Fetler in our cable of greeting. In addition, we suggest that all our readers give place to Pastor Fetler's work, and especially to the dedication day, in their prayers.

BAPTIST BIBLE UNION SENIOR LESSON LEAF

Vol. II.

T. T. SHIELDS, Editor

No. 3.

Lesson 8

Third Quarter

August 21, 1927

GENTILE CONDEMNATION.**LESSON TEXT:** Romans, Chapter 2:1-16.**GOLDEN TEXT.**—"God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel" (Rom. 2:16).

This lesson occupying the first sixteen verses of chapter two, deals with the impartial judgment and condemnation of sin by God, "in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my Gospel". There is no statement of the Gospel in this lesson whatever, and in order to its proper understanding, one must keep the fact before them that it deals only with the question of government and judgment.

The first thing in the lesson is some of the fruits of the reprobate mind. First, there is a common practice stated; next, a foolish thought of escape; next, a guilty despising of the forbearance of God, and then a description given by the Apostle of the accumulation of wrath against such. The common practice is to judge another and to condemn in another the sins which the person himself commits. There were many moralists among the ancient heathen, that approved what was right, condemned the breaker of the law, and practised the breaking of the law themselves. The men who are guilty of particular sins are frequently in the habit of condemning emphatically the same sin in others. The greater number of censorious persons are guilty of this foolishness, and so condemn themselves: "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." Illustration of this can be found in the severe judgment passed upon the man in Nathan's parable by King David. Or, the Pharisee's condemnation of the Publican who went up to the Temple with him to pray. However difficult it may be to explain, the severe condemnation of the same sin in another person seems to deaden in some way the accusations of conscience in the heart of the man who is judging the other. "And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them that do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" There can be no escape whatever, and the folly of such a hope should be clear to every person. The person who continues in wrong-doing, with such a low estimate of the judgment of God, is also represented as despising the riches of God's goodness and forbearance, and blind to the fact that the goodness of God is shown to him for the one purpose of leading him to repentance.

The apostle goes on to show that such a person, through the hardness and through the impenitence of his heart, is laying up for himself "wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God". Three things are stated concerning the judgment by God of such men. First: The judgment of God will be according to truth. Second: He will render to every man according to his deeds. Third: There will be no respect of persons with God. See verses 2, 6, and 11. First, the judgment will be according to truth. Men deceive themselves, or are made void of judgment, that is, reprobate in mind, by the deceitfulness of sin, and change the truth of God into a

lie. But in the judgment of God this will be entirely removed; truth will be made clear, the folly of man will be declared. In accordance with all God's revealed truth the deeds of men will be judged. Second: God will render to every man according to his deeds. The question here is not profession, is not the condemnation of other men, but is the question of a man's actions, "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified". All the actions of men will be brought into the light; the secrets are to be judged as well as the open practice of wicked men. The judgment will be the judgment of reality and not of profession. Third: There is no respect of persons with God. The Jew believed that he stood on a higher plane than the Gentile, and expected special treatment in the question of judgment, but the judgment is to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. These are three principles of judgment and condemnation stated in the lesson.

There are two questions arising out of the lesson which require distinct and satisfactory answers. Verses 6 to 11 raise the question as to whether a man can have salvation by works. Two classes are described, one class who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honour and immortality, and eternal life (that is the life beyond death): the other class who are contentious, who do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, upon whom there will come indignation, wrath, tribulation and anguish. This would seem to indicate that by good deeds one might obtain salvation. This passage is to explain the principles of the judgment of God, and does not deal with the question of salvation at all. In other portions of scripture, salvation is dealt with, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast". (Eph. 2:8, 9). "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. (Titus 3:5).

The second question is regarding sin under the law, and sin without law. "For as many as have sinned without law"—that is the Gentiles; "shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (For not the hearers of the law are just before God but the doers of the law shall be justified.) For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." Out of this arises the question, Are those who have sinned without law, able to save themselves by obeying the law put in their hearts by nature, that is, while living up to the light they have? The Apostle in this Epistle states "there is none righteous, no not one" and the Bible is distinct and emphatic in many other places as to the impossibility of salvation by good works, either under the law or without the law. Even Cornelius of Caesarea, a man who was acceptable to God by his alms and prayers, was told by the angel to send for Peter who would speak to him words whereby he and his house might be saved.

All men have sinned and come short of the glory of God. "For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law" (v. 12).

LAST SUNDAY IN JARVIS STREET.

Sunday was a day of great blessing in Jarvis Street. In the morning the Pastor preached from a text taken from the Whole Bible Lesson which had been considered in the School,—an old-fashioned, familiar, text, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian". It was a simple message, a mere alphabet

of the gospel. When the invitation was given, fourteen responded to the call, all of whom were adults.

In the evening the Pastor preached on "The Anti-Christian, Soul-Destroying Cult called Russellism." The people came in a flood. Long before the time of service the seats, and aisles, and every available inch of space was not full, nor crowded, but literally packed. Hundreds and hundreds of people—how many, we do not know—were turned away before the hour of service struck. Early in the service Dr. Shields requested the members of Jarvis Street to give up their seats to strangers, and to withdraw to the Lecture Hall for a meeting of prayer. This, some hundreds of them very gladly did, crowding the Lecture Hall—but it made no difference to the multitude in the auditorium. Crowds flowed in and filled every available inch of space.

The open air service at the rear of the church was begun before the main service was dismissed, where another great multitude had assembled. The indoor service closed about half-past nine. Several responded to the invitation, notwithstanding the packed aisles. Out-of-doors, the Pastor continued the discussion of Russellism before an enormous crowd of people.

We are of the opinion that this anti-Christian cult is one of the worst plagues of our time. If it be not a doctrine of demons, there never was such a doctrine. The address delivered last Sunday will be printed in *The Gospel Witness* in due course with other addresses which are to follow.

Next Sunday evening Dr. Shields will speak in the church at seven o'clock on the subject, "Russellism's Perversion of the Doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ"; and in the open air after the evening service, he will speak on, "The Unscripturalness of Russellism's Famous Doctrine of 'To Hell and Back'." It is probable that all these addresses will be put together in booklet form for use in combating the plague of Russellism, whose advocates are now known as The International Bible Students' Association.

DR. W. B. RILEY'S NEW PAPER.

Dr. W. B. Riley has just issued the first number of his new monthly paper entitled, *The Christian Fundamentalist*. Dr. Riley is so well known the world over, and *Gospel Witness* readers, especially, are so familiar with the character of his teaching, that it would be superfluous to say much about this new paper. We have seen one number, and we can give it no higher praise than to say that it is edited in the usual Riley style. It is packed full of information, and it seems to us that no Christian who would be abreast of the times, and familiar with current religious thought, can afford to be without it. The subscription price is \$1.50 per year, and we recommend every reader of *The Gospel Witness* to subscribe for it at once. Address, *The Christian Fundamentalist*, 1020 Harmon Place, Minneapolis, Minn.

NEW BAPTIST BIBLE UNION PAPER IN ILLINOIS.

We have received a copy of a new Baptist Bible Union paper called, *The Trumpet*. It is published in Chicago, and edited by Rev. F. S. Donnelson. The first number promises well, and we are sure this paper will exercise a useful ministry. We think there is great value in such publications, and we heartily commend this splendid paper to our readers. Some day soon we will publish a list of all the Baptist Bible Union papers of which we have knowledge.

THE EDITOR'S ENGAGEMENTS.

The Editor goes to Des Moines again this week. He should have left Monday evening to fulfil an engagement there for Wednesday and Thursday, but being detained for two funerals, he leaves Wednesday evening for a meeting in Chicago on Thursday, and in Des Moines on Friday, returning to Toronto for Sunday morning. Monday, August 1st, he will leave for Montrose Bible Conference where he speaks daily, August 2nd to 7th.