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Editor: T. T. SHIELDS.

Associate Editors: T. I. STOCKLEY, ALEXANDER THOMSON, W. GORDON BROWN.

"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 VALUE OF LOYALTY

It would perhaps be difficult to find a more pathetic story in all the literature of the world than the history of Saul, the son of Kish. He was taken from humble circumstances, and elevated to a throne. His record proves that he was, at heart and in his very nature, an aggregation of opposites,—superficially so modest that he had to be brought from his hiding place among the stuff, and introduced to Israel, he later manifested a pride so unbending that when the divine sentence of deposition had been uttered by Samuel, the haughty spirit of Saul begged the seer still to honour him before the people. Of splendid physical stature, he lived to demonstrate that the glorious mansion was tenanted by a little soul. Blessed with a mental equipment above many, he showed his moral littleness by making envy and jealousy his daily companions.

It must have been exceedingly difficult for anyone to be loyal at all times to such a complex and self-contradictory character. Notwithstanding, even Saul had his loyal friends who, when they could not admire his conduct, at least respected his office; and when they could not honour him as a man, in loyalty to the principles of law and order, paid him due homage as their king.

Saul lived throughout his career a troubled life, but most of his troubles came from within. His brilliant and tragic career ended on Mount Gilboa when "the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons. And the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Melchishua, Saul's sons. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him; and he was sore wounded of the archers . . . So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armourbearer, and all his men, that same day together." And when, on the morrow, the Philistines came to strip the slain they found the bodies of Saul and his three sons who had fallen together on Mount Gilboa, "and they cut off his head, and stripped off his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to publish it in the house of their idols, and among the people. And they put his armour in the house of Ashtaroth: and they fastened his body to the wall of Bethshan. And when the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard of that which the Philistines had done to Saul; all the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul

and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Bethshan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there. And they took their bones, and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days."

The character of David presents a complete contrast to that of Saul. His physical stature was not great, but he was great of soul. He was never envious or jealous of others, and as he hated these qualities in others he hated them equally in himself. Always unswervingly loyal himself, as he proved abundantly by his treatment of Saul, he developed a capacity for a large appreciation of loyalty in others. Envy and jealousy are twins, and they are robbers and murderers always. They slay all peace in every breast, and rob life of every joy. Yet what common human qualities they are! It was envy in the heart of his brethren which sold Joseph into Egypt. When certain men of Israel prophesied, there were certain men of pigmy moral stature who would have forbidden them, but Moses the Great exclaimed, "Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!"

The history of the kings of Israel and of Judah is a history of deadly feuds occasioned by jealous intrigues. Haman, the son of Hammedatha, seemed to possess even more than heart could wish, but all his prosperity availed him nothing so long as Mordecai the Jew remained at the king's gate. And when He Who was the embodiment of all virtues, the manifestation of all perfections, the incarnation of eternal goodness, was brought before Pilate, we read that "he knew that for envy they had delivered him". How we ought to hate it! and to shun it!

But its cure is never negative: it must be positive. Covetousness may be cured by liberality; envy by contentment.

The story of David's treatment of the men of Jabesh-gilead affords an example of how true loyalty may be appreciated, and, by appreciation, still further cultivated. When David had been anointed king of Judah, "they told David, saying, That the men of Jabesh-gilead were they that had buried Saul. And David sent messengers unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, and said unto them, Blessed be ye of the Lord, that ye have shewed this kindness unto

your Lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him. And now the Lord shew kindness and truth unto you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing. Therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant: for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them."

By this conduct David proved at once the greatness of his soul and the keenness of his perception. Saul had been David's bitterest enemy. No one knew Saul's defects of character better than David; but when the story of Saul's tragic end reached him he could not find it in his magnanimous soul to rejoice, but rather he exclaimed, "The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions. Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!"

I.

When David heard of the loyalty of the men of Jabesh-gilead, and commended them for their conduct, he showed himself to be eminently wise, for a wise man will never envy another the loyalty showed him by his friends. David had no reason on personal grounds to mourn for Saul. Yet he appreciated the loyalty of those who gave him honourable burial, for David had learned to regard this quality of loyalty as a rare virtue wherever he found it. So ought this quality to be appraised by all. There is an ominous verse in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, and its prophetic import seems to have verified itself in the experience of all who are loyal to Christ and His Word: "And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another."

We do not mean to say that qualities which are the antitheses of love and loyalty are new things under the sun. Apparently there have always been men who found it impossible to be loyal to anyone but themselves. In the days of the American Civil War there was a certain political party of which someone remarked that it was a party of loyalists who were always uncompromisingly loyal to the seven principles of their platform, and that the seven principles were always the same, namely, five loaves and two fishes! Such loyalty has never been scarce. But how many tragic chapters are written not only in the life of every nation, but in the life of every

individual! Ahithophel has never wanted for a successor. The contemptible Shimai, by whom David was lauded or loathed, exalted or execrated, according as the circumstances of the moment, to the mind occupied exclusively with its own interests, seemed to dictate, has had his counterpart in the varying fortunes of all men of leadership in all ages.

There is a loyalty to the past which may indicate a most admirable quality of heart and mind. Homesickness in boys or girls, or men or women, should never be despised, for it is a revelation of capacity for attachment, for abiding affection, for loyalty to persons and places and principles, which ought always to be encouraged.

There may, of course, be an extravagant devotion to the past which ignores one's duty to the present; but a passion for new things, new places, new friends, betokens a sentimental shallowness which is indicative of a quality of nature comparable to the stony ground in which no worthy plant, no plant of renown, can find sufficient depth of earth in which to root itself, and find a permanent abiding place. Great trees which strike their roots deep into the soil, and wrap themselves around the immovable rocks beneath, are not easily transplanted. The modern tendency to be disloyal toward the past, the want of historic perspective which blinds men to their indebtedness to old friends, whether they be persons, or principles, or books, of *the Book*, is symptomatic of a superficiality of thought and feeling and affection which makes greatness of character impossible.

The man who can be loyal to principles can be loyal to persons too. There is a world of sound sense in the proverbial saying that old friends are the best. Nothing is more beautiful or inspiring than to see friendships begun in youth, continued down to old age. What is more ennobling to the beholder than a golden wedding, with all that half a century of partnership involves? And how beautiful it is to see a pastor and his people go on and grow old together! It is so common for this relationship to be characterized by a mutual weariness. Long ago the Methodists used to have a saying respecting the three-year term of pastoral service: "First year idolized; second year criticized; third year scandalized." Where that is true there could be no genuine loyalty. There are many people like the plant that is sometimes called "Wandering Jew"; they are easily transplanted, and will grow in any bowl of water.

There is a kind of conservatism which is only a veiled loyalty. We remember an old lady of few words who was once a member of our congregation. We built a new church, and the pews of the old church were given to another congregation in the city which was erecting a new building. This old lady had sat in one pew every Sunday from the beginning of her married life, and, until they were grown and scattered from the homestead, all the children had sat in the same pew with their father and their mother. This old saint did not take very kindly to the new church, and periodically she used to go across the city to attend a service in the church to which the old pews had been transferred, and she was wont to ask, as a special favour, that she be permitted to sit in the same pew. Her attitude was more than

conservatism, and more than mere sentimentality: it was a disguised loyalty to the memories of the past, to the pastors who had ministered to her, and all the holy associations of the old church. Such loyalty should never be disparaged.

But there is a loyalty to the living and to the present which is equally admirable. We used to know a certain woman who was never loyal to her pastor until after he had ceased to be her pastor: her admiration was always written in the past tense, it was always for those who had left her. There is something in the office boy who learns, within a week or two of his employment with a new firm, to say "We". Church gypsies to whom all churches are alike, and who can lightly trip from place to place, seldom make much contribution to any church. People who are loyal to their church, to their pastor, to their friends, and even to their city, will be found to be of a quality that will not wear out with the years.

II.

But we learn another lesson from David's treatment of the men of Jabesh-gilead, and it is this: that a wise man will cultivate the friendship of those who have been loyal to others; for this was what David did in this instance. The men of Jabesh-gilead had honoured their master Saul. They had respected him in life, and had given him honourable burial in death. David was shrewd enough to see that men who had been true to one king were likely to be true to another. Therefore he commended them for the kindness they had shown to Saul, and said, "And now the Lord shew kindness and truth unto you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing. Therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant: for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them."

This principle is susceptible to many applications. It is true domestically. The loyal son or daughter is likely to be a loyal husband or wife. If a young woman were wise, before she gives her heart to any young man, she would find out what sort of a son he had proved himself to be. If he has been careless of his mother, he is most likely to prove careless of his wife; and this applies to both sides of the house, for the selfish person cannot be loyal to anyone or anything but to himself.

Many a minister has invited disaster by neglect of this principle. When he goes to his new charge a certain number of the people come forward to greet him, and to assure him that he is the only minister who ever preached acceptably in that pulpit. They fall upon him, and flatter him, and tell him that Spurgeon was a mere tyro in comparison! They are likely, indeed, not to content themselves with complimenting the new pastor: they are most likely to contrast him with his predecessor—much to his predecessor's disadvantage! And if he has had but little experience, the poor minister is likely to be trapped, for who does not like to hear pleasant things said of himself?

But there are other people who are not so enthusiastic about the new minister. They accept him; they are respectful to him; they co-operate with him; they are faithful in the discharge of their duties. But they

do not go into raptures over the new minister. Truth to tell, they are rather sad at heart. They have lost a friend. They remember that he ministered to them in hours of sorrow; that he helped them to carry their heavy burdens up the hill; that he proved to be a cheery companion on the cloudy and dark days; and that when bereavement came, and the world seemed empty, he comforted them with the comfort that he had received from Someone else, and he brought to them, by a tender, sympathetic ministry, a foretaste of that heavenly life when God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. And now he has gone, and the little children miss him, and father and mother miss him, and all who have cares and anxieties and burdens miss him—and a stranger has come to take his place!

They love the stranger, too, after a fashion, but these deep and capacious natures, these large-souled saints, do not lavish all their affections upon the stranger on the occasion of their first meeting. But when the stranger has ceased to be a stranger, and months have stretched into years and the years are multiplied, upon whom must he depend for prayerful support and faithful effort? Not upon those who were so lavish in their compliments the first day he preached. Oh no! Long since they have retired to the back seats, or have gone out of the door altogether. They are just as critical of him as they had been of his predecessor; but the more reticent and cautious people, in whose nature deep ever calleth unto deep, are standing now with this man of God as they always stood with others who preceded him.

It is ever so. The loyalty which respected Saul in death will support David his successor in life. To learn to be loyal to anyone who is worthy will help us to be loyal to everyone who is worthy. Those who would make new friends of value, will find them among people who have many old friends.

III.

But in this story of the men of Jabesh-gilead we may also see a picture of the Lord's Anointed appealing for the loyalty of His own. Jesus Christ is never jealous of our loyalty to any worthy object. He shares it, and sublimates our love to higher heights. The more we love Christ, the more we shall love other people. To be pre-eminently loyal to Christ will put anyone in right relationship to everybody else. Ah, how true it is that our affections have been lavished on the dead! on the perishing things of time! He comes now to ask us to transfer our loyalty to the Living. Saul is dead, and He is anointed king.

No one else has ever deserved of any one of us such loyalty as the love of Jesus merits. There is no one comparable to Him. We may well exhort each other to the utmost loyalty: "O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods." Yes, to Him we owe supreme loyalty: "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker"—"And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord: thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints. For who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?"

LOVERS OF PLEASURE

There is a passage of Scripture which predicts that a time will come when men will be lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, and there are not wanting those who see the fulfilment of this prediction in this present pleasure-loving age. It is probably true that men and women were never more given to pleasure than they are to-day, although, of course, there never has been a day when there has not been at least some people who were found to be lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

We are not disposed to dissent from those who see this prophecy fulfilled in our day. But some who quote this passage are disposed to limit its application to such as indulge in what are usually called "worldly pleasures". The dance, the theatre, and the card table, are three favorite forms of pleasure. We have no defense for either, and will join with anyone in the strongest condemnation of each and all. But our fear is that some perfectly orthodox people, and certainly multitudes of professing Christians, may themselves be guilty of an inordinate love of pleasure.

It is not so much with the legitimacy of the form of pleasure *per se* that we are concerned as with the relation of these two, pleasure and God. It would simplify the text, and clarify our understanding, if we recognize that God must be first, and pleasure afterward. There are pleasures which are legitimate, and, indeed, which are commanded. In God's presence there is fulness of joy, and at His right hand there are pleasures for ever more. It is quite legitimate for Christian people to be lovers of pleasure, providing their pleasures are of the right sort. But any and every kind of pleasure becomes wrong when it takes precedence in the life of God Himself.

The complaint of the verse we have cited is not that men love pleasure, but that they love pleasure more than God. Therefore anything that takes God's place is illegitimate. It becomes an idol, and should be removed. A man may never go to the theatre, nor dance, nor play cards; and may frequently go to church, and hold office in the church, and engage in many forms of religious service,—and still come within the censure of this scripture. The plain matter of fact is that whoever puts his own enjoyment first, whoever selfishly indulges himself, whatever the form of indulgence, and however harmless in itself it may appear to be, if the thing be indulged at the expense of duty, and of primary obligations, it brings the man within the condemnation of this scripture.

A person who absents himself from the house of God because it is too warm, or because it is too cold, or because it is too far away, or because he thinks he is too tired, or because he is enjoying converse with the Sunday visitor, just as truly puts pleasure before God as another man who puts the theatre before the prayer meeting.

The applications of the principle are innumerable, but if we remember that duty, obligation, service to others, cannot be neglected or sacrificed without a breach in the divine fellowship, without some measure of separation from God, we shall see that anything which is exalted to the place which belongs exclusively

to God, will bring us within the condemnation of this prophetic word.

Let us be happy Christians! Let us rejoice ever more! Let us know the ecstasy, the rapture, of divine fellowship! Then we shall prove, to repeat one of our quotations, that "in thy presence is fulness of joy: at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

FOUR FAITHFUL SAYINGS.

By Prof. Wm. Jones.

There is an interesting phrase found in the pastoral epistles, one which challenges and engages the attention of the person interested in a study of the Word. That phrase is, "faithful saying". There are four of these faithful sayings in the New Testament, and singularly enough they appear in the last writings of the Apostle Paul, frequently called the pastoral epistles.

The precise nature of these sayings, their historical importance and significance, no one can declare absolutely. But of one thing we can be sure, that they reflect very accurately the beliefs commonly current and accepted in the church of the third quarter of the first century. First Timothy was written about sixty-four; Titus, about sixty-five; and Second Timothy, about sixty-seven. If we look at the sayings either in the order in which they occur in the New Testament, or in their chronological order, we find a remarkable sequence. But we shall take their concatenation, as found in the Authorized Version.

The sayings seem to reflect foundation truths, dealing with strategic points of the believer's life. More than that, the principles or doctrines therein enunciated are requisite to a proper understanding of the Gospel, and to Christianity as a movement.

Take, for instance, the first saying, found in I Tim. 1:15: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

Paul declares that the One about Whose person and work the message of Christianity centers came to this world for one purpose. Does Paul deviate from his predecessors' view of Christ's coming, and their declaration of that purpose? Manifestly not, for the angel of the Lord declared that purpose, the purpose of the Messiah's mission, in these words: "Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." And as if this prophetic command were not enough, we have the Lord Himself emphasizing the unique character of His coming in the words of another evangelist, Mark: "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

An important truth this, that Christ's major, His supreme, His only purpose, so to speak, in His first advent was "to save sinners", or "to give his life a ransom for many." How different from the purposes attributed to Him by many of our contemporaries! All the offices of His earthly and heavenly ministry derive from His one office of Redeemer.

The second of these sayings is not so easily located. By that we mean that the saying itself is difficult to

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A QUIET SUNDAY IN OLD ENGLAND

This has been a very interesting Lord's Day. I am staying with my daughter and her husband and their two little girls. The weather continues bright and warm, although yesterday some parts of south-east England experienced a violent thunderstorm. In this immediate neighborhood two of my old fellow-students are residing. They have both retired from their pastorates, and are now preaching, when able, in any church which may call for their help. They have both occupied the same pulpit to-day in a small church nearby. The knowledge of this arrangement led me to decide to hear my college companions to-day. It is very many years since I heard either of them preach. One of the two belonged to my own special "batch" in college, and in those college days we were much together, and in our holidays we used to go out together conducting evangelistic missions. This dear friend—W.J.H.—conducted the morning service in the little church to-day. It was very painful to me to see how weak he has become physically, and to know that he can now preach only once a day; but spiritually he is stronger than ever. This morning's service was exceedingly rich. The opening prayer carried us into the Holiest Place, and each part of the service held us there. The sermon was based on a brief sentence in Isaiah 27:3. "I will water it every moment". The message was just what I expected from my dear friend—full of vital truth, of the abounding grace of God, with many beautiful and some humorous touches, and a delightful ease of manner. It was indeed a joy to listen to him, although it was evident that his physical strength was scarcely equal to the occasion.

The outline of his sermon was simple and natural.

1. Divine supply for human need.
2. Increasing supply for continuous need.
3. Personal supply for personal need.

The application gave us the purpose of the promise, namely, to make us steadfast, to make us grow, and to make us fruitful. It was a gracious message. My friend, always an intense admirer of C. H. Spurgeon, seems to have absorbed that mighty preacher's teaching, along with much of Samuel Rutherford too, for his sermon seemed to throb with the grace, and spirituality and style of both of those great souls. If the Baptist ministry of England were of this stamp our beloved Dr. Shields would delight to have fellowship with his brethren in this land.

The evening service in the same small church was conducted by the other fellow-student residing in this district. He is a Scotsman and, of course, retains his native accent. In college I was not brought into such close contact with this brother as with my friend, W. J. H., but I always admired him for the purity and strength of his character, and his diligence as a student. I had never heard him preach since the old days when he delivered his "trial sermons" in college. The service this evening was conducted with grace and

dignity, and the sermon was marked with much beauty of thought and illustration. The text was James 4:14, "What is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away." The preacher told us at the outset that he did not intend to speak on the brevity of human life, but that he would base his message on the metaphor used by the Apostle, that life is "even a vapour".

There were three divisions to the message:

1. Life, like a vapour, may be a very beautiful thing.
2. Life, like a vapour, may be a very powerful thing.
3. Life, like a vapour, may be a very vitalizing thing.

These main lines of teaching were unfolded with much beauty of thought and illustration, and we were told that God alone could make our lives beautiful, powerful, and vitalizing. But I was eager to hear how God would do this for me. Here my college friend disappointed me. It seemed so unprofitable to present to us such a noble picture of what life could be unless we were also shown how it could be realized. Afterwards I ventured to speak to my old friend about this, and his reply was that all who were present knew quite well how such a life could be theirs. I told him, however, that it is quite unwise to take for granted that all in the congregation would know the "how". It is much safer to take it for granted that many do not know, and hence we must always tell how divine realities may become ours. He accepted my gentle criticism very graciously. In the course of the sermon our brother recalled, to my delight, what he presumed that I too should remember, some occasions in our student days when, at Spurgeon's Tabernacle, a singer with a pathetic and beautiful voice would sing:

"Show me Thy Face—one transcient gleam
of loveliness divine,
And I shall never think or dream
of other love save Thine:
All lower light will darken quite,
All lower glories wane,
The loveliness of earth will scarce
Seem beautiful again."

And while the singer was pouring forth his own soul as he sang those words the great Spurgeon would be so melted that the tears of love and joy would simply roll down that mighty preacher's face. I have often thought of the words of this beautiful song, but never without recalling Mr. Spurgeon's deep emotion when Mr. Chamberlain sang it.

In the afternoon I addressed a fine crowd of "Crusader" boys, but I will not trouble *Gospel Witness* readers with any account of that service. This has been my first Sunday in England since our arrival without a definite preaching engagement. On the whole it has been a good day.

Sunday Evening, July 21st, 1929.

T. I. Stockley.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE STRATEGY OF ABSALOM.

A Sermon by the Pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields.

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, July 14th, 1929.

(Stenographically Reported)

"And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were called; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing." 2 Sam. 15:11.

Prayer Before The Sermon.

We pray, O Lord, especially now for the ministry of Thy Spirit that the truth of God may find entrance to many hearts long shut against Thee. We read in Thy Word that Thou didst open the heart of Lydia so that she attended to the things which were spoken by Paul. We pray that many hearts here this evening may be so opened by the Holy Ghost that they may receive the truth, and that by the truth they may be made free. For the sake of Him Who died we ask it, Amen.

One of the most extraordinary rebellions of history was that to which the text of this evening relates. David was the Lord's anointed, and reigned over Israel. His own son, brilliant and dashing young Absalom, aspired to wear his father's crown, and to sit upon his father's throne. He had spent some time in exile, but by his father's grace was permitted to return and to dwell in Jerusalem. While there he rose up early in the morning, stood at the gate of the city, intercepted those who came to the king for judgment, and made great promises of what he would do were he in authority. Thus he stole the hearts of the men of Israel. When he had scattered the seeds of sedition with a sufficiently liberal hand to justify, as he thought, the expectations of a harvest, he sent spies throughout all the land of Israel with instructions that at the sound of the trumpet they should proclaim, "Absalom reigneth in Hebron."

As a part of the mob, with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were called; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing." David himself was temporarily driven from the city. Like his Greater Son, he went up Mount Olivet, weeping as he went up. All the people, apparently, were turned after Absalom. Messages came to David day by day, and hour by hour, saying, "The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom". So that, with a small but faithful band, he turned his back upon the city, despised and rejected of those whose rightful king he was, and he went out again into the wilderness.

There is a picture here of that which has happened again and again in the course of human history, for men are found in rebellion against a Greater than David, and are moving in the direction of a still greater tragedy than that which marked the end of Absalom's career. I use this Old Testament story this evening to illustrate some of these great principles of which we must be made aware if we are really to be saved.

Here is the story of a brilliant leader, of a cunning strategist; and of an army of dupes.

I.

ABSALOM WAS A BRILLIANT LEADER OF MEN. Nothing is done without leadership. Wherever you find a mass

movement of people, be it for good or for ill, you will find someone, somewhere, who is responsible for the movement. I know it is true that "all we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way," but no one did ever go astray without superhuman leadership in the beginning. Our "adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour". In many figures he is set forth in Scripture. Notably he is said to transform himself as an angel of light. Everybody here this evening is under the dominance of one of two masters, following one of two leaders, acknowledging and obeying one of two masters, taking one of two roads, and moving in the direction of one of two ends.

Look at this story for a little, will you? Absalom was no fiction, but was a *very real person* who brought the force of his personality to bear upon the personality of others. And there is a real devil. That is old-fashioned doctrine, is it not? I wish the fact of it were as obsolete as some people imagine him to be. But surely it requires no stretch of the imagination to believe in the existence of some mighty, malignant, personality who designs the destruction of men. There is a devil. He who tempted our first parents in the garden, and who stamped all human history with his slimy course, who tempted the one and only perfect Man Who was God as well as man—that same devil lives, modern theologians to the contrary notwithstanding. When a bandit, or a criminal of any other order, has left a trail of wreck and ruin behind him, he exerts himself often to the utmost to give currency to the idea that he has ceased to be. The police of a thousand cities do not spend their time looking for a dead criminal, but for a living one; and if, by any means at all, he can persuade them that he has passed out of existence, then they are apt to be less diligent, and doors may be left open for him to do more of his predatory work.

The worst devil of all is no devil at all, nothing is more dangerous than the assumption that there is no evil leadership—leading men astray. I could not account for half the theological seminaries on the American continent, as they are now constituted, apart from the hypothesis that there is a personal devil. I cannot imagine who else is running them. How do you account for all the evil in the world,—for the denial of the Book, for a thousand things subversive of Christian faith,—apart from that scriptural doctrine of the existence of a spiritual Absalom who would lead men away from God?

Absalom was a *very attractive man*, rather an extraordinary character: "In all Israel there was none to be

so much praised as Absalom for his beauty; from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him." He was physically a perfect man, with long flowing locks. He lived before the practice of bobbing hair had become popular! Even Absalom wore what seemed to be, to him, a crown of glory. Poor lame Mephibosheth would have had a poor chance of leading an army against David. It required a man of Absalom's splendid physique and magnificent personality to lead men to take up arms against their lawful king.

Thus sin in its most dangerous aspects is always attractive. "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof." Sin seldom comes in shabby attire. It seldom approaches men in ugly guise. The devil transforms himself as an angel of light. He never comes to young men as one that is down at the heel and out at the elbow, who seems to be having a hard time. A canny Scotsman once saw a picture of The Temptation, in which the devil was represented as an ugly creature with hoofs and horns, and about as repulsive as the artist's imagination could make him. As the Scotsman gazed at it he said in his native tongue, which I will translate into English, "Ah well, if that creature had come to me in that guise he would have had a difficult job with me too!"

Of course he would! It is not thus the devil comes. He comes like Absalom, as one fashionably attired, perfectly groomed, of pleasing address, of cultured and persuasive speech, as one who is at home in the world, making large promises—thus he comes, and thus he bewitches men.

I think it is not without significance that nearly all our Modernistic friends are "nice" people. I have heard it said that Dr. T. R. Glover is a most estimable gentleman! And I have no doubt that Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick is a most companionable and interesting man. The devil always lays hold of some Absalom with whom to do his work. A friend was speaking for me twenty years ago, and discussing some of these gentlemen and their "niceness," he turned to me and said, "Shields, you will have to stay orthodox. There would be no chance for you"! (Laughter) Be that as it may, beyond peradventure, those who lead men away from God invariably come in the attractive form of Absalom.

I would remind you of another thing. Absalom was a *religious leader*. On this occasion he came to the king and said, "I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the Lord, in Hebron. For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the Lord shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then I will serve the Lord. "And now," he said, "let me go to Hebron that I may pay my vow unto the Lord." It was in the name of religion, professing loyalty to Jehovah, that Absalom did the devil's business in Israel.

Of all the devils, there is no devil to be so much feared as the religious devil. And the devil is religious! That is his chosen sphere. It is in the realm of religion that the devil has done his deadliest work always. I do not mean to say, of course, that sins of grosser character do not proceed from him. They are, however, but the later fruits of this tree which in the beginning

is so pleasant and so full of promise, promising to make men wise.

And surely of all days there never was a day when the devil was more religious than he is to-day. If anyone must needs manufacture a new religion for himself he is very difficult to please, for if he cannot find something to please him among those now in vogue he must be of a strange mental constitution.

Where is the worst work being done to-day? You smiled a little while ago as our student-friends sang about Darwin's monkey, but it is nothing to smile at. Do you not know that evolution is not a science? It never was a science. It has not an infinitesimal atom of truth to stand on, and never did have. It is purely a speculation. It is nothing more than a hypothesis. It is not a science: it is a philosophy, and it is a philosophy of origins, and therefore, in the nature of the case, of destinies; and therefore, again, it is a religious philosophy which would undertake to tell us whence we came and whither we are going. Evolution is a religion. It is a false religion. It is a religion especially designed to suit the depraved tastes of man. And how any man who in any measure approximates the divine purpose, should find any cause for rejoicing in the assumption of his kinship with the brute instead of in his relationship to God, I cannot understand.

Who is it that teaches young people in high schools, in colleges, and in universities,—who is it that teaches men to glory in the assumption that they came from the animal instead of rejoicing that man in the beginning came directly from the hand of God? It is Absalom. It is a religion taught by the state for which you pay taxes; the teachers in your high schools and in your universities, under the leadership of a spiritual Absalom, are teaching boys and girls and young men and young women to reject the Bible, and to deny every doctrine of the gospel. "To be desired to make one wise"! There never was anybody who did not want to be "wise",—at least they want a reputation for wisdom. Men care more for the reputation than for the thing itself very often. A great number of university students do not care much about the knowledge a degree represents. That is how these bogus degree factories flourish—by selling men a reputation for wisdom.

And it is especially true in the religious realm. If it were not a tragedy, it would be one of the most amusing things in the world, to see these little bits of fellows standing on their tip-toes and trying to look down on everybody,—they are so wise! They have evolved out of something! I am glad they have, for I do not know what they could have been in the beginning of the process! Following Absalom!

What is this Modernism, with its denial of the supernatural, that has taken possession of our seminaries and of our pulpits and of our periodicals? that keeps the presses busy turning out books that deny the fundamentals of the faith? What is it? It is a religion designed by the devil himself. That is the trouble. And there are a great many of you Christian people who retain your membership in churches that are giving all their energy to help the devil instead of to help God, following Absalom instead of following David! Shame on you! How many there are! What is it you would like? They are selling

almost anything! Modernism in all its forms. Do you want a half-way house to the lunatic asylum? Be a Christian Scientist.

Yet you have to be very clever too, paradoxical as that may seem. The principle is this, you must not assume that because people are religious, they are serving God. The greatest crimes of history have been committed in the name of religion. The Roman Catholic system is distinctly anti-Christian, but it represents an enormous organization. Mohammadism, Buddhism, all the pagan religions with their modified forms that appear in this country such as theosophy and many others, whence came they? Who is the author, the originator? Who is the leader in all these movements? A religious devil, that is all. It makes no difference where you are, in India, or China, or in Japan, anywhere in Europe, or America, you will find the devil is there, and is busy leading men as did Absalom.

II.

Let me tell you how he does it, ABSALOM WAS A CUNNING STRATEGIST: "With Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were called."

Everyone of them had a distinct call, for Absalom believed in personal work. He picked his men very cleverly. How did he do it? He got up early in the morning, and sat at the king's gate. He did not wait until high noon to begin his day's work, but just as the day was breaking Absalom was there, so that no one might pass that point and reach the king until Absalom had got his ear and poured his poison into his mind. It is said in the parable that "while men slept, the enemy sewed tares".

There are some people who never think of doing anything for the Lord with the children. I have heard of a woman who said to her minister once, "Doctor, I have thought a good deal about the religious training of my little boy, and I have decided that I will not try to make a Christian of him until he has arrived at years of responsibility; I am not going to begin to teach him religion until he is at least ten or twelve years old". To which the minister replied, "Do as you will, madam, but let me warn you that the devil will not wait until he is ten or twelve years old before he sows his seeds in that young child's mind." No! he begins in the primary class. He begins in the kindergarten. I have been in the Museum of Natural History in New York City where Henry F. Osborn has his exhibit of the evolution of man, showing how he developed to his present state from the amoeba through apes up to man! I have seen school teachers leading young children through the Museum and explaining very carefully that that is where they came from. What a trick of the devil that is!

The devil does not wait until men are of college age,—he begins "early in the morning". Let me exhort you Sunday School teachers to get up early in the morning, get the children as young as you possibly can. Fill their minds with a holy prejudice in favour of Jesus Christ if you can. I told the friends last night at prayer meeting of the place where I stayed last week in Wheaton, Illinois. I stayed in the home of some friends who had a little boy of whom I had heard, but whom I had never seen before. This little chap had been taught to pray for several

people, he had been taught to pray for me each day; and two or three times a day he was in the habit of mentioning my name. He is now about eight years of age. When I arrived he came walking up to greet me, saying, "You are going to stay with us". What a joy it was to be with that little Christian boy of only eight years of age! His father and mother said, "He wants to be baptized. He is trusting the Lord, and he wants to go to Jarvis Street to be baptized."

Little children can be taught to pray. Little children can be led to Christ. Very early in the morning we can lead the little ones to the Saviour. And I remind you that this devil has no pity for little children. He is always busy.

What did Absalom do? *He intercepted those who were coming to the king for judgment.* He stood between the seeker and the source of wisdom. He stopped him before he could get to the king. That is how the devil does. While I am preaching he will do his utmost to keep you from Christ. How often we say in this place, "Only come. No matter how you come, or why you come, if you will only come. The Lord will settle all the rest of it"—

"Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come."

If you will only come, Christ will settle everything. Bring all your doubts and misgivings and all your perplexities, yes, and all your Darwinism, if you like,—come and lay them at the feet of Christ. But this devil of whom I speak will be sure to stand in your way and will endeavour to keep you back from getting to the King. You remember how an illustration of that principle was given in the case of the child that was possessed of an evil spirit. The Lord said, "Bring him to me", and "as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare him." If he can only keep people back from Christ he will have accomplished their destruction.

What did Absalom do when thus he intercepted those whose faces were set toward the king? *He flattered them* by saying, "See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee. And Absalom said, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man that hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice." In effect he said, "You are all right. You are the finest man I have seen this morning. I am on your side." It did not make any difference what the case was; everybody was right. That is a palatable religion, is it not? Whenever you go to church and hear a preacher tell you that you are all right, let me warn you to be careful. Let me tell you confidentially that you are not all right. The fact is, you are all wrong. "All we like sheep have gone astray." The preacher who tells you that you are all right is not a man who is acting under divine commission. He has got his commission from someone else. I often tell you in this place that we are a pretty bad lot from this pulpit to the back pew, downstairs and upstairs. Our matters are not good: they are bad. They are

not right: they are wrong. We are all wrong; and we need the saving grace of our God.

But the devil comes along and says, "It is all right now. Do not let that preacher disturb you. You are all right." Who does not want to be thought right? I heard a man say once that the Roman Catholic religion is the religion of the natural man. Evolution is a religion of the natural man. "Poor soul, you cannot help it", the evolutionist says. I know a minister who gave an address in New York in which he said that there is a bit of the tiger, of the lion, of the fish, of the crocodile, and a bit of the serpent in every one of us. I confess I have met some men whose course seems to lend strong probability to that theory! Thus people are told that they are not to be blamed for playing the brute and the beast.

I think I told you of a compliment one of my former deacons once paid me. He was a fine man in many ways, but he once came to me in great concern. He said, "Do you know what the people say?" "No", I replied, "I do not. What do they say?" "They say that when they go to a certain church and hear the preacher preach, they come away walking on their high heels, because the preacher has told them that the worst of them is on the outside, and that they are a great deal better than they appear, and that their intentions are much nobler than their actions. They come away feeling they are a good lot, and that they are doing the best they can. That sets them up for a week. Then they go to another church"—and these were two Baptist churches which I will not name—"they go to another church, and they are told that every man is the captain of his own soul. He is not a bankrupt-sinner. Everybody can well do whatever he likes. From there they come away feeling, I am a bit of a hero and I did not know it! And they like it. But they say that when they come to Jarvis Street, they cannot sleep for a week"!

Well, I do not know whether that is true,—but I hope it is. Some of you here to-night ought to stay awake for more than a week; you ought never to close your eyes until you have made things right with God.

"Thy matters are good and right, but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee. Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I will do him justice! You are my concern, and if you would only come to me I would render a verdict in your favour." Thus the devil promises. Thus he leads men astray with his fair persuasion.

"With Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were called." The devil is calling through the daily press, through every magazine, through every moving picture show, and through half the pulpits of the land. Absalom is calling men—and men are responding to his call. We are going out into the open air in a few minutes, and there will be hundreds of people out there who never go inside a church—never. They will hear the gospel out there, but they do not come to church to hear it. If they are saved they will come. But around in the crowd there will be people who will endeavour before that service

is over to destroy every word that is spoken. The devil will have his agents outside calling people. He has some inside this building as well. I do not know who you are, and I do not mean to say that you know you are his agents. Sometimes the devil uses God's saints, and I will tell you how he does it. Some of you look interested, as though you really believed this gospel, and are concerned for the salvation of souls; yet the moment we reach the most critical hour in the service, you will walk out. Well, if that is your capacity you will have to go. But why do you not stand by and help us to call men to God? Why do you want to lead people away?

III.

Look now at THE ARMY OF DUPES. "And they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing." They were under the counsel of Professor Ahithophel!—a big man whose word was as the word of an oracle! And I suppose these two hundred men imagined that they were the intellectuals of Israel! They were following the great Absalom; they were up-to-date, modern to the last degree. And the Bible, with a fine touch of irony says, "Look at them! Look at the poor dupes! They go in their simplicity, and they know not anything!" You could not find as much as that in a sentence outside the Bible.

Only simple people follow the devil. You say, "Is that so?" Yes, that is so. Only people who are very simple, who are simple-minded, follow the devil. Sub-normal people! People who are a little bit insane! Do you know that sin is a kind of moral insanity? If we were rightly balanced, if we were what God planned we should be, there would be no one of us who would follow the devil for a minute. I mean by the term "normal", the standard that God set for us. You say, "Surely you do not mean to say that people who are not religious are lacking in intelligence?" I have never been able to understand how any man with his head put on right could be an evolutionist. It takes a thousandfold more credulity to believe these strange philosophies than it does to accept this magnificent statement, "In the beginning God created." My heart and intellect can rest in that. When I have God, when I have postulated God, I can believe in all miracles. Nothing is impossible if once I have God. The man who says there is no God, or the man who would push God back so far that no one can find Him, and prate about "the divine immanence",—the man who talks that way is just "a little bit off", even though he be a Doctor of Philosophy. He is going in his simplicity, not knowing anything. Many a man and woman, into whose heart and conscience a light has shone from heaven, but who can scarcely spell his or her own name, has more real wisdom than can be found in the heads of all the members of many a university faculty. "In their simplicity" they go "not knowing anything."

You say, "That cannot be true. They know something." I tell you, you know nothing. You know not the truth about anything, if you do not know Christ. "Oh", you say, "have you not seen the great men looking through the telescope, looking at the stars"—no man can see the stars until he has seen Christ!

You say, "That is foolish". Very well, I will rest under the imputation until He Who made the stars shall come, and you will find that I am right. You cannot see a lily until you know Christ. You cannot see anything in the light of truth until your eyes have been opened to behold Him Who is *the* Truth. Until then you go in your simplicity, and you do not know anything—not a thing.

"Heaven above is softer blue,
 Earth around is sweeter green!
 Something lives in ev'ry hue
 Christless eyes have never seen:
 Birds with gladder songs o'erflow,
 Flowers with deeper beauties shine,
 Since I know, as *now* I know,
 I am His, and He is mine."

They did not know two or three things specifically. *They did not know that in leaving Jerusalem they were leaving the sacrifice and the blood behind them, and the mercy seat of which God said, "There will I meet with thee."* Turn your back upon the Bible; turn your back upon the cross of Christ; turn your back upon the Mercy-Seat, and you are moving away from the only place where a sinner can be saved. You are going in the wrong direction, and you "know not anything".

They did not know that *they were going to certain disaster.* "Why", they said, "Absalom cannot fail. Surely such a leader as that can never fail." But you remember when the battle was set in array, and Absalom was galloping on his mule through the wood of Ephraim, and his glorious locks were flowing in the wind, as he passed under the low bows of an oak the locks of his head caught in the branches, and the mule under him went away; there he was suspended by his glorious hair. Somebody came and told Joab, and Joab said, "And, behold, thou sawest him, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would have given thee ten shekels of silver, and a girdle. And the man said unto Joab, Though I should receive a thousand shekels of silver in mine hand, yet would I not put forth mine hand against the king's son: for in our hearing the king charged thee and Abishai and Ittai, saying, Beware that none touch the young man Absalom. Otherwise I should have wrought falsehood against mine own life: for there is no matter hid from the king, and thou thyself wouldest have set thyself against me. Then said Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee. And he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak." And Absalom died, and the wood of Ephraim that day swallowed up twenty thousand men who died as rebels against the Lord's anointed, and among them two hundred men who had gone in their simplicity, not knowing anything. There they go!

Some young man, when I have got through this evening, sitting down there, or up in the gallery, I do not know where he is, perhaps with a young lady beside him—when the service is over—he is a polite gentleman; he will not say anything indoors, but

going up the street he will say, "Is it not astonishing that in this day of enlightenment there remains a man who would talk like that! Is it not extraordinary!" And he will go in his simplicity, not knowing any thing!

The great Robert Hall was a marvellous preacher, a very eloquent preacher. Sometimes he spread his wings and soared into the seventh heavens, and carried his congregation with him; but sometimes he condescended to the most common phrases and to the most homely illustrations, although usually he was the reverse of that. He knew his classics; he could find his illustrations from the pages of ancient history; he could talk to men who were at home in the world of literature—and sometimes he did. There was a lady who waited on his ministry. She was a Christian woman, and had been wonderfully blessed under Mr. Hall's ministry. This woman had a son who was not a Christian, and he was a very fastidious young gentleman. He abhorred anything coarse. He wanted things on the highest possible intellectual plane.

His mother knew how critical he was of preachers. After much prayer she ventured to invite him to go to hear the great preacher, and he condescended to accompany her. So they came where the great throng assembled, and all the time this good woman prayed that the Lord would lead Mr. Hall, on this occasion, to avoid anything that was approaching coarseness. She hoped that this would be one of his high nights, when he would take them all above the things of earth.

There were a few flights of oratory; he soared away toward heaven and then came down to earth again. Then he paused for a minute and said something like this: "Last week I was going along a street and saw a man who was trying to drive a lot of pigs—(the idea of a man's talking about pigs in the pulpit! Horrible! The very suggestion was shocking! But the great preacher went on.)—I saw a man trying to drive a lot of pigs, and they would not be driven. They all wanted to go in the wrong direction. Then he gave it up. He went around the side and went ahead of them, sprinkling some corn on the street. He walked along the street sprinkling the corn as he went, and the pigs followed him. On he went until he came to a place where there were two wide gates open; he walked in through the gates—and all the pigs followed him after the corn. After he had got inside the gates, and the pigs had got in too, the great gates closed behind them. I looked up and found that it was a slaughter-house: they had gone to their death. And", said the preacher, "that is just what you are doing. The devil is going ahead of you throwing down a few kernels of corn, and you are following to your own destruction."

As the minister finished his story this poor woman bowed her head in shame saying to herself, "He will never come again. He will never come again." As they left the church she turned to her son and said, "I am sorry that Dr. Hall descended to the use of that vulgar story this evening." The son replied, "To what do you refer, mother?" "The story of the pigs." The young man was silent a moment, then said, "Please do not apologize for that, for that is exactly

what I have been, one of the devil's swine on the way to destruction. God used that horrible story to open my eyes, mother. I have turned right-about-face, and I have received Christ."

That is the picture, "With Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were called; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing."

I beg of you to turn to Him of the wounded hands, and a voice still more persuasive, Who has within His gift eternal life, and Who pledges you by the word of God that cannot lie that you shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck you out of His hand.

O Spirit of God, seal Thy truth, we pray Thee, upon heart and conscience. Forbid that the enemy should catch away the Word that is sown in human hearts to-night. Constrain men to come whole-heartedly to the Saviour. May this be a night of salvation, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

FOUR FAITHFUL SAYINGS.

(Continued from page 4.)

name. The text itself helps but little. Taking verse eight of the fourth chapter of First Timothy as the faithful saying, and verse ten as an explanation or expansion of the saying, we arrive at some understanding of the text. In the light of Paul's opposition to the purely physical, that which focused its hopes and joys on this life only, we find supporting proof for our choice of the eighth verse as the faithful saying.

To think that with all the opportunity of witnessing Greek games and sports at their best, both at Tarsus and at Antioch, the Apostle could dare to pronounce the attitude of the early church in this bold fashion: "Bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

Here we find that piercing truth of the New Testament revelation, that Christianity is something spiritual. The Revised Version rendering of the passage, "profiteth for a little" does not change the cardinal meaning that the Gospel promises hope for this life and for that which is to come. Christian truth, which alone can produce genuine godliness, deals with the things that are unseen and eternal. Not that exercise of the body is essentially sinful—it profits for a little while, and is profitable to some extent. But Christianity has no patience with that which is merely material or physical. No, it promises something more, hope in this life and in that to come. And what a remarkable gift of the Gospel! The Hellenistic culture, prevalent in the Apostle's day, gave little hope for this life, let alone for the future life. But Christians have hope in this life, which would be felicity enough; but to have the promise "of that which is to come", how blissful! "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." The Saviour's presence was promised by Himself—"to the end of the age", and the Apostle implies that omnipresence in this second saying. It reflects, then, another essential of the Gospel, its spirituality, and its hope for all time.

From these principles which are presuppositions of the faith, we come to the sayings which deal in par-

ticular with applications of these axioms in the lives of Christians. These last two sayings, however, state particular principles.

The first of the last two sayings occurs in II Tim. 2:11. There we have an array of parallels: "dead . . . live"; "suffer . . . reign"; "deny him . . . deny us"; "believe not . . . abideth faithful."

What do they mean? They refer to epochal events in the believer's life. The Pauline epistles give abundant evidence that the teaching here is no departure from the earlier truths of Paul's writings. The early church believed on the basis of the Apostle's teaching, that every one born of the Spirit was identified with Christ at Calvary. And further, that this death with Christ was representative, just as His bearing our sins was. But there was another truth, another death; the death to self, the daily dying of which the Apostle speaks in another place. A most remarkable reference to the death with Christ at Calvary is found in Galatians 2:20, where there is also a hint of this daily dying. What then? Why, simply that "if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him". The Christian has life, only because of the death of Christ; and that life is eternal, the promise of which was given in the second saying.

But there is another aspect of the believer's life. His walk begins when the effects of the Atonement are applied by the Spirit, but it does not end there. He suffers. But he shall reign, if he suffer. The light affliction works a far more exceeding weight of glory, because it is given to us not only "to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake".

Still another phase of the life of the believer appears in this third saying. It is one which discourages us when we look at it; one which we do not like to disclose. When we deny Him, He denies us the privilege of fellowship. Our only recourse is to the cleansing blood. The denial does not affect our sure safety in Him, but it does temporarily affect our walk. Our salvation is secure, but our witness and our reward are marred.

How comforting the last parallel! If we are faithless in our service, if we are unfaithful, He is ever faithful, unchanging. The verse does not mean that we have the unchanging ministry of the High Priest, if we are "unbelievers". The promise is to believers only. With the early church and with the church to-day, it is true that though its members become unfaithful, yet He exercises all the offices of His heavenly ministry—High Priest, Advocate, Intercessor. He abideth, continues, forever faithful! All because He cannot be what He is not; His nature demands that He be ever the same.

This third saying deals with the progressive life of the believer in all its varied phases, and it links with the preceding two sayings.

The Apostle, veteran in the faith, sounds one of the tenets of the early church in the last faithful saying. "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men."

Fearful lest the followers of the Lord fall into the disastrous error of unduly stressing sovereign grace, he admonishes the cultivation of good works. How

many since his time would have been spared the ravages of perverted doctrine, if the correct order of grace and works were kept! Those who believed in God, manifestly had something done for them. It was unconditional grace which sought them out, which chose them; but that same grace ordained that they were to walk in the ways of good works. Hence the timely warning of the inspired writer to "maintain good works." And the maintenance must be with all care! Here then, is a fitting conclusion to the life of the believer. He is to recognize that his good

works are but the spiritual outworking of the initial work of regeneration.

A truly simple array of sayings, dealing with the truths of the Gospel. The first, enunciating the divine purpose of the Saviour's mission; the second, the spiritual nature of the Gospel; and the last two sayings treating of the walk and conduct of the believer, because of the primacy of the doctrines of the Gospel set forth in the first two sayings.

Let the church ever maintain these as basic in her teaching, and profitable in her life.

The Union Baptist Witness

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W. GORDON BROWN, Editor.

Communications for this department should be addressed direct to W. Gordon Brown, Box 502, Orangeville, Ontario.

HOLIDAY OBSERVATIONS.

During my holidays I had the pleasure of visiting four of the churches recently established in connection with our Union. On Sunday, June 30th, the day before the holiday, I visited Trenton and Belleville Churches. I attended the morning service at Trenton and the afternoon service at Belleville. These two churches are under the able leadership of Rev. H. E. Buchner. I found in both places a fine spirit pervading the people and excellent work has been done, and I believe the Lord is going to bless the work. Both these churches are carrying on the work under difficult conditions as they have no church building and worship in rented halls. Shall we not pray that the Lord may speedily open the way so that both these churches may secure proper places for carrying on their work? I had the privilege of speaking in both places and enjoyed meeting the friends very, very much.

On Sunday, July 7th, I visited the church recently established at Verdun, a suburb of Montreal, at the morning service. This church is making rapid progress under the leadership of Rev. Mr. Leggett. The pastor was away on his holidays, and an excellent message was delivered by a layman whose name I do not remember. This church is at present worshipping in a store building but have already purchased an excellent site for a church and are expecting to proceed with their building at an early date. This suburb of Montreal is growing very rapidly, and I look forward to seeing a strong, vigorous church established. In the evening I visited the Bilingual Church, of which Rev. Arthur St. James is pastor. All our readers are aware of the manner in which Grande Ligne Mission excluded Mr. St. James from St. Paul's Bilingual Church. It was a pleasure to visit the new work which has been established. This work is also at present being carried on in a store building, but they have purchased a site for a new building and a

special appeal is now being made for funds to erect their building. It is a worthy cause, and I am sure that the Regular Baptists everywhere desire to take part in providing the necessary building to carry on the work. At the evening service Mr. St. James gave an account of his twenty years' ministry in Montreal, and it was a very interesting account of the work done in the name of our Lord in a very difficult field.

It was a real pleasure to meet with all these Churches and fellowship with those who had established these new fields because of their convictions regarding truth.

(Signed) Thos. Urquhart.

ON THE WAY TO LIBERIA.

A volume of prayer has been ascending for Mrs. H. L. Davey who is proceeding to Grand Bassa, Liberia, where she will join her husband, the Rev. H. L. Davey, and begin her missionary work among the Bassa people.

Mrs. Davey sailed from Montreal on the S.S. Letitia on July 12th and reached Liverpool, England, on July 19th.

To the glory of our God is the story of her trip to England and a record of answered prayer.

For the first time, Mrs. Davey crossed the Atlantic without becoming a victim of sea-sickness and she says, "all along the way I have been deeply conscious that your dear folk at home were constantly remembering me at the Throne and your prayers are answered a hundred times a day in so many countless ways, for every step of the way has been so easy and everyone has been most kind and helpful. I truly have lacked no good thing."

Kind friends met Mrs. Davey at Liverpool and attended to all her baggage and entertained her while there and she was able to complete purchases of outfit and visit the Mission to the Lepers in London in the three days that were at her disposal in England.

On July 23rd, Mrs. Davey writes—"The time is coming near for me once more to go out on the rolling deep. Tomorrow I leave and, by the way, the

boat has been changed and I go by the "Ebani", instead of the "Egori".

"Mr. and Mrs. Jones have been so kind. They took me for a long car drive around the city tonight and we are just back."

"This afternoon, I did most of my shopping and spent some time trying on helmets—hat hunting has nothing on helmet hunting. I chose one that looks like a policeman's helmet. I also got mosquito boots, deck chair, small mosquito net and one air tight steel box, absolutely air and ant proof. Most of my cases are ordinary wood or fibre and I thought I had better have one case in which to store things I will want to keep."

An excerpt from another letter tells of her visit to the Mission of Lepers. In view of Mr. Davey's appeal and the prompt response which came from the Women's Missionary Society of Regular Baptists of Canada, the office had written to the London, England, office of the Mission telling of Mrs. Davey's proposed visit and her desire to get instruction regarding the latest treatment, etc., and this is her report:—

"I found the Mission to Lepers without much difficulty and they had received your letter, and procured a quantity of the new leper treatment called 'Apepol' for me, enough to last for some time and they are also sending on to me a special syringe. The medicine is given by the intra-muscular method and I also obtained a good deal of information. I am so glad I was able to visit them.

They refused to take any money for the medicine or syringe saying that there was a special fund which provided the new treatment to missionaries who were interested and not only this, but I was told that all the medicine we required for our leper work would be provided free as long as the fund existed. We have only to keep in touch with them. They were so courteous and kind and so deeply interested in our new work. Again I have to thank God for all His gracious care and leading these days."

Mrs. Davey is possibly now in the neighborhood of the Canary Islands, having covered the greater part of her jour-

ney and we are sure that when the story of this long and tedious voyage comes to us that it too, will ring with the same triumphant note—"His loving kindness is before our eyes and nothing can happen to us without His permission, He knows and He cares and trials come only that we may know Him better."

A LETTER FROM BROTHER LEWIS.

Grand Bassa,
c/o Bank of
British West Africa,
Republic of Liberia,
June 21st, 1929.

Dear Brother Atkinson:

The sad news of the cable came as a terrible shock. For a while I felt as if I should be useful for nothing, but the Lord has not failed in His comforts. I appreciate your sending the cable so that I could get the news swiftly and I know that your prayers and sympathy have been going out toward me. It seems so hard for the dear little lad to die without his father being near to comfort him, but, thank God, his mother was by his side. How strange it seems that this blow should come when we have placed all on the altar for the Lord. I am terribly anxious for my dear wife, as she tries to bear all the grief and burden and expense of this blow and I greatly fear lest it might bring a relapse because of her previous breakdown and undo the recovery that she has made. I am trying to commit all in confidence to my Lord and dare to believe that somehow all will be for the best. I only pray that God will sanctify this trial to our greater spiritual development.

At the same time as the cablegram bringing the sad news came, another cablegram arrived that was a marvelous answer to prayer. We were badly in need of funds, having had to borrow forty pounds from the Mission for our personal expense while waiting for the allowances and this brought us down to almost the last cent, with bills to pay and workmen murmuring at the delay. We were going to put back the forty pounds when we cashed the sixty pounds allowance draft, but were told that it must be sent back to London and at least a month would elapse before we could cash it. We were in despair and then like a thunderbolt from heaven came the cable for one hundred pounds which met every need and allowed for future complementation of the Station.

Mr. Davey is well underway with his house and we are testing out the relative costs and values of two different kinds of buildings for future guidance.

Keep praying. We are steadily sowing the seed knowing that those who sow in tears, shall doubtless come with rejoicing bringing their sheaves with them.

The Lord be with you.

Yours and His,
Alfred J. Lewis.

It must be remembered that when Mr. Lewis wrote the above letter he had not received details of the sad accident that robbed his little son, Howard, of his life. The very briefness of the cablegram would be an added trial, but the God of all Comfort is sustaining and strengthening these children of His.

"Keep praying" is the request of our missionaries. We will not fail them surely.

* * *

ROUYN-NORANDA.

The Lord has burdened hearts for the work carried on by the Wellington Brothers in the mining towns of Rouyn and Noranda, but we believe that there are many others who will accept this privilege of intercession when the need is known. The difficulty of working in mining towns is generally well known, but there are special difficulties facing the missionaries in this new northern district. In addition to the hardness of hearts, the inroads Bolshevism has made, and to some extent the transient population, there are real and serious physical discomforts. Black flies and mosquitos make it a burden for even seasoned men to carry on. Forest fires are raging and at the present time even the closing of underground work in some sections is contemplated. Let all these things become a matter of definite prayer that these young men may be kept physically and spiritually that they may "buy up the opportunities" and lead men and women to the Lord Jesus Christ.

* * *

CHATHAM.

We are glad to hear of another splendid day in Chatham on Sunday, July 21st. Five young men who were in the orchestra of the Parliament St. Mission, Toronto, assisted the Rev. W. N. Charlton and a splendid open air meeting was held. Several hundred must have heard the Gospel message. Hotel guests were listening from the Hotel windows, and the firemen, more than half a block away, stood in front of the fire-hall and heard every word.

* * *

MIMICO.

The services at the Immanuel Baptist Church, Mimico, were taken on Sunday, August 3rd, by Mr. John Taylor of Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, and it is expected that Mr. Taylor will continue to serve there for the month of August at least.

Mr. John Knight, who has been in charge of the Mimico work for the past month or so, was greatly appreciated by the friends there, and will be followed by their prayers as he enters the larger field of service in Jamaica.

* * *

HARTFORD.

At a business meeting of the Hartford Baptist Church held on Wednesday evening, July 31st, it was decided by vote to withdraw from the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec and link up with the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec.

This news comes to us from the Church Clerk, E. Hayes.

The Churches of the Union will welcome this sister church into the fellowship which purposes to stand uncompromisingly for the Word which Holy men wrote as the Spirit gave them utterance.

* * *

"Folks wants you to prove de truf but dey'll swaller a lie on heah-say."—Sel.

MICHIGAN NOTES.

By Rev. C. R. Peterson.
GRAND HAVEN.

Grand Haven is a beautiful resort city of about 10,000 population situated on the shore of Lake Michigan. As such it has the usual church problems of a resort town. Our Baptist work is not very strong here, and as a consequence the financial problem is a serious one. However, they have a beautiful edifice, well situated. Pastor R. E. Moss, who has been on the field nearly five years, is doing a good work here. His preaching is both expository and evangelistic,—a happy combination. Several are ready for baptism. The services are well attended, especially the prayer meeting. Pastor Moss also has a country appointment near Denison, where he preaches Sunday afternoons, and holds a Bible-study class Tuesday evenings. In addition to these regular services, he conducts shop-meetings every week, as well as a weekly jail service. There have been many profess conversion at the jail meetings. The church believes in the Scriptural method of finances, hence does not resort to suppers or sales, nor any other worldly methods of raising money. Frequent Bible conferences are held, and, naturally, the church is strongly premillennial.

* * *

WEALTHY ST., GRAND RAPIDS.

Wealthy Street Church is making some interior changes. A pipe organ is to be installed, and the choir loft is to be changed to a position back of the platform. Then the baptistry is to be elevated back of the pulpit. These changes will greatly add to the convenience of the auditorium. Pastor Oliver W. Van Osdel, D.D., LL.D., has ministered to this church for many years, and is still "going strong". He is the most loved, and the most hated man in the Baptist ministry in the state,—loved by all who love the truth, and hated by most of those who bow to the ecclesiastical machine. Because of his defence of the faith once delivered to the saints, he has frequently been charged with having a domineering spirit. Nothing is farther from the truth. He is kindly in spirit, sympathetic towards the young preacher, and unselfish in his endeavor to help wherever help is needed. He is one of the Trustees of Des Moines University, and has great faith in the future of this institution. Four were baptized into the fellowship of this church on a recent Sunday. On Sunday, July 28th, Dr. Wm. A. Matthews, president of the Baptist Theological Seminary, of Los Angeles, Cal., preached at both services.

* * *

OKLAHOMA.

Dr. C. P. Stealey, editor of The Baptist Trumpet, and now pastor also of the Hudson Ave. Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, a church organized under his leadership, on June 30th, had the great joy of opening their building, with a membership increased from seventeen to sixty-seven in less than three months, with a Sunday School rising from thirteen to one hundred and two, and with

an offering that day totalling \$2,500, not to mention another offering of \$35 for the co-operative work of Baptists.

* * *

THE FRENCH BIBLE MISSION.

Seven years ago, Modernist tendencies appeared in the Union of French speaking Baptist Churches, so twelve churches were induced to organize separately. Withdrawal of all financial support by the Mission Board of the Northern Convention immediately sanctioned a conscientious step, which had been taken with due caution and charity. Dire deprivation and heart-rending handicap followed. Thus divinely trained, our membership grew unusually spiritual, earnest and efficient, whilst doctrinal unity fostered a rare spirit of brotherly love, trust and disinterestedness. Since 1923 our membership has increased more than 20%. If you bear in mind that the main part of our Assemblies are in a Catholic country, that Protestantism does not like nor receive us, you will realize that a great work has been done, knowing that our financial means are very limited. We humbly give glory and thanks to the One Who "is able."

Through fine sacrifice, our church life has become practically self-supporting. But we cannot face alone the considerable needs of the fields in which we pursue our activities; the important developments are set before us, but bring with them expenses that we could not afford.

To secure outside co-operation our beloved President, Pasteur Robert Dubarry has been repeatedly deputed to America and has unselfishly devoted himself to his exacting task. A breakdown having followed, his contact with those many American friends to whom he has surely endeared himself, was somewhat relaxed thereby. As he would certainly be cheered by news of continued interest from overseas, we venture to remind Gospel Witness readers that his address is 9 Benedictins, Nimes, France. Our French Bible Mission is, we dare say, the most biblical, reliable and efficient evangelical instrument in our countries.—(Signed) G. Guyot.

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A CHRISTIAN LESSON LEAFLET!

A friend gave us a copy of "The Lesson Leaflet" for July 21st, issued by the United Church Publishing House, Toronto. The lesson is on "Ezekiel's Vision of Hope"; and the Golden Text is Isaiah 9:7, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." We have looked through this "exposition" and have read about "God's house", "the church", and such like, but we have failed to find even one direct reference to Christ! Now remember that the Golden Text speaks of "His government". Listen to these closing sentences from the exposition:

"Ezekiel's vision is for our encouragement, too. No other institution has brought so much blessing to the world as the church. Everywhere it makes for health and strength and good living. Evil is banished and wrongs righted. There is much to do yet, but

if we all work hard the church will win the victory over evil and make the earth a good and pleasant land where wickedness will no longer spoil men and women. The church will win this victory because of God's help and blessing. Will you give the church your best?"

God has used churches, it is true; the New Testament tells us of no other divinely established institution for God's work in this age. But when "the victory over evil" is won, it will be Christ, not the church, who will win it.

How useless to teach a Sunday school class of pious nothings which purport to be what the lesson teaches! In the old days the purpose of the Sunday School was to win the scholars to Christ. But this lesson leaflet does not even mention Him now. Should we "drop Jesus" from any lesson? If we do, we have failed of the divine purpose of our teaching.

* * *

GIVING.

Le Lien Fraternal, the organ of the Evangelical Association of French speaking Baptist Churches, whose representative, Rev. Robert Dubarry, visited America a year or two ago, gives a charming story about giving. We think it worth repeating.

Many people say: If we were rich, we would give much for the Lord. But it is always easy liberally to dispose in words of that which is not ours. A fine missionary illustrated this truth as follows:

A man one day asked his neighbour: "If you had a hundred sheep, would you give fifty of them for the work of the Lord?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Would you do the same if you had one hundred cows?"

"Certainly, I would."

"And if you had a hundred horses would you make the same distribution?"

"Assuredly yes."

"And if you had two pigs would you give one for the cause of the Lord?"

"No, I would not do so and you have no right to put such a question to me when you know that I have two pigs."

It is infinitely easier to say that you will give fifty horses when you have none, than to say that you will give a pig, which represents half of what you really have at your disposal. Nevertheless, it is the fact of giving something which belongs to our absolute necessities, which counts far more than the intention of giving from our abundance.

* * *

EBENEZER.

Four of the small Sunday School of Ebenezer (Mr. J. Fullard, Pastor), have recently accepted Christ.

* * *

"BABY CHRISTIANS."

One of our Seminary students writes something which we think should be passed on. He says: "I am convinced that there never will be a revival in the church of God until "Baby Christians" get past the long-dress stage. The church to-day is a nursery for hawling 'kids' instead of an Employment Bureau

where Harvesters of Souls can be pressed into service.—God give us 'Men!'"

LAUDING HERESY!

A recent report in the newspapers of the graduating exercises of Moulton College told how Rev. W. A. Cameron, the popular minister of Yorkminster Baptist Church, wished the graduates, for their spiritual betterment, doubt, temptation and failure. Now we all recognize the truth that success can only be achieved by overcoming obstacles; but nevertheless we never pray for doubt, temptation or failure for anyone. We do pray, "Lead us not into temptation"; we do pray for that experience of Paul's, when he said that God "always causeth us to triumph in Christ"; we do pray for the faith of God, in which there never can be any doubt. To encourage young people to doubt God and His Word, is to encourage weeds in the garden of the Lord. He is not a good adviser who can say with Mr. Cameron, "I hope that some day a wise man may give us a book on 'Function of Heresy in the Advancement of Mankind.'" Our experience has been that McMaster students have usually been told that doubt is normal to the adolescent, and implicit faith, abnormal. Some men have passed through periods of doubt, and come out with a strengthened, rather than with a weakened faith; but we think it better so to have held on to Christ, or rather to be held by Christ, that the Bible ever has been and will be for us the Word of God:

* * *

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

The Canadian Baptist for June 13th gives a report of the closing exercises of Crozier Theological Seminary. The report is signed by Professor I. G. Matthews, and tells of the address of graduation being given by Dean Shailer Mathews. Editor Kipp is certainly keeping fine company. If he does not want common sense folks to class him in with these modernists of the most extreme school, he ought to remember the Scotch proverb that if a blackbird flies with the crows, it is likely to be shot!

* * *

A POOR SUBSTITUTE!

We were glad to read a newspaper report telling how the Northern Baptist Convention officials had been forced, because of strong protest, to remove the Methodist Bishop, Dr. McConnell, from their programme, because of his openly avowed modernistic attitude, if not because of his association with the so-called Federation of Churches of Christ in America, an organization which is seeking to throttle evangelism on this continent. But what was our disappointment when we discovered that the substitute on the programme was Dr. Avery A. Shaw! We have heard of robbing Peter to pay Paul, but this was robbing one apostle of Iatan to pay another advocate of Modernism. We heard Dr. Shaw give a commencement address at McMaster University a year ago. The subject was, "The Art of Living," and the Doctor succeeded in discussing this fine art with only a passing and indefinite reference to Him Who is Himself the Way, the Truth and the Life! Where are Baptists drifting?

And after all, Dr. McConnell spoke!

Coals for the Altar Fire

By Rev. T. I. Stockley, D.D., Dean of Toronto Baptist Seminary.

Sunday, August 11th.

The call to rest.— Matt. xi:25-30

There is need of rest. If any age needed divine rest, surely it is this one in which we live. It is often called a "busy age". But some would say it is more than busy—it is restless, and some would even say it is a fussy age. Many pride themselves on "living fast". Life is a constant rush. Even the pleasures of men are not seasons of refreshment and rest, but of excitement. Amusement is not recreation, reinvigoration, fitting the person to return to his work with fresh strength and courage, but is often an exhausting demand on nerve and heart, and is a real strain. There is deep need for rest—physical rest, mental rest, but especially spiritual rest. We need repose of soul. We need rest of conscience, rest from doubt in the certainty of everlasting truth, rest from anxious and worrying care in simple childlike trust, rest from life's turmoil in the quieting presence of things unseen and eternal, rest from the world in solitary communion with our Heavenly Father, rest from panic in the knowledge of the care of Him who is Lord over all. This is not carelessness in the ordinary sense of that term, not insensibility, not inertness, not indulgent ease—it is a divine inward calm, a heavenly peace which is really the secret of the greatest strength and energy.

Monday, August 12th.

The need for rest.— Psalm xxxvii:1-18

Our tendency is often to fret. The tendency is indicated in verse 1 of the 37th Psalm. The word literally is "do not put yourself into a heat;" and "be not envious". Dr. McLaren says the root idea of this latter word is that of becoming fiery red. The one word "fret" expresses the kindling emotion, while the other, "envious" signifies its visible sign in the flushed face. Don't get into a heat. Yet says one, "if ever heat were justified it was surely justified in the circumstances outlined in the Psalm. Evil doers were moving about clothed in purple and fine linen and faring sumptuously every day. Workers of iniquity were climbing into the supreme places of power and were tyrannizing over their less fortunate brethren." In the midst of these conditions good men were in danger of getting into a heat of anger and envy. Keep cool, is the word, do not get unduly heated. In a certain direction heat is good. It is needed in the boiler of an engine or no steam will drive the train. But "it is no help to a train for the axles to get hot; their heat is only a hindrance; the best contribution which the axles can make to the progress of the train is to keep cool. So don't fret, let not the heat of anger, of envy, or discontent fill thy heart and flush thy cheek—rest in the Lord. This rest is the crowning beauty of a life of trust. Kindly note verse 3 of this Psalm, "Trust in the Lord." Like a little child who, having a wealthy and kind father, plays and sings about the

home quite assured that the father will provide for its needs as they arise each day.

Tuesday, August 13th.

The character of rest.— Luke xv:11-24

There is reconciliation in true rest. The soul is like an ivy plant which rests most completely as it clings to the tree or the wall most closely. The soul must be on "good terms" with God in order to truly rest in Him. There can be no doubt about our personal relation to Him. There can be no estrangement between the soul and God. The relations must be truly loving. Sin must be quite out of sight and the soul be assured of the infinite sufficiency of the blood which makes God's throne for us a throne of grace—a mercyseat. The soul must be conscious of the Heavenly Father's love, and smile, and have the spirit of sonship by which he can say with assurance, "Abba-Father". It is only when such a relationship is established that the heart can rest in the Lord. There can be no rest in the Lord without entire confidence in Him as the infinitely perfect One, and in His most gracious intent in all His dealings with us, we must be confident though trials are thick and the way shrouded in mystery. He loves—nay, more, is love; that He is wise, nay, is infinite and perfect wisdom. This confidence grows from knowledge, and it is only knowledge of God that we need to inspire the utmost confidence.

Wednesday, August 14th.

The requirement of rest.—Psalm lxxii:1-12

There is submission in true rest. "Rest in the Lord." The Hebrew literally is, "Be silent to God." "Hold thou still before God." It is the silence of submission—the silence which bows without a murmur to the divine will. It is the condition of heart which says, "My soul is as a weaned child", or that says, "O Lord, Thy will is now my will. It is often a sharp lesson, but it is beautiful when the heart can sweetly yield. Our Master and Lord in the shades of Gethsemane gives us the example of this spirit. With drops of blood being pressed in agony through the pores of His brow, He cried, "Father, not My will, but Thine be done." This is a great lesson and is essential to resting in the Lord. Remember, this is not the annihilation of our own will, but the calm acceptance of the Lord's will as being infinitely better than ours. The results of such submission will be wonderful.

Thursday, August 15th.

The ingredients of rest.— Phil. iv:8-20

When in Switzerland for a holiday one summer, we were ascending a beautiful wooded slope toward Aelfuh one day and were met by two men with heavy cans of milk upon their backs. They came swinging down the steep slope in the great heat of the morning, to a seat on which we had sat awhile. One of the men sat down upon the seat with his burden still strapped on his shoulders and rested himself somewhat by setting his load also on the seat. The other set

his heavy load down upon the seat and threw off straps and all, and for a while released himself completely from the weight, and wiped the sweat from his brow—a free man for a time. Rest involves release—the load laid upon Another, and the heart freed from care. Rest involves release, and contentment too. But true Christian contentment is not mere satisfaction with one's earthly lot. It is not narrowing down one's desires to one's circumstances. Paul, in Phil. iv, does not say, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." He says, rather, "I have learned, whatever be my outward circumstances, to have a competency." In the Lord Jesus he had a boundless supply of peace, and comfort, and love, and joy, and this fulness, this sufficiency remained when all earthly supplies ran low.

Friday, August 16th.

The chamber of rest.— Isaiah xli:10-20

The chamber of rest is in the Lord. It is the Lord Himself in whom it is our privilege to rest. The Lord of Nature is great, and grand, and full of majesty and might. But,

"Oh! the bright, the vast creation,
Can be terrible and stern;
"Time and space, O Lord, that show Thee
Oft in power veiling good,
Are too vast for us to know Thee
As our trembling spirits would."

So we must turn elsewhere for rest. And we turn gladly to the Lord of Revelation and Redemption. We hear the Son of God saying, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." And we gladly sing

From its stroke be no salvation,
Though on every side we turn."
"Yes in Jesus, Yes in Jesus,
Father! Thou art understood."

Saturday, August 17th.

The comfort of rest.— Luke x:21-24

When we know the Lord of Revelation we can also rest in the God of Providence. We know He is an unerring Guide, and that His will is ever the best. We can love Him in the mystery of life and trust His providence. When all things to us seem against us we can still say, "Even so Father for as it seemeth good in Thy sight." The future is dim after all our straining to see into its depths. The future is threatening after all our efforts to prepare for its coming storms. A rolling vapour veils it all; here and there a mountain peak seems to stand out; but in a moment another swirl of the fog hides it from us. We know practically nothing of the future, except that we are sure it contains losses, and sorrows, and death. But we are sure too, that God is in the future. And He sees His own way, and we can see Him. What else do we want? As we look into the future we can see the loving Father's face, and we know that the future will but evolve the purposes of His all-wise and gracious heart.

Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

Vol IV.

No. 3

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR.

Lesson 34.

August 25th, 1929

Third Quarter.

A CALL TO REMEMBRANCE OF CERTAIN DUTIES.

Lesson Text: Hebrews, chapter 13.

Golden Text: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Hebrews 13:8.

I. LOVE AND PURITY, (vs. 1-4).

1. This concluding chapter contains various exhortations manifesting the practical nature of the Christian teaching. In large measure, doctrine has been given in the previous chapters, but such teaching is expected always to bring forth fruit in the life. The first exhortation relates to love, "Let brotherly love continue" (v. 1). "God is love", (1 John 4:8), and those who live in touch with Him show forth His character. Love should be shown to all but especially to the members of the household of faith, (Gal. 6:10). All too often a contrary spirit is shown in the church and does great harm. Love should be manifested for our Lord's sake, for the sake of others, and for our own sake. But love cannot be forced, it is only as we live in close touch with God that we can love as we ought. 2. Following this exhortation direction is given concerning the entertainment of strangers, (v. 2), so needful in those days, and necessary in these times as well, and arising from the spirit of love. The reference in the verse is to the incident of Abraham entertaining the angels on the plain of Mamre, (Gen. 18:1). That friend of God was richly blessed on account of his hospitality, and so may we be, although not in exactly the same manner, if we show the same spirit. 3. A plea for extending sympathy to the oppressed is then made. We should remember those who are undergoing trials, and who are less fortunate than we. We are in the body ourselves and not immune from trouble, and it is comforting when others sympathize with and help us. Let us do unto others therefore, as we would have them do unto us, (Luke 6:31). The fourth verse contains a solemn warning against immorality and inculcates purity, (v. 4). In these days, when there is so much looseness in thought and action in this respect, it is well to fortify ourselves with the truth of God concerning the matter.

II. CONTENTMENT AND CAREFULNESS (vs. 5-9).

1. The first exhortation of this section deals with the evil of covetousness. We are enjoined to be "without covetousness" and be content with such things as we have, for our Lord has promised never to leave us nor forsake us, (vs. 5, 6). The Spirit of covetousness has wrecked many lives, by bringing into them discontent, and leading, at times, to wrong actions. It may show itself in the home, the church, the place of business, or in other spheres of human activity, and it may affect the position or the possessions of another. In whatever sphere it is noticed let it be put

away. We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we shall take nothing out therefrom, (1 Tim. 6:7), therefore let us be content with that which God has given us, knowing that with Him as our Helper we need not fear. Let our aim be to please Him, to do our duty faithfully and humbly, and thus lay up in store for eternity. 2. The second exhortation relates to the attitude of the people toward their spiritual rulers. They are to remember them in order to follow their faith, (v. 7). Such rulers are appointed by God, (Eph. 4:11); they are not mere employees of the local church; and their duty is to feed and guide the flock over which God has placed them. A chief characteristic of such a minister is faith. He cannot be successful apart from this, and his life and actions constantly manifest its presence. His flock therefore should follow him in it. Such faith is not of the blind variety but is centred in a real living person, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever", (v. 8). What a wonderfully comforting statement this is. Our Lord is unchangeable. What He was yesterday that He is to-day, and will be for ever more. Think of His love, of His power, and of His attitude to sinners, and with confidence approach Him and with love serve Him. 3. Our faith centred in Christ we shall not go astray, nevertheless it is well that each one of us should give heed to the warning not to be carried about with "divers and strange doctrines", (v. 9). A knowledge of God's word is necessary in order to discern the truth and be guarded against false doctrine. Remember that Satan is most dangerous when he comes with a text of Scripture on his lips. Note the blessedness of a contented life, the security of the child of God and the necessity and fruitfulness of faith.

III. SEPARATION AND DEVOTION (vs. 10-14).

1. In these verses an appeal for consecration is made based upon Old Testament usage and typical teaching. In the tabernacle service, as later in the temple, the altar of burnt offering was the centre round which the service revolved, speaking to us thus of the expiatory work of our Lord on Calvary and the basic nature of such work. The material was typical and its purpose ended with the coming of Christ, the Antitype, therefore to continue in the old rites implied refusal to accept the divine purpose, and those who did this had no right to eat at the Christian altar, (v. 10). They could not partake of the benefits of salvation before accepting Christ as the real and eternal expiator of sin. 2. Continuing the thought of expiation, reference is made to the carrying out of the law on the day of atonement when the body of the animal whose blood was brought into the holy of holies was burned without the camp, (v. 11, Lev. 16:27), typical of our Lord in His expiatory work suffering without the gate, being crucified outside the city of Jerusalem at a place called Golgotha, (Matt. 27:33). It is profitable and interesting to note how completely our Lord fulfilled the Old Testament types, and in what a wondrous way they foretold His suffering. In His work He bore the re-

proach of sinners, and we are urged to go forth unto Him, without the camp, bearing His reproach, (v. 13). This is a call for complete separation from the world and for whole-hearted devotion to our Lord. To be wholly devoted to Him in these days means the bearing of His reproach, the world will not understand us, it will not love us, and it may even abuse us, but blessed be God we have the fellowship of our divine Lord, and that well repays us for the loss of the world's companionship. We have a foretaste here of the blessedness of our Lord's presence, but in that glorious continuing city to come we shall enjoy to the fullest extent all that He has in store for us. Note the necessity and blessedness of real consecration.

IV. LIBERALITY AND OBEDIENCE (vs. 15-10).

1. In view of the aforesaid blessing we ought to show our gratitude to God, first by offering the fruit of the lips, giving thanks unto God, (v. 15), and second by giving of our good things unto others, (v. 16). Mere lip service is not acceptable unto God, (Matt. 15:7-9). Indeed, if the service is only of the lips, it is a sign the heart is not sincere. Real gratitude to God will affect the will, and touch the pocket and effort will be put forth to help others. 2. A further exhortation is then given in relation to the attitude of the people toward their spiritual rulers. They are enjoined to submit themselves unto them, (v. 17). In what other way can the sheep be fed and guided than by giving heed to the shepherd, and God has placed men as shepherds over the flock, (1 Peter 5:1-4), yet there seems to be jealousy on the part of some concerning such a God-given prerogative, not that one is to be followed when he is plainly wrong, but when he is faithful to God, and proclaiming the truth, his guidance should be followed. A request for prayer ends the section, (vs. 18, 19). Note the need for the spirit of thanksgiving, for the grace of liberality, for the proper Christian attitude toward pastors and for increasing prayer.

V. THE CONCLUDING SALUTATION (vs. 20-25).

1. The epistle concludes with a farewell blessing wherein the apostle expresses his fervent, prayerful desire that God would perfect or make them able to do His will, (vs. 20, 21). In invoking God in the matter several things are stated in reference to Him. He is the "God of peace". This is seen in all His actions. Man is the rebel against His law. He "brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep"—Sin placed our Lord in the tomb; God brought Him forth again—"through the blood of the everlasting covenant" the basis of the work of reconciliation. Note the prominence of the blood. 2. The nature of the prayer is that they may be made perfect in every good work to do His will, or that they may be made able or equipped to do His will, working in them that which was well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ. The purpose of our existence is to do God's will, and emphasis may be placed upon the nature, the purpose and the blessedness of obedience to this will.