

# The Gospel Witness

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IN DEFENSE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.

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

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## WHEN ALL CREATION SINGS

"He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside; that he cannot deliver his own soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand? Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel."

Throughout the chapter from which we have quoted, God asserts His own incomparableness. "Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God. I know not any." A picture is drawn of the idolater; the folly of putting anyone or anything in the place of God is exhibited; and it is implied that all who thus turn aside lay up for themselves a store of disappointment. All sin is a kind of idolatry. "Covetousness is idolatry", the New Testament says. And all sin leads to disappointment, bitter and deep.

In contrast to the view of deepening shadows and increasing bitterness, the prophet presents the growing brightness of the gracious life, leading to the realms of gladness and of glory where—

"The whole creation joins in one  
To bless the sacred name  
Of Him Who sits upon the throne,  
And to adore the Lamb."

### I.

Sin is essentially deceitful. In the end of the day it is true of every sinner, "He feedeth on ashes." He is represented as choosing from among the trees of the forest, material upon which to show his skill. Highly skilled in the use of tools, he carves for himself a figure according to the beauty of a man. With the same material he kindles a fire, and bakes bread. With part he prepares his food, and with part he warms himself and

saith, "Aha, I am warm. I have seen the fire." But "with the residue thereof he maketh a god, and falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my God." The folly of it all is summed up in this, "He feedeth upon ashes"—even his god is of the same material, and is reduced to ashes at last.

The great truth enunciated is that the spirits of immortals are seeking to nourish their immortality on things which are reducible to ashes. What are all sensual enjoyments, the gratification of any fleshly appetite, but feeding on ashes? And what are all sensuous delights, the pleasure of seeing, the enjoyment of hearing, the luxury of rest and ease? The answer is given us on every hand where every pleasant and beautiful thing is resolved into its elements—a heap of ashes!

Nor is it otherwise in the intellectual realm. This idolater puts intellect into his work; there is a rude elemental art in his production—even the beauty of a man. But the utmost that he can do is to give new forms to that which is elementally only ashes. What does all the boasted intellectualism of the day accomplish? Men are making nothing but heaps of ashes. And in what is modern scholarship, philosophy, and science, and the supposed superior culture, delighting itself? "He feedeth on ashes."

Universal human experience is summed up in these four words: "He feedeth on ashes." In those things to which his life is given, how pleasant, and attractive, and promising, soever they be, there is no spiritual, vital principle; there is no spiritual nutriment; there is no crumb of the bread of heaven mixed. These temporalities may be attractively wrapped, "pleasant to the eyes, and to be desired to make one wise"; but they are only sweetened ashes: and the soul that is thus fed must perish in the using.

The cause of this is a deceived and deceitful heart. As in certain forms of delirium, the diseased imagination inverts the natural order, so that the patient's best friends are regarded as enemies, and everything is falsely colored, and its shape distorted, so it is of the very nature

of sin to pervert the judgment, and becloud the understanding, to the utter confusion of all moral values. Sin is a kind of moral delirium, and delirium is an invariable accompaniment of the disease of sin; and like some patients in insane asylums, who would eat anything if allowed, the sinner in his madness, "feedeth on ashes".

There is no difficulty in recognizing this moral blindness in certain cases which are the more manifest because of their physical accompaniments. The drunkard who spends his all on his cups,—he is the only one who does not see that he is heading straight for the precipice. The same is true of any other form of sin which is committed against the body. The doctor knows it, his friends know it, everybody but the poor deluded victim of vice knows that he is preparing for himself not even a dinner of herbs, but a meal of ashes. But the forms of sin which are less gross are just as deadly. The appalling fact is that men do not know it. The awful truth is that many whose attention is drawn to the fact do not believe it. They think they are dressed in the height of fashion, on the way to a royal banquet; whereas the truth is they are clothed in filthy rags, feeding on an ash-heap: "A deceived heart hath turned him aside."

This leads to a consideration of the logical sequence of it all, that no man can save himself. He cannot find his way home. He is like a drunken man bereft of his senses, so far as knowledge of spiritual things is concerned: "He cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

The right hand here represents the utmost of human desire, of concentrated resolution, the strength of the whole life, and it is—what? Only a lie! He says he is righteous, and God says he is a sinner; he says he is revelling in luxury, and God says he feedeth on ashes; he says he is on his way to heaven, and God says he is going to hell. But he does not know there is a lie in his right hand. How therefore can he deliver his soul when he does not know he needs deliverance?

That is the picture God draws of the sinner: all his powers are engaged in the accumulation of ashes. Like the wild asses who "snuffed up the wind", he is feeding his soul upon nothing. With the lie in his right hand he is committing soul-suicide.

## II.

What a mercy therefore is involved in the enlightenment of grace!

The beginnings of grace in the soul are recognized in an enlightened understanding. Grace does not overbear, nor magnify any faculty of the mind. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creation"; and every faculty is a sharer in that new creation, and by the natural exercise of its function is called into co-operation with the divine Spirit in the transformation of character and life. As the new-born child holds commerce with the vital air, and exercises its breathing function with a cry, so the new-born soul responds to its new atmosphere, the vital Spirit, and all the faculties of the soul fulfil, weakly, but harmoniously, their proper functions in obedience to the new life.

Hence such a word as this: "Remember these, O Jacob". No word that we can write can reach the sinner to undeceive him, to awaken him from sin's illusionment. The sleeping, sin-benumbed, faculties

will never answer to a human call. But the Spirit of God can awaken them. "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live!"—"O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord!"—"Awake, thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light"—"Remember these, O Jacob". O man, at God's call, think; ponder the path of thy feet, consider whither thou art going. It is not in vain we write if the Spirit of God be pleased to make us His mouth-piece. It is not in vain we call. Grace quickens the conscience, enlightens the understanding, informs and clarifies the judgment, purifies the affections, and enfranchises the will. If we but discern these evidences of divine renewal within, a growing distaste for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, it is an infallible sign of a spiritual awakening. The Lord God is calling us away from our feeding on ashes: "Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me". We are required to exercise our spiritual senses to discern good and evil, to see the folly and wickedness of sin, to turn from idols to worship the true God.

But here is a comfortable word for the soul which is keenly sensitive on account of sin. The evil of it all is seen, but how to escape we know not. In the name of the Lord let us adjure our readers to receive the truth.

Sin is said to be blotted out as a record from a book; it is blotted out as a cloud. It is important too to notice how sin is classified. The word "transgression" represents sin in its positive aspect. It means "trespass", "rebellion", "treachery", stepping across the line, literally, transgression,—the betrayal of trust, and affection, and privilege. It speaks of antagonism toward all that is holy, the law and the Law-giver. The word "sin" is negative. It means missing the mark, failure to run the race, failure to attain to a standard, to fulfil divine expectation. Here then the ten thousand failures and shortcomings and delinquencies of life are gathered into a cloud; and the multitude of transgressions — ten thousand times ten thousand, like vapor particles, have overcast the sky as "a thick cloud". What a picture of sin! It turns mid-day into midnight. It obscures the sun by day and the stars by night. It robs the lily of its beauty, the landscape of its splendour. It silences the music of the feathered singers of the forest and the field. It is thus sin hides the face of God, and obscures the light of heaven, drapes all the world in darkness and in the shadow of death. Verily sin is as a thick cloud covering the face of the sky—a cloud of our making, like the fog of London, obscuring the light of day, so that a man knoweth not at what he stumbleth.

If that be sin, who can dispel the darkness? Who can dissipate the clouds? Who can deal with the thick clouds of sin? "Canst not thou lift up thy voice to the clouds?"—"It is high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." None but God can blot out sin. The clouds can never be dissipated from the earthward side: they must be dispelled from Heaven.

But ere they vanish forever grace has thrown the rainbow across the thick cloud, the glory of the Lord appeareth even in this cloud,—

“Thus e'en thy murkiest storm-cloud,  
Is by His rainbow spanned,  
Caught from the glory dwelling  
In Immanuel's land.”

How is this cloud blotted out? Ah, it might have poured out vengeance on our heads. But its lightnings were drawn by the cross of Christ; it was emptied of its wrath by Calvary:

“The tempest's awful voice was heard,  
O Christ, it woke 'gainst Thee!  
Thy open bosom was my ward,  
It braved the storm for me:  
Thy form was scarred, Thy visage marred,  
Now cloudless peace for me.”

But there is a wonderful doctrine involved here. When the sun in all his might and glory looks upon the cloud, when the concentrated rays of the sun pour down upon that mass of dense vapor, its darkness is riven by the light, its watery particles are evaporated, the cloud is dissipated, or “blotted out”, and there remains only the glorious Sun in a cloudless sky. It is thus all the powers of Deity are concentrated upon our sin, His justice, His righteousness, His truth, His mercy, His love, His might, His holiness,—or to sum up all attributes in one grand, incomparable, immeasurable word, His *grace*, poured its rays upon our sin and blotted it out from the sky!

“I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.” That is the logic of the gospel's appeal: not, “Return that thou mayest be redeemed”, but, “Return because thou art redeemed. Oh, that is the difference between grace and works. Sin is atoned for—therefore return. When the prodigal returned, he found he was already forgiven. Sinai turned everything to ashes. We have read of the far country where a prince would fain have fed on husks. But what is the alternative of husks and ashes? Who will give beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness? It is not Sinai with its ashes, nor the far country with its husks, which can constitute the great appeal: it is Calvary with its voice of pardon, the Father's house where there is a welcome, and “bread enough and to spare”. The sinner may return because there is no reason to stay away. He is redeemed. He may come and claim his inheritance in Christ “in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.”

### III.

Then there is the joy of salvation! But how can one speak of a “joy unspeakable and full of glory”? When the winter of our discontent is ended, when the day of darkness and of storm is over, when the sky is clear, and the heavens opened, and “God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ”—how shall

we utter all our joy? When springtime comes to the soul—

“O day of God, thou bringest back  
The singing of the birds,  
With music for the hearts that lack,  
More musical than words!

Thou meltest now the frozen deep  
Where dreaming love lay bound,  
Thou wakest life in buds asleep,  
And joy in skies that frowned.

Not yet may almond-blossoms dare  
A wintry world to bless;  
Still do the trees their beauty wear  
Of glorious nakedness:

But clouds are riven with the light  
Of old unclouded days,  
And Love unfolds to longing sight  
His sweet and silent ways.”

“Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it.” The heavens do sing! But they celebrate only the praises of the Lord. The heavens declare the glory of God. The stars in their courses fought against Sisera, but they will not publish his fame. The morning stars sang together at creation's birth, but they sang in praise of the Creator, not of the creature. It was not for Joshua, but for Jehovah, the sun and moon stood still; it was not for Ahaz, but for God, the shadow returned on the dial. And the wise men were never wiser than when they said of the heavenly guide, “We have seen His star”. “His star”? Yes; all the stars are His, His ministers to do His pleasure; His choristers to sing His everlasting praise.

But they are silent in view of all human achievements. They sing only when “the Lord hath done it”. And when our sins are blotted out,—“the Lord hath done it.” When the prodigal turns from his husks to his Father's table; when his filthy rags are exchanged for the best robe, and the wastrel is shod, and has a ring on his hand, it is “the Lord hath done it”. Earth cannot contain the joy of that achievement. The heart of the redeemed must cry, “Sing, oh heavens, for the Lord hath done it”;—

“Saints and angels joined in concert  
Sing the praises of the Lamb;  
While the blissful seats of heaven  
Sweetly echo with His name;  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!  
Sinners here may sing the same.”

And even the lower orders of creation share the joy of a soul's conversion. We remember a most devoted Christian man, who, prior to his conversion, had been a very depraved and vicious character. He used to say that the first creature to know of his conversion was his dog,—for when, on the night of the great change, the dog came to meet him on his return home, instead of a vicious kick the dog received a tender caress. And the man insisted that his dog felt the change conversion had effected. The principle is true. A man's horse, and dog, and all creatures he touches have reason to shout when he is really and soundly converted.

"Break forth into singing, ye mountains". Let your lofty peaks catch the music of the skies; let your ribbed and rocky slopes, your mighty canyons, acclaim the mystery of grace; let your purling streams, your myriad wild, instructive voices accompany the song of angels in celebration of redeeming love. "Break forth into singing, O forest, and every tree therein". Let the wind that bloweth where it listeth play upon thee, and wake every murmuring pine, and every feathered melody, and every tremulous leaf, in praise of the Redeemer's name!

What means it, but that if all the universe could suddenly become animate and vocal, the joy of salvation would still be unspeakable and full of glory!

"Oh, for such love, let rocks and rills  
Their lasting silence break!  
And all harmonious human tongues  
The Saviour's praises speak."

"For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel"—grace has devised means to make the creature's good and the Creator's glory mutually to consist in each other. That is the stupendous, the transcendent, wonder. Grace giveth beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

Let us have done with feeding upon ashes! Let us return unto the Lord and to the land of cloudless skies! Let us get ready for the day when every creature that is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, shall be heard saying, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever!"

### THE NEED AND HOPE OF THE CHURCH.

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

It was a joyful moment to me a day or two since when I opened a letter from Jamaica telling me of the safe and happy arrival there of two of our Seminary students, Mr. and Mrs. John Knight, who graduated last May. The joy deepened as I read of the impression which they had made upon the missionary with whom they have gone to labour: "Now," said he, "after four or five days I can say that I do not think you could have found a better fit for our situation in all Canada." Evidently Mr. and Mrs. Knight have made a fine impression already, and it is a matter for deep thankfulness to know this. So, the Toronto Baptist Seminary has two more representatives in that beautiful island, who are destined, we believe, to do a magnificent work for our Lord there. Those in this land, who are rendering valuable help towards the support of Mr. and Mrs. Knight should be greatly encouraged.

One of the joys of the new Seminary term, with its heavy pressure of work, has been the glad tidings of the vital ministry exercised by our students during the summer, and the extremely favourable impression which they are creating in some of the city churches since this term opened. If these men press on in the path which they are treading to-day—godly, earnest, devoted, with a clear ringing gospel message, Canada, and many other parts of the world will yet

have to bless God for the day when Dr. Shields planted the Toronto Baptist Seminary in Jarvis Street.

My recent visit to England made me feel more than ever that we need everywhere a trumpet blast of Christian testimony that will startle men out of their deep spiritual sleep, and their empty dreams. The world may not love to be aroused, and turning over in its sleep may utter curses deep and many against the disturbers of their Godless repose; but many souls will arise from their slumbers at the touch of Divine grace, and come forth to live and labour for Him Who put away their sins by the sacrifice of Himself.

It is good to see that a number of our students have the world-wide vision, and that they will not be content with spending their lives in some little corner of Canada. Paul is a noble example for us here. It was not enough for him to preach the gospel at Jerusalem, or Damascus, he must needs journey into Pisidia and Pamphylia, and to the utmost verge of Asia Minor. And so full of Christ was he that when he fell asleep he saw a vision of a man calling him across the blue Aegean, "Come over and help us", and with the morning light Paul was away to preach the gospel in Macedonia. He was filled with a sacred restlessness to reach the "regions beyond" and to move on and on in order to touch soil where no other had ever told the story of the Cross. We trust that the ambition of our students will be boundless, until dead souls in the most distant lands, and the utmost islands of the seas, will be stirred to seek the Lord by the awakening gospel which they will proclaim.

These are days which call for spiritual ardour. Lukewarmness is all too common, and that is a thing which our Lord abhors. It is the Pauline spirit that we need again, the spirit that neither "perils by the heathen, perils in the city, perils in the wilderness, perils in the sea, nor perils among false brethren" will quench, or impede. Everywhere the world needs men who "believe, and therefore speak"; and who will love and serve their Lord even unto death. None of us can afford to allow any relaxation of zeal. The pure Word of God must be proclaimed with intensity until that Word begins to tell, and still proclaim it till the rocky hearts of sinners are broken in pieces. There must be no drawing back, no losing of force, no slackening in prayer, for we must ever contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. God's men must put their heart and soul into their service, and with manliness, vigour, and vehemence, all their powers must be moved to unwavering earnestness in holy living, in prayer, and in the passionate preaching of the great saving message.

Our young men will need to be strong to the utmost possible strength. Battles are before them where they will need to stand with firm foot, and to wield the Sword of the Spirit with mighty power. Many older men are sadly lacking in anything like flaming zeal. They are tied up to "machines", through fear they trim their speech, or speak with bated breath; or they have an eye upon denominational "leaders". There is little hope of any great spiritual movement through such men. So, under God, our hope in the conflict for King Jesus is in the young blood of the church. And we shall all be glad

(Continued on page 13.)

# The Jarvis Street Pulpit

## A PRAYER FOR REVIVAL.

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Sunday Morning, October 27th, 1929.

(Stenographically Reported.)

"O Lord, revive thy work"—Habakkuk 3:2.

"O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy." We shall give our thought particularly to this phrase, which is our church motto for the year: "O Lord, revive thy work".

It is the practice of every business concern periodically to take stock of its assets and liabilities, in order that it may know whether it is going forward or backward, that it may estimate the measure of its progress. It is necessary that Christians should frequently take their bearings and examine the foundation of things: "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure." Take nothing for granted except that God is true, and that He will keep His word.

It is wise also that every church should periodically review its work, and exercise every care "lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." When God gives to a church a measure of prosperity there is always a danger of its being satisfied with something less than the best. The devil does not always tempt us with things that are in themselves evil, but he does often cripple and impoverish the people of God by getting them to set their minds and their hearts upon something that is less than the best that God has to give to His own people. By that means they are made contented with their present attainments, instead of pressing "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus".

I do not think there ever was a day when the church of God as a whole more urgently needed revival than to-day. I think every true believer ought to be constantly praying not alone for himself, nor exclusively for the church to which he belongs, but for the people of God everywhere, that God would revive His work. But the best way to have a revival on a large scale is to be sure that we have a revival in our own hearts, in our own homes, and in the churches in which we have been placed, and where responsibilities particularly rest upon us. So in the simplest fashion I shall turn over this familiar scripture which we have had before us through the year, that we may be enabled afresh to make it our prayer this morning,—“O Lord, revive thy work.”

### I.

First of all, it is an expression, AN EXAMPLE, OF THAT EXERCISE IN WHICH ALL BELIEVERS OUGHT TO BE ENGAGED: it is a prayer. I shall ask a few questions of every Christian here this morning, questions that are very simple, very practical, and very much to the point;

and I ask you to try to find an answer for them, an answer which you will give not to me, but to God.

Are you thus praying? Are you praying at all? When there is sickness in the home when some serious illness has overtaken some member of the family, or when a serious accident has taken place, and someone is examined to discover whether life remains, or whether there is but the tabernacle of clay left, the great question asked by the physician is, Is he breathing? Is there breath there? Is the pulse beating? What breath is to the body, prayer is to the soul; and no man is really "alive unto God" who does not daily and hourly pray. Prayer is much more than the formal exercise of repeating certain petitions. Prayer is the normal attitude and exercise of every truly regenerate soul. We are not to pray occasionally, but literally and of necessity, "without ceasing"; otherwise we cannot live. "Prayer is the Christian's vital breath, the Christian's native air."

You will recall the description of the valley of bones in the thirty-seventh chapter of Ezekiel, and you remember how Ezekiel prophesied as he was commanded, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." There was a noise, and a shaking; bone came to his bone. Presently the bones were covered with flesh, and with sinews, and with skin; each collection of bones was rearticulated, and formed into the fashion of a human body—but the prophet observed that there was "no breath in them". It is possible to have a great school such as we have here, it is possible to have a large congregation, it is possible to have a large church membership, to make a fine show in the flesh, and yet to be devoid of spiritual life. The great question is, Are we alive unto God?

What is the test of our spiritual life? It is whether it is natural for us, whether it be the normal thing for us to be always, Monday as well as Sunday, morning as well as evening, forenoon as well as afternoon—all the time—to live in an attitude of prayer, depending upon God, breathing out our desires toward God, and receiving again supplies of the Spirit of God, so that we are animated by the Spirit. In this way we become spiritual men and spiritual women, not minding the things of the flesh, but minding the things of the Spirit, which are life and peace.

Let me address the members of this church—for I have a special responsibility in respect to you. A pastor must be especially concerned for the spiritual health of the flock he is set to feed. And that is what I want to know of you young people who are members of the church, and of you boys and girls who have made profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Do you

pray? Is it natural for you about your play, about your study, and about your work, wherever you are—has it become habitual for you to lift your heart to God and pray? We ought to be always praying. We have three prayer meetings a week—we have more than that. Beside the three mid-week meetings we gather for prayer at six o'clock Sunday evening, and again Monday evening the various departments come together, first of all, to pray. Some people remark upon it as though it were extraordinary, but we do not pray as we ought to pray, although there are many members of this church who are found in the place of prayer as often as it is possible for them to come. It is one thing for us to pray individually: it is another thing to pray collectively. What is true of the individual member ought to be true of the church. If the church, as a church, is to live unto God, and exercise her proper functions, then she must, as a church, be constant in prayer. We must be always praying—not three prayer meetings a week, but all at it, and always at it.

I still think there are many of you who are members of this church, who could make it possible, if you would, to gather with the people of God as they meet in His name to pray. I know how strenuously some people must live of necessity. I know how time is consumed in going to and fro; and yet if we recognize the fact that prayer is vital to a church's existence, and certainly vital to its functioning and fruit-bearing as a church, then every member of the church will come to recognize that unless he or she prays, unless he or she has a part in the ministry of prayer, such is not in any true sense a real addition to the church's working force. We ought to have hundreds whenever we gather to pray. There are some of you who, I trust, walk worthily before the world. I hope it is true that, in some measure, by divine grace we are enabled to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things"; and yet you ought to be an active cell in the church's lungs. You ought to be breathing.

Go and ask your physician where trouble begins in the lungs, and he will tell you that if there is a part of your respiratory system that you are not using, if the lungs are not filled with God's fresh air, if you do not learn to breathe deeply all the time, you are in danger of suffering an impairment of health. When germs find lodgment in the lung, it is invariably in an unused cell, and not in those that are active. And whenever the devil gets into a church, whenever he succeeds in turning some believer astray from the path of righteousness, he always finds his opportunity in the life of a man or woman, or boy or girl, who is careless in respect to the privilege of prayer. If only we learn to breathe, to hold commerce with heaven, and get the atmosphere of Heaven into our spirits, we shall have the very life of God within us, and we shall be able to throw off those ailments from which so many professing Christians suffer to-day. Most seriously I urge upon you the fact that the prayer life of the church is vital; it is absolutely indispensable to its fruit-bearing ministry. The church that does not pray, might just as well close its doors; for preaching without the mighty power of God is of no avail. And how impossible it is for any of us to live worthily, except by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God!

Let us take this motto for our own, and learn to pray, "O Lord, revive thy work."

To whom is this prayer made? The dimensions of your prayers will always bear some relation to your conception of God. If you have a little god, your prayers will be little prayers. If you have a God that is revealed in the person of Jesus Christ, then your prayers will compass the world with their interests; and nothing shall be impossible to you.

How do you pray? Are you using the same prayer that you "said" twenty years ago? Why do you not wear the same clothes that you wore twenty years ago? You say, "They are worn out; I have outgrown them." You ought to have outgrown your prayers of twenty years ago, in this sense, that you ought to be scaling the mount. You ought to be asking for larger and richer things than you did in your spiritual infancy. There is a sense in which we continue to pray that which is fundamental to all prayer, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors", and yet we ought to be living beyond the first principles, going on to perfection, and seeking more and more grace from God that we "may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ".

To whom is your prayer addressed? To what sort of God? To whom did this prophet pray? He began his prayer by saying, "O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid." There is nothing that will inspire people to pray like hearing "the speech" of God. Let me remind you young people again of that which I have called to your attention many times, that the study of God's Word and the exercise of prayer always go together. It is when you hear His speech, it is when you look into this perfect law of liberty, that you discover what you ought to be. It is when we look at the height of the mountain which He would have us climb, it is when we view our own inheritance in Christ, and learn something of the depth, and breadth, and height, and inestimable worth, of our inheritance as Christians—it is then we see our shortcomings; it is then we are inspired to pray, "O Lord, revive thy work".

Is Jesus Christ your Lord? In what measure is He your Lord? If He be your Master every day, then it becomes your privilege and duty to receive orders from Headquarters. It is the most natural thing in the world for one who recognizes Jesus as Lord, to desire to keep in unbroken communion with Him. In time of war that is always one of the chief problems, how an army may keep in communication with its base of supply. It must always keep in communication with headquarters, so that it may receive orders from the commander-in-chief, that all its movements may be an execution of his design, of his plan. You and I cannot pray effectively unless there is a recognition of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We pray, that we may receive orders from Him. It was instinctive to the newly-converted Saul of Tarsus, it was natural for him when he heard that Voice from heaven, when he heard that speech, to be afraid. He fell to the ground, and when he heard his name he said, "Who art thou, Lord?" As soon as he received the answer, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest", instinctively he said, "What wilt thou have me to do?" Henceforth that became the burden of his prayer, the rule of his life,

to discover the will of God, in order that he might do "the will of God from the heart".

That is our question this morning: Is Jesus Christ *Lord* in the most absolute sense? We cannot exaggerate it. You cannot employ superlatives that would be excessive in your definition of your obligation to Him Who is your rightful Lord and King. He is Lord of our lives; therefore we pray to Him. When the brethren of Joseph came down to Egypt they came to one who was described as "lord of the land". They were not content to deal with any middle-man: they wanted to get to the governor who had the keys to the storehouses—for their sacks were empty; their families were famishing in the famine land. When they came there I think they said, "Introduce us to him who is lord of the land, for no one else can meet our need; no one else can fill our sacks; no one else can satisfy our hunger."

My dear friends, you and I need things of which Jesus Christ has the absolute monopoly: we must get them from His storehouses, or we can not get them at all. They are not within the keeping of any minister, of any priest, of any church, of any organization, of any denomination. If you and I are to live triumphantly, effectually, to the praise of God, then we must have access to Him Who is Lord; nobody else can help us. As we come to Him and pray this morning, can we say, "Thou art Lord of the storehouses, Thou hast all the necessary supplies; and I therefore come to Thee because Thou hast it in Thy power to help me."

One of our little girls got up in the prayer meeting last night and said, "I want to quote a passage again that is a great favourite of mine. I quote it so often that I sometimes fear you will think I do not know any other. I know others, but I quote this because I love it." And this was the passage: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." When you pray, do you come to One Who has all authority "in heaven and in earth"? Is it worth while praying to Him. If you really believe that the keys of all storehouses swing at His girdle, that His sceptre has power not only over the hearts of men, but over nations.

To whom do you pray? Is it to the Lord to Whom all authority belongeth? I know that in your experience, in your life, there are a thousand difficulties—as there are in mine. As I speak of revival this morning there are men here who say, "You do not know where I work, sir". Or another man says, "You do not know where I live, sir. You do not know my difficulties. If you did, you would not talk to me about revival, because I live in a perfectly impossible situation." There are no impossibilities to any man to whom Jesus Christ is Lord! He is bigger than all your difficulties! He is mightier than all your foes! He is superior to all your temptations! There is nothing that the God Whom we worship cannot do. And if we really, by prayer, lay hold of God, there is no reason why we should not have revival, individually and collectively. We shall receive whatever we need.

Jesus Christ is Lord. I love to think that He made this old world. It is a beautiful place. I sometimes have a good deal of sympathy with a little girl of whom a friend of mine told me when I was pastor in London. This little girl was visiting one of the families in London; she was visiting her aunt. At night her aunt heard her say her prayers. She stopped in the midst one night and said, "Auntie, I do not want to go to heaven." Her aunt said, "Why, what makes you say that, dear?" "Because this world is such a beautiful place; it is so full of flowers and birds and music, and all sorts of beautiful things, that I should like to stay here." Her aunt told her that some day the flowers would fade, that the birds would spread their wings and fly away to other climes, that the snow would come, and that it would be cold. She told her our friends would leave us, that we should have to leave them out in the cemetery—and we should be lonely; that by and by life would look a little different, and we should begin to take an interest in things across the river. The child said, "Yes, I suppose that is so, Auntie, and I had better pray about heaven; but, really, I don't want to go there just yet."

I do not blame her, you know? I think the Lord would have us value the beautiful things about us. But what I remind you of this morning is that we pray to Him Who "made heaven and earth, and all that in them is". Our God is a great God, and if He wants us to have beautiful things He can give them to us.

Did you ever hear the sweet story of Mrs. Spurgeon and her bird? For years she was an invalid, and she had an idea that she wanted a canary. I suppose she might have sent someone to buy one, but she made up her mind that she would ask the Lord for one, and that He would, without her telling anyone about it, send her a beautiful singing bird. And so she prayed. She did not tell her husband or anyone else, but she just prayed the Lord to send her a canary to cheer her sick-room. One day when Mr. Spurgeon came home she told him that some anonymous friend had sent a beautiful bird—there it was, cage and all. She said, "I have been asking the Lord to send me a bird." Said he, "My dear, I think you are one of the Lord's spoiled children. You get whatever you ask for!" It was essentially Spurgeonic, but it was a beautiful idea. He not only gives us raiment to wear, and food to eat, but our God can give us luxuries if He will; and if we pray to the Lord of heaven and earth there is no telling how rich we may become.

Who is he to whom you pray? Is he a remote figure of history, one with whom you have no personal acquaintance, a character in a book, someone who is far away in heaven? Or is He a personal reality, a dear and intimate Friend with Whom you hold daily converse, and to Whom you present your daily requests? "O Lord!" said the prophet. Make Jesus *Lord*.

He is Lord of principalities and powers. I am not afraid of men. I really am not. I have seen a few of them; and many are only pigmies after all! "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." We need not be afraid of men. But oh, we wrestle against "principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world,

against spiritual wickedness in high places." And if we are going to pray for revival we must pray to Someone Who is superior to these powers of darkness which bring paralysis and impoverishment and ruin everywhere. Who are they? Theological professors? They are bad enough. They are a bad lot (except those in the Seminary, Dr. Stockley). There are false teachers, but even they are only the puppets of principalities and powers; and if you could rid every institution to-day of every false teacher, it would be as bad as ever to-morrow unless the Spirit of God should come and take possession. We wrestle against principalities and powers.

When you pray for the salvation of a soul, you are praying for the salvation of one who is led captive by the devil at his will, and he cannot break away unless he has a power that is superior to the power that holds him. When we pray to Him Who is *Lord*, let us remember that He is greater than the devil himself—and all his angels. "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace."—but listen—"when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." Our Lord is stronger than "the strong man armed", and if we have Him by our side there is nothing we cannot accomplish.

To such an one we must bring this prayer, "O Lord, revive thy work; preserve alive thy work. Give us a revival." That is to say, give us replenishment of the stores of life; revivify us; reinvigorate us. "Revive thy work". You may ask people for money—and you may get it. You may ask people to come to church—and they may come. You may appear to be successful, successful even without God; but you cannot have spiritual life without Him, nor can you have it without prayer which must be presented to the Lord of all,—*"Revive thy work."*

## II.

WHAT SHALL BE THE BURDEN OF MY PRAYER? Revive my effort, my industry? No, that is not it. It may be a blessing when some work stops, you know! There are a great many churches that have all kinds of organizations. They are like a man who makes a hobby of having many clocks, he has two or three in every room. He is like Smitty's friend, he is occupied much of his time winding up the clocks! I know some preachers who are kept constantly busy looking after their organizations. I do not know what they are for—nor does he—but they are there, and have to be kept going. He has this society, and the other, this club and the other; and all his energy is expended in keeping the machinery going, yet nothing happens, month after month, year after year; and the poor man is nearly worn out.

We do not want a revival of that kind. This is what we want, "O Lord, revive *Thy* work." It is a prayer that God will come and work—not that you shall work, nor your work; but *His* work. Now for you who are Christians, what is His work? You say, "He worked a work in my heart once upon a time. He made me a new creature, and I know I was quickened by the Divine Spirit of God. I know that I am His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto

good works." Then pray that God may come into your heart in fuller measure, that He may revivify His work; that He may cultivate the garden so that the weeds may be plucked up; that the drooping plants, the virtues that ought to flourish in a Christian life, may be revived; and that all the graces of Christ may flourish in your life. "O Lord, revive thy work! Help me to keep my temper; make me more patient; help me to be more charitable; help me to be absolutely truthful; make me faithful in the discharge of my duty; help me, as a Christian, to put conscience into my daily task, to do my duty, to fulfil my obligation. Whatever I ought to do as a Christian, whatever I ought to be as a Christian, help me to do and to be that. Revive Thy work. Come into my heart, and do Thy work perfectly so that everyone will say of me, "There is a man by whom and in whom God is working."

There is a great difference between the man in whose life God is working, and the man who is daily trying to work *for* God. The one can work and accomplish nothing: the other is a channel of divine grace, an instrument of divine power.

"O Lord, revive thy work." It may mean, "Lord, renew my zeal. Once I used to teach a Sunday School class, but I got tired of it. Once I was so zealous I could not get enough to do for the Lord; then after a while I was content merely to touch the burden with the end of my finger. O Lord, revive thy work. Give me back that flaming passion for the souls of men, that zeal that will consume me even as it consumed my Lord of Whom it was written, 'The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.' O Lord, revive thy work."

Like the children of Ephraim we all turn back; "being armed, and carrying bows, turn back in the day of battle." We are a pack of cowards! Left to ourselves we run away from any foe. It is only as God comes in and revives His work, and works in us "to will and to do of His good pleasure", that we shall be able to accomplish anything. Pray for a revival of your zeal, and a revival of your interest in spiritual things generally.

How shall we study the Bible? The lights are out and it is night. I come here and open this Bible—but I cannot see a thing! I put on my glasses, and still I cannot see! I go to Dr. Stockley and say, "Please lend me your glasses". I put them on too; I get a magnifying glass; I call in a dozen opticians; I look—but I cannot see anything. What folly! Here is the way (turning on the electric light): Turn on the light, and you can see clearly. How is it some people do not know the Word of God? It is because they are studying in the dark. The Jews do not understand the Old Testament because, "even unto this day, when Moses is read the veil is upon their heart"; and that is just as true of a Gentile professor as of a Jew,—*"which veil is done away in Christ"*. If you have Christ, if you see everything through the medium of Jesus Christ, you will come to your Bible and find it the most thrilling and entrancing book ever written.

If you are to get back to God, and get a knowledge of God's will, how must you do it? "O Lord, revive thy work"—"Then opened he their understand-



ing, that they might understand the scriptures." Light up the candle again! "Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head." It is wonderful when the Holy Ghost comes in and lights the candle, and makes the Book blaze with glory. Do not come to me and say, "Pastor, can you recommend me a book that would interest me in Bible study?" Oh, dear! dear! dear! How much of that there is! Somebody telephoned me the other day—I am always glad to have an enquiry—but someone called me and said, "I am a stranger. I am a member of the . . . United Church."—I will not tell you what church it was—"we have a great many young people in our church who are going astray. . . . They are going to dances, having their cards at home, and all the rest of it. Would you tell me how to prepare an address for such young people?" I felt like saying, "Go to headquarters, and get the Lord to turn the light on. You will not need others to instruct you if only the Light shines. "O Lord, revive thy work."

So I could go on. Is there a backslider somewhere? Is there someone in whom there is a flickering light? Blessed be God, "a bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." He will fan it into a new flame if you ask Him, and suddenly

you will have your heart warmed. You will be like Wesley, who found his heart "strangely warmed". You remember the disciples on the Emmaus road said, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way." Why? It was because He came and fanned the flame. He revived His work, rekindling their desires toward God. Shall we pray this?

I know I was born out of my time! I ought to have lived fifty years ago when people went to church to sit three hours! One of the attractions of heaven will be that there they serve Him "day and night". I hope some day to be able to preach just as long as I like! In the meantime, I shall have to remember that we are in the flesh, and that dinner will get cold!

But is there one here who is not a Christian? The Lord of Whom I speak is the Lord of life. If you are dead in sins, He can make you live again. The church cannot save you, the preacher cannot save you, the teacher cannot save you, your own resolutions cannot save you—but Jesus Christ can. Come to Him this morning and say "O Lord, revive thy work. Begin it in me, and then carry it on until I shall be perfected before the throne." May the Lord bless our simple meditation this morning!

*(Fifteen came forward in response to the invitation following the sermon.)*

## CHRIST CRUCIFIED

A Sermon by Rev. Thomas Todhunter, M.A.,

Vicar of Dacre, Cumberland, some time during the last half of the 18th century (The Editor's great-great-grandfather), printed from a manuscript in the Editor's possession, dated 1760.

"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."—I Cor. 1:23, 24.

Corinth was the capital city of that part of ancient Greece called Achaia. And being situate on a neck of land, between two seas, it lay peculiarly convenient and advantageous for commerce. By means of its pleasant situation, it became a city of great resort, both by Jews and Gentiles, for trade and learning; grew exceeding populous; and abounded with rich merchants, fine orators, and great philosophers.

In this wealthy and magnificent city the apostle Paul took up his residence; and preached the gospel among them for about two years; during which space of time, many believed in the Lord Jesus, and were formed into a gospel church.

What arts did he employ, or what means did he make use of, in order to make men believe the gospel? By the preaching of Christ crucified. "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

The crucifixion of Jesus, or in other words, the doctrine of the Cross, was the subject of the Apostles' teaching, and the grand theme of their writings. They did not concern themselves with the study of politics, or the improvement of arts and sciences. These they

left to statesmen and philosophers; and declared the only way of salvation to sinners of mankind was by the sufferings and resurrection of Christ. They did not entertain their hearers with the strains of human eloquence, and the flowers of rhetoric so much cultivated and admired by the Greeks—they did not adapt their discourses to the maxims of philosophy, or the corrupt notions of high pretenders to reason and learning;—but without studying to please men, they declared the testimony of God, and proclaimed the doctrine of a crucified Saviour in its native majesty, simplicity and glory. It was a matter of indifference to them, how the affairs of this world were managed, or what sort of government was established in any country—all their comfort and satisfaction consisted in preaching a despised gospel, and seeing those little societies, which they had formed here and there, walking in love and in the fear of the Lord. They did not endeavour to catch the vain breath of popular applause, by artifice, and sanctimonious hypocrisy—they did not court the smile of kings, by smooth-tongued adulation, by false and fawning flattery. They had no worldly preferences to bestow upon mankind, for they neither were possessed of, nor aspired after any. No, they had nothing to expect or to promise in this life, but poverty

and affliction, ignominy, and disgrace. They were made the filth of the world, and esteemed the off-scouring of all things; but this they counted as nothing, if so be, they might "obtain a better resurrection".

"But we preach Christ crucified".—Who can observe, and not admire the Apostle's manner of expressing himself? He speaks of it with an air of boasting, as if to preach the gospel of the despised Jesus was a most desirable privilege. As if he esteemed it a greater honour to suffer the most cruel persecutions for the name of Christ, than to be advanced to the first employments in the state! "But we preach Christ crucified"—Christ is our province to display the riches of divine grace, and to preach reconciliation to sinners of mankind, in the death and sufferings of the adorable Jesus. Though it is a doctrine which proves a stumbling-block and an offence to the carnal Jews, and is esteemed foolishness by the learned and polite Greek; yet it is a pleasure to us to proclaim salvation in the name of Christ, Who was publicly condemned and executed as a malefactor for the sins of His people.

"We preach Christ crucified". Who can read this, and not be charmed with the very *simple*, but incomparably *gallant* manner of the Apostle speaking? He rejoices, he exults, he triumphs, that he was accounted worthy to preach the gospel of *Jesus of Nazareth*, though his ministry was attended with persecution and imprisonment, and would, ere long, end in martyrdom and death. Had the Apostle's ministry been accompanied with ease and honour—had he enjoyed a large revenue as the reward of his extensive labours—or had he "preached Christ crucified" with a view to some grand preferment, the turn and air of this expression would not so much have excited our admiration—nay, it would have lost all its beauty. But when we consider that he had nothing to look or hope for in this world, but hunger and nakedness, poverty and shame, and the most violent opposition from all ranks of people; we cannot but admire this illustrious champion of the Cross?

"But we preach Christ crucified". Note, they did not tickle people's ears, or soothe their vanity with fine speeches upon the dignity of human nature. They did not, like many of our preachers, entertain them with dry, spiritless lectures of virtue, which neither convince the judgment nor reform the heart: but they preached the glad tidings of salvation through Jesus Who was crucified upon Calvary. They considered all mankind both *Jews* and *Gentiles* as sinners, and enemies of God by wicked works. They clearly proved from the Old Testament, that he was the Messiah Who was "fore-ordained" to take away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

In discoursing upon these words, I shall

First: Shew how the apostles preached Christ crucified.

Secondly: Offer some reasons why the doctrine of Christ crucified was a stumbling-block to the Jews, etc., and

Lastly: I shall make a few observations upon the latter part of the text—"But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

## I.

First, I am to shew HOW THE APOSTLES PREACHED CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

It is very evident both from the Old Testament and the New, that the death of Christ was a real and propitiatory sacrifice. The *Arians* and *Socinians* indeed, would persuade us that He died upon the Cross only as an example of patience, or a martyr to the truth of the doctrine which he taught. But this doctrine is entirely inconsistent with the whole tenor of scripture. Nothing can be plainer than that sinners are reconciled to God by the pouring out of Christ's blood upon the Cross. "He hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." And the Apostle confirms the words of the Prophet, "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." These passages are so plain as not to need any comment. They declare, as clearly as language can do it, that God punished or visited sin in the person of Jesus Christ—that He stood in the room of sinners, and purchased their life by His propitiatory death. Let us contemplate a little the sufferings of this divine Person as they are recorded by His own apostles. Let us follow Him to the Garden of Gethsemane.

Matthew tells us, He "fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." Mark has it thus: "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt." And Luke expresses the same thing in these words: "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done." The evangelists, you see, do not all use the very same expressions in describing this circumstance; but this affords no argument against the truth of their history: for we are not to suppose that they relate every expression which our Lord used in His earnest prayers when He was in His agony; but only the most remarkable. They do not narrate His prayers verbatim; but give you only the substance of them in a few words.

As the evangelists inform us of the condition He was in when He prayed thus, they also shew us what *that cup was*, which He prayed might pass from Him. They say, He "began to be sorrowful" (or, to be sore amazed) "and very heavy", and saith, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me." "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Was all this occasioned by the mere horror of approaching death? Then He did not face death with that firmness, constancy and resolution of mind which was conspicuous in *Stephen*, and many of the martyrs. What then was the cause of all this agony? And what *was* this cup, whereof He was thus beginning to drink? It was nothing less than the *death*, due by the Law of God, to the sins of those transgressors, with whom He was numbered, and whose sins He bare, when He poured out His soul unto death, and made intercession for them. He was now acting in a public character, as the Representative of His people. He stood betwixt them and death; so that it was *their sins*, and not His *own*, which fetched from Him, His

sighs, His groans, and His tears. He had tasted of this cup before, when, foretelling His death for the salvation of His people, He said, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name." John 12:27, 28. And, when the Apostle, in his description of Christ's priesthood, says that Jesus "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him", he is giving the sense of these words, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me".

It is manifest, from these prayers and supplications of Jesus Christ, that there was the greatest reluctance and aversion in His soul to that cup of the wrath of God, or to that cursed death, due to sin, of which He was beginning to taste. And it could not be otherwise; for the more holy and innocent a soul is, the more will it love the divine favor; and according to the greatness of that love to the light of God's countenance, so must the aversion to His wrath be great. Therefore it was a strong expression of His love to the light of the Father's countenance, when He expressed His great aversion to the opposite death, in these words, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." And, "Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name." He prays to be saved from drinking of this cup, *only* upon this *express condition*, if it could be compatible with the Father's will, and if it could be consistent with His glory in the salvation of His people, for whom He was to drink that cup. And so He says, "if thou be willing", "if it be possible"—and, "Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." "Father, glorify thy name." He would not be saved from drinking the cup, or from that hour, if it was not consistent with the Father's glory in His people's salvation from death. And so He expressed, in this prayer, the great love that was in His soul to God, and to His people; in that He would rather drink the cup, to which He had the greatest aversion, yea, drink it to the very dregs, than that the Father should not be glorified in the salvation of His people. Thus, we see the perfection of that love, which was required in the law, presented to the Father in those prayers and supplications, which our High Priest offered in the days of His flesh. And this love, which was truly the fulfilling of the law, was obedience, as it carried in it the greatest submission to the divine will. This subjection to the will of the Father, occasioned by the height of His sufferings, was the highest instance of obedience that ever was in the world, and to which there is no parallel in the creation of God; especially if we consider the infinite dignity of the person thus obeying: for "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Heb. 5:8.

As the connection betwixt sin and death was pointed out in the *typical sacrifices*, upon which the *emblematical* uncleanness was transferred; so this connection is most manifestly declared in the offering of Jesus Christ. For if, in any case, sin and death could have been separated, or if it had been any way possible for sin to pass unpunished by the wrath of God; it must have been when the Son of God, standing in the

room of His sinful people, was crying to His Father with tears to be saved from suffering His wrath due to their sins. But even in this case it was impossible. It was not the Father's will that sinners should be saved without manifesting His displeasure against sin. It was not His will that the cup should pass from His son, except He drank it. He could not be saved from that hour, because, for this very cause came He unto that hour. Thus we can see it is impossible that God, consistent with His goodness, could save sinners, without discovering His opposition and hatred against sin. And this is clearly declared in the death of Jesus Christ, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

But here we must observe,—If that death, wherein God's infinite hatred against sin, had been inflicted upon any person of finite dignity, it would have been impossible that the "pains of death" should be loosed; and so such a person must have been holden of it eternally: but this was infinitely expressed in the death of that person of infinite dignity and worth, the Son of God; for the Father, finding His wrath against sin fully declared in His sufferings, "loosed the pains of death", and raised Him to a life suitable to the infinite merit of His obedience to the death. And this deliverance from death, this glorious life that is given to Him, as the answer to the prayers which He offered up, is the salvation of all His people; for they are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ".

There is no trouble or disquietude like that which arises from a sense of God's displeasure against sin; and there was no way or method for our deliverance from this trouble, but by Jesus Christ's taking it upon Himself for us, and undergoing the sorrows of death, to manifest the divine displeasure against our sins, that so we might have peace. "The chastisement of our peace was upon him". For, in His death, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them", but unto Him! And so He is our peace-offering, Who hath reconciled us, both Jews and Gentiles of every nation, unto God in one body. The covenant confirmed by this sacrifice is a "covenant of peace". And this peace is the legacy that He has left us in the New Testament, as it is made of force by His death; even that peace, which He inherits, at the Father's right hand, in the name of His people, as the reward of His obedience unto death. When He was about to leave His disciples, and go to the Father to enjoy this peace as the fruit of His sorrow and death, He comforted them with this legacy: "Peace I leave with you", says he, "my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you". This peace is preached to us in the gospel. Hence it is written that peace is made "through the blood of His Cross".

Thus the apostles preached Christ crucified—and thus they still continue to preach in their writings. This is their account of the sacrifice of our High Priest, when He gave His body to be broken for us, and His blood to be shed for the remission of our sins.

Secondly. But this doctrine of a crucified Saviour, we are told in my text, was "a stumbling block" to the Jews, and "foolishness" to the Greeks.

It appears very amazing, that when God, out of His abundant mercy, sent His Son to suffer in the room of the guilty, and commissioned the twelve apostles to preach salvation in His name, there should be any of the human race so obdurate as to reject such ineffable Love and Grace. But when we consider the pride and enmity of man's heart—when we reflect on the prejudices of human creatures against the ways of God, our amazement ceases; and we are constrained to say with our Lord, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight".

The reason the gospel was a stumbling-block to the Jews, was their wrong notions of the Messiah. They flattered themselves that He was to be a great temporal prince, who should raise their declining state to the highest pitch of grandeur; and lead them, like Moses, by the glory of conquests and triumphs, to universal empire.

The mean and despicable appearance which Jesus made, was not at all consistent with these expectations; and this they thought a sufficient refutation of His pretensions to the Messiahship; they could not bear to think that the carpenter's Son should be the great Shiloh, who was so often foretold, and whose coming was described in such majestic and lofty terms by Moses and the prophets. Here the Jews mistook their own scriptures. What they took in a *carnal* and *literal* sense, they ought to have interpreted in a *figurative* and *spiritual* one.

We frequently find in the evangelists, that the Pharisees demanded from our Lord some further sign of His being the Messiah, than any He had hitherto exhibited. And as He claimed to be the *Messiah* and the great King foretold in their scriptures, they often asked Him "when the Kingdom of God should come"? In answer to which He told them that they had a very mistaken idea about the Messiah's Kingdom. "Ye imagine that, like an earthly kingdom, it will make a pompous appearance in external riches and grandeur, and will by its extensive spread, attract the admiration of the world: but you are quite deceived", for "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation". It is not a kingdom of this world. People shall not say, "Lo, here" "or there"! It shall not resemble the Jewish policy; but, like its King, shall be despised, and not established till the resurrection of the just.

Here it was where the Jews were mistaken. They were all along expecting a temporal Messiah; so they stumbled at the Stone of stumbling and Rock of offence. But whatever false conceptions the Jews had of their Messiah, or however they were chagrined at the low, mean and ignominious appearance of Jesus; yet He is become the Chief Corner-stone. "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner".

Our Lord's disciples themselves could not reconcile his behaviour and appearance to the notions they had entertained of His exalted character, and their hopes of His reigning with power and glory, as a temporal prince. Though they thought Him to be a great prophet and an holy man; yet when they heard

that He was to suffer at Jerusalem, they were, many of them, so offended in Him, as to forsake Him, and walk no more with him. All their ambitious views and expectations of an earthly Kingdom were dashed to pieces in a moment. Note, there are a great many people in the world, who would follow Jesus Christ for the "loaves and fishes", and for the sake of some worldly advantage: but when they are called to patient suffering upon His account,—"when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended".

If Jesus had appeared in the outward pomp and splendor of an earthly monarch, like Caesar or Alexander the Great, the Jews would not so often have required a sign from Him, but would have been glad to put the reins of government into His hands, and salute Him as their king. What exposed Him and His religion to all the hatred and rancor of His countrymen, was His obscure parentage, His low extraction, and mean appearance in the world. His religion and appearance were as opposite to the notions and prejudices they had conceived of the Messiah, as light is to darkness. And thus He became a stumbling-block to the bulk of the Jewish nation. However, the "election hath obtained it", though "the rest were blinded". The Jews had likewise another invincible prejudice against the doctrine of *Jesus*. It is obvious to any one, who attentively reads the scriptures, that the Jews were a very self-righteous people, and ready upon all occasions to treat their neighbours with contempt, as not worthy to be ranked with them. They valued *themselves* upon their acts of obedience to the outward letter of the moral law. They were exceeding zealous for all their ceremonial observances, and prided themselves in their excellency above other men: and so through pride and self-righteousness they despised the gospel of Christ. They grounded their acceptances with God upon some slight and partial obedience to the law, and could not away with that divine righteousness revealed in the gospel for the justification of every one that believeth.

Thus the gospel, which sets forth the way of salvation to poor ungodly sinners by the death of a crucified Redeemer, became a *stumbling-block* to the proud self-righteous Jews. And so it proves offensive to the bulk of mankind in all ages—even at *this day*, as well as in the *time of Christ*. For the gospel is intended to bring all mankind in guilty, and to convince them of their great need of a Saviour. It excluded all boasting. It is a battery erected against human pride; and thus it becomes "the savor of life unto life". It often proves an exquisite and inviting feast to "the publicans and the harlots", while it is very offensive and (like a nauseous carcase) noisome to *Pharisees*, and to such as are elated (lifted up) with a vain conceit of their own excellency and merit.

Further: the doctrine of the Cross of Christ was not only a stumbling-block to the proud, carnal and worldly-minded Jews; but it was foolishness to the Greeks. "The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God".

The Greeks were the fathers of science. They were at that day the most learned and scientific people in the world. Greece was esteemed the fountainhead of philosophy and polite literature, from whence all the stream of learning proceeded which watered the other parts of the world. It was resorted to for education from all parts of the globe. In what light soever Greece is considered; whether for the glory of her arms; the wisdom of her laws; or the study and improvement of arts and sciences; all these she carried to the utmost degree of perfection: so that in all these respects, she was deemed the school of mankind. From a survey of ancient Greece, we see what human reason and human wisdom, unassisted by revelation, can effect. Human reason can institute fine wholesome laws, it can make eminent statesmen, deep politicians, acute philosophers, skilful commanders, noble orators, and fine poets. But it is of no service in helping us to understand the doctrine of a crucified Saviour—of no advantage in the matter of investigating the unsearchable riches of Christ.

The gospel is a plain, simple institution, calculated for the instruction of men of weak abilities; and not for exercising the ingenuity of the wise and learned men of this world. "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the wise". Persons of the meanest accomplishments, "to confound the wise", "that no flesh should glory in his presence". No man can see these things except he be born again; and the unlearned stand as fair for this, as the disputers of this world.

There is nothing in the doctrine of Christ crucified to excite the curiosity or employ the idle reasonings of the learned and philosophical world. So that when the gospel was preached amongst these conceited sons of science, the Greeks, it appeared to them a ridiculous doctrine. They thought it to be a piece of folly and stupid nonsense. They could not comprehend how a glorious life of immortality should ever be brought to sinners of mankind through faith in Jesus who "died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures". The Apostle tells us, that the Greeks sought after wisdom. They required the religion of Christ to be explained and demonstrated to them by mood and figure as it were; they wanted the Apostle to account for the way of salvation by the death of Jesus, upon the principles of human learning and natural reason. But how God should bring to life an innumerable company of sinners, through the righteousness of His Son, is quite unfathomable by their line of human reason. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God".

Thus both the Jews and Greeks mistook themselves and stumbled at the only means of their eternal salvation. The former were wedded to their carnal and corrupt prejudices; the latter were conceited and proud of their great attainments in science, and both joined in despising the doctrine of a crucified Jesus.

But notwithstanding the inveterate prejudices of the one and the curious reasonings of the other against the gospel; notwithstanding those, who found their notions of happiness upon worldly wisdom and worldly policy, will always combine to set it at

naught: yet "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his". And the Apostle tells us in the latter part of the text, that to "them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God"; which I might now proceed to enlarge upon: but, leaving what I have already advanced to your serious consideration, and God's gracious benediction, I shall, God willing, make this head the subject of a future discourse.

### THE NEED AND HOPE OF THE CHURCH.

(Continued from page 4.)

to have a hand in raising up a godly seed, a race of heroes who shall be stronger than lions in their faith, and swifter than eagles in their zeal. In saying this we are not pleading for feverish excitement, nor unseemly haste; but for a calm, triumphant confidence, and determination that will not be turned aside by anything or anyone till the Lord's great commission is obeyed to the full. Mr. Spurgeon once said, "You are of no use in the ministry, my dear brother, if you are not quite willing to be called a fool, to be called a thief, or even to be called a devil. You will never be successful if you are afraid of being pelted. The true minister often finds his pulpit to be a place but little preferable to a pillory, and he is content to stand there feeling that all the abuse and blasphemy which may come to him are only the means by which the world recognizes, and proves its recognition of a God-sent man. Oh! to rest upon the covenant which is made in grace, and to hold fast to the covenant which Christ has compelled us to make with Him, resolved that even should He take all away,—our joy, or comfort, and our ease, we will stand to it, and keep the covenant still." May the Lord in answer to the cries of His people send to His church speedily a mighty army of such valiant men, and may a fine crowd of these come from the Toronto Baptist Seminary!

—T. I. STOCKLEY.

### SUNDAY IN JARVIS STREET.

Sunday was another day of grace in Jarvis Street. The total attendance at the morning School was 1,401, made up as follows: Officers, 4; Adult Department, 300; Young People's Department, 305; Intermediate Department, 187; Junior Department, 298; Primary Department, 189; Beginners' Department, 91; Cradle Roll, 27. We should judge that at least eighty per cent. of the School, perhaps ninety, remained to morning service. The auditorium was filled in every part. The morning sermon is published in this issue. Fifteen responded to the invitation at the close of the sermon. In the evening there was another full house, and a good number came forward when the invitation was given. There is really a "sound of a going" in all the departments of the work in Jarvis Street, and we are looking for a great revival.

### TO ALL OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

On the 26th of August we addressed a letter to all our subscribers, informing them of the extra cost involved in publishing *The Gospel Witness* during the last six months. Hundreds have generously responded, and we are sure hundreds more intend to do so. We doubt whether any paper was ever more generously supported by its readers than is *The Gospel Witness*. This note is merely to suggest to our readers that what they intend to do some time, they should do at once if possible.

# The Union Baptist Witness

These pages (14 and 15) are the Authorized Official Organ of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches in Ontario and Quebec, 337 Jarvis St., Toronto, Canada.

W. GORDON BROWN, Editor.

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

## ARE YOU READY.

We hope that a full representation of all the churches of our Union will be present at our Convention, to be held in Shenstone Memorial Baptist Church, Brantford, Ontario, where Rev. F. A. McNulty is pastor, November 19 to 21 inclusive. Are you ready to come?

## SAWYERVILLE.

The special services at Sawyerville on October 13 and 14th were a combination of the 107th anniversary of the church and a harvest-home festival. In the auditorium, decorated with flowers, fruit and grain, the pastor read a sketch of the church's history since its organization, with thirteen charter members on December 15th, 1812. Then the people rose and sang,—and Fundamentalists mean it when they sing,—

"Faith of our fathers, holy faith,  
We will be true to Thee till death."

The church choir excelled themselves that day. Rev. W. E. Atkinson, our beloved Secretary, preached two powerful sermons, while the pastor baptized three young men at the close of the morning service.

Monday afternoon, Rev. C. H. Leggett, of Verdun, conducted a Bible study. Tea was served by the ladies of the congregation. That evening, friends were present from Coaticook and Rev. W. H. Wallace, the pastor there, brought greetings, and gave a short address. Following, Rev. Mr. Leggett delivered a sermon of real inspiration. The thankoffering taken on these occasions amounted to \$190.00.

## ORANGEVILLE.

The Lord blessed a sermon on "Election" to the salvation of one soul last Sunday night in the Orangeville Baptist Church. Another young lady, from the village of Palgrave, came forward for baptism.

## MIMICO.

Rev. J. M. Newby has taken charge of the Regular Baptist work at Mimico.

## SLATE RIVER.

Rev. R. J. Campbell, the pastor of the Baptist Church, in Westfort, a suburb of Fort William, is also pastor of the church at Slate River, some ten miles distance. Recently, a series of special meetings were held in the latter church. The pastor did most of the preaching, but was assisted three nights by a Swedist Baptist Evangelist named

Mr. Hill. Pastor and people from the Fundamentalist Baptist Tabernacle of Fort William attended several nights, and helped with the meetings generally. The Lord blessed with reviving grace. On the Thursday of the first week of meetings, six professed conversion, and two backsliders, restoration. In all there were thirteen decisions for Christ and several reconsecrations. Among the converts was a Russian, who gave his testimony through an interpreter. Another was a Pole. Among the eight who were baptized the last Sunday of the campaign at the Westfort Church, were a converted Catholic and a Lutheran.

On Sunday, the 20th, Pastor Leander Roblin preached in the Westfort Church, and Pastor Campbell, in the Fundamentalist Baptist Tabernacle, inasmuch as that date was the second anniversary of the connection of the latter church with our Union.

## ESSEX.

Sunday, October 13th, was the anniversary occasion at the Essex Church, of which Rev. F. W. Dyson is pastor. Rev. Alexander Thomson, of Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto, was the special preacher for a good day. Further special meetings were held Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, with Rev. Warner Cole, of Pontiac, Michigan; Rev. William Fraser, of Windsor, and Rev. Donald Fraser, of St. Thomas, as speakers. During these well-attended meetings two professed conversion, and the members of the church were much blessed.

## MEDINA.

On October 13th, two boys responded to the Gospel invitation given by Pastor Melchie Henry in the Medina (Indian) Baptist Church, and came forward to accept Christ. The following Sunday, another boy publicly confessed Christ also.

## KENORA.

Three of those who were converted the night the writer was in Kenora, were baptized recently.

## NORTH BAY.

The saints in the Regular Baptist Church in North Bay have been praying for a "break" in their Sunday evening services, and now God has answered. October 13th, one man came clearly to Christ. His was one of those cases where the joy of the Lord immediately floods the soul. Pastor J. Forrester, that same week, led a man of 92 to the Ancient of days. Later, a young woman was also reported saved.

## BARRIE.

Professor Campbell preached morning and evening at Barrie on Sunday, October 20th, and it was a great day for the Regulars there.

## WORTLEY ROAD, LONDON.

October 20th was the forty-first anniversary of Wortley Road, London, when Rev. T. J. Mitchell, the pastor, preached morning and evening. There were twenty at the sunrise prayer meeting that morning. A quintette of Gospel singers from Hamilton contributed special musical numbers. During the evening service, a mother of four children received Christ, and two young people followed their Lord in baptism.

## FENELON FALLS.

In an endeavour to lift the mortgage on their parsonage, the Fenelon Fall Baptist Church on Sunday, October 20th, took an offering of \$500.

## ANNETTE.

Morning worshippers at Annette Street, Toronto, on Sunday, October 20th, heard Students G. W. Searle, C. McGrath and H. C. Slade give accounts of their splendid work this summer.

## JAMAICA.

Contributions for Baptist work in Jamaica may be sent to the office of our Union, 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto 2, Ont. If contributors will send their gifts thus, rather than to Dr. T. I. Stockley, as before, all concerned will be obliged.

## 200,000 DEAD CHURCHES!

"Sixty thousand of the 200,000 Protestant churches are "dead"; within a year they gained no new membership; perhaps 40,000 more gained one or two new members, while between 7,000 and 8,000 churches stand vacant and deserted, according to Frederick L. Collins, writing in *The Woman's Home Companion*."

## FOUR CONFERENCES ON THANKS-GIVING DAY.

The Regular Baptist Young People of the provinces of Ontario and Quebec will gather in four different centres on Monday, November 11th.

### Alton.

The Alton Conference is for Toronto and district. Speakers: Rev. B. Lakin, of West Virginia; Mr. T. Summers, of Hespeler, Ont.

### Boston.

The young people of Hamilton-Brantford district will gather at Boston.

Speakers: Rev. Sydney Lawrance, M.A.; Rev. A. J. Loveday.

#### St. Thomas.

The St. Thomas Conference will be attended by the London-St. Thomas-Lindsay district young people. Speakers: Mr. S. L. White; Rev. F. Mesley.

#### Montreal.

Conference for Quebec and Eastern Ontario. Speaker: Dr. T. T. Shields.

Conferences will begin at 2 p.m., with afternoon and evening sessions. Supper served by the entertaining churches.

For information respecting any of these conferences, write the General Secretary, Mr. S. L. White, 87 Murray St., Brantford, Ont.

### CHURCH AND CHIEF IN LIBERIA.

We are sure that all our people are anxious really to understand the problems and opportunities which confront our missionaries in Liberia. Therefore they will welcome the following from a letter written by Rev. H. L. Davey, on September 9th last:

#### All So Strange!

"This field presents great possibilities. The Bassa tribe is a very large one but very scattered. In our district there are many small villages, and these have been visited by us regularly and the Gospel has been preached to the people. It is all so strange to these people, but the seed has been faithfully sown and now we are looking for definite results.

#### A Dead Church.

"We are faced with peculiar difficulties here; throughout the district we have, what is known as, the 'Bassa Church,' a Church with all kinds of forms and ceremonies, but with no spiritual life. It particularly appeals to the raw native mind, as it demands no change of life or heart; its adherents simply follow the ritual, and think that they are absolutely safe and sure of salvation. Its ministers, so-called, are untrained, uneducated, and unsaved in many cases; polygamy is tolerated, superstitious practices common to all Africans are not condemned, and fanaticism is looked upon as being part of the work of the Holy Spirit. Dealing with natives of this kind makes our work most difficult, as they, being thus deluded by the enemy of souls, go down in utter darkness to a lost eternity. They surely need the message of redeeming grace and regenerating power.

#### Rain and Study.

"At the present we are unable to do any extensive itinerant work, as the rainy season is here. It has rained every day for the past month, and the little native paths are all turned into streams, the rivers are all flooding their banks, so that it is impossible to do any walking. We are concentrating on the study of the language; this in itself is sufficient to keep us busy for a few years. This language is different from any other native language I have ever heard. There are no books, grammars or notes, from which we can obtain any help or information; we have to rely solely on the natives themselves for anything we wish to learn. Our chief

difficulty is to find the English equivalents for many of the tones and words. Brother Lewis and myself can hear much of what the people are talking about, but to talk back to them is a totally different matter. We shall value your prayers in this respect, as we must learn the language before we ourselves really can come into personal contact with the people.

#### Physicians and Souls.

"Now that my wife has come, we hope to be able to develop an extensive medical work. She has had considerable experience in this work, not only at home, but also in Northern Rhodesia. This work is always a means to an end, for in seeking to relieve the sufferings of the body, we can always tell of the Great Physician of the soul, and thus win some of our patients for the Lord. A suffering people are often more easily reached than a people who are not subject to sickness and oppression. We are also hoping to develop a work amongst the lepers of this tribe. Through the kindness of Brother and Sister Urquhart we have been able to make plans to build a dispensary for this work; then the 'Mission to Lepers' have been most kind to us; they have given my wife the very latest remedy for this disease, along with the necessary syringes, and have promised to assist us in every way possible. Later on I will give you more definite news of this work. We believe that it is of the Lord, and we, possibly through this means, can establish confidence in the hearts of these people, and thus build up a work which will not only bring relief to the body, but will bring salvation to poor lost souls. My wife and I have done this work before, and we are glad to be able to do it again. Anything we can do to win these people is worth while; their souls are of eternal value.

#### Bringing the Children.

"One custom which the people of this tribe have, will probably give us much influence with the children. The parents are all anxious that their children should learn to speak English, and for this reason they bring their children to us, begging us to take them into our home and keep them. This, of course, is impossible at present, as we have no room, and it would take considerable food to feed them, not to mention necessary clothes. On the other hand, these children would be entirely under our control, and, of course, under the influence of the Gospel. The son of the Paramount Chief was given to me for this purpose some months ago. He is only three years of age and is quite a little pet at present. Having this particular child gives us great influence with the Chief, as he has great power, and, incidentally, opens up all the villages in his district for the Gospel, many of which would probably be opposed to listening to the message or even allowing us to come into their villages. As this little boy is the heir, we are hoping that the early training received may be one of the means of affecting his early conversion; and to have a Christian chief would be of untold value to this work.

"We shall be glad of the prayers of the people in all our churches. We cannot hope for progress or victory without this. We rely upon our people for this help."

### Michigan Notes.

By C. R. Peterson.  
KENT CITY.

Pastor E. A. Ford began his ministry with this church May 1st of this year. He is very enthusiastic concerning the work and future of this field. He reports splendid congregations, with no falling off during the summer months. Prayer meetings have trebled, and it has become necessary to move from the usual prayer meeting room to the auditorium of the church in order to have sufficient room. Three street meetings are held each week, which have netted some conversions and many requests for prayer. Brother Ford is also pastor of the North Casnovia Church, where he holds an afternoon service and Sunday school. Kent City Church has recently sent one of its finest young men, Lester Anderson, to Moody Bible Institute, where he will prepare for missionary work. Roy L. Brown, Bible teacher from Detroit, will be with this church October 30 to Nov. 10.

#### General Notes.

The Wealthy Street Church, Grand Rapids, has recently opened a new mission at the corner of Leonard and Fuller Streets, S.E. Bible school is held at 3 p.m., and preaching service at 7:30. Bro. John DeVries, a layman of the church, is superintendent, and does the preaching.

Ten were recently buried with Christ in baptism in the river near Strickland Church by Pastor G. D. Kaufman. Others will be immersed in the baptistry of the church at St. Louis next Sunday. This is a part of the fruit of the recent revival.

There were four professions of faith at the North Chester Church recently, and one backslider was restored. Bro. L. Gross is pastor.

The Holland Church held a surprise party on Pastor Zuiderhoek on Friday evening, October 18, the occasion being his birthday. A large birthday cake, embellished with candles, and a purse of money, helped to convince the pastor of the esteem which the church has for him.

The Berean Church, of Grand Rapids, is nearing completion, and Pastor Brown expects to have the dedicatory service Sunday, December 8. A pipe organ is being installed while the building is going up.

The writer recently visited the prayer meeting of Calvary Church, Grand Rapids, and was greatly edified by the spiritual nature of the service. Pastor Headley and his people are happy over many things, including their new building, but it seemed to me that most of all they are happy in the Lord. A fine spirit of harmony and unity prevails in the church.

## Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

Vol. 4

No. 4

REV. ALEX THOMSON, Editor.

Lesson 46 November 17th, 1929  
Fourth Quarter.

### FALSE TEACHERS.

Lesson Text: 2 Peter, chapter 2.

Golden Text: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." 2 Peter, 2:9.

#### I. THE PREDICTION CONCERNING FALSE TEACHERS.

1. In predicting the coming of false teachers, Peter reminds the believers of the presence of false prophets among the Lord's people in all ages, and we need not be surprised to find them among us in these days. The striking thing is they are not recognized by so many, possibly due to the way in which they work, and also because of the lack of spiritual discernment. 2. Several things are stated concerning such teachers. First, they are to do their work at first privily or stealthily. This is the way in which their teaching is generally introduced; to begin otherwise means too much opposition, the people must be made accustomed to the teaching, quietly, persistently, a little at a time, just like absorbing poison into the system. How contrary is this to the proclamation of the truth which is done in the open. 3. The character of the teaching is then referred to. It is termed "damnable heresies", a rather strong expression, but not too strong for the Satanic work it accomplishes. Scripture never speaks lightly of false teaching, and we should be guided in our attitude by its pronouncement. It is further stated in reference to the teaching that it will include denial of the Lord. This is generally where false teaching ends, for we cannot deny our Lord's truth without eventually denying Him. 4. The consequence of such conduct is then stated, they "bring upon themselves swift destruction", implying that when destruction comes upon them, as it surely will, if they do not repent, it will be swift. And great and terrible must it be for such an offence. A sad result of such teaching upon others is that "many shall follow their pernicious ways by reason of whom the very truth shall be evil spoken of", (v. 2). This emphasizes the fact of the blindness of many concerning the truth and of the evil effect on the conduct of the acceptance of false teaching, for all too often false living accompanies false teaching, and the world judges Christianity by its worst profes-

sors rather than by its best. The spirit of the false teachers is referred to in the next verse, "through covetousness", etc., (v. 3). It would be well if those who know the truth were as diligent in making converts as some of those false teachers. Emphasis may be placed upon the necessity for knowing the word of God, of being possessed of the spirit of discernment, of keeping close to the Saviour, and of proclaiming diligently the gospel of Christ.

#### II. THE PUNISHMENT OF FALSE TEACHERS, (vs. 4-11.)

1. In the previous verses, judgment has been predicted for the false teachers. In this section, such a consequence receives further emphasis, and its certainty is assured by the citing of some of God's judgments in the past. There is first the reference to the fallen angels who, after their sin, were not spared by God, but were cast into hell, and are reserved unto judgment, (v. 4), giving thus an example of God's justice and power. Then follows the reference to the deluge of Noah's day, when only eight persons were saved out of a whole world population, (v. 5). Noah as a preacher of righteousness would undoubtedly give forth God's truth, but error claimed the attention of the people and judgment fell upon them. Another illustration is cited in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah, (vs. 6-8), which cities gave themselves over to ungodliness and suffered the evil consequences thereof. The depth of their iniquity is realized by its effect upon just Lot. 2. The sum of the matter is that "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished", (vs. 10-12). From the examples given, such a statement is quite clear. It may be thought for a time that God is paying no attention to sin, but in His own good time, judgment falls, and his people are delivered; therefore false teachers should be warned and the Lord's people should take courage. Note the presumptuous nature of the sin of the false teachers, and the necessity for carefulness on the part of all in speaking of dignities, (Jude 9).

#### III. THE CHARACTER OF FALSE TEACHERS, (vs. 12-19).

1. The teaching of the following verses emphasizes the ungodly character of the false teachers Peter has in mind, and, in a certain measure, like teachers of the present day are included. We note first they are on the natural plane, and "speak evil of the things that they understand not", (v. 12). Were such teachers spiritual, they would not teach in such a manner, (1 Cor. 3:1, Romans 8:6). But having left the revealed truth there is no depth of error to which they may not go, bringing the sad consequence of judgment in its train. 2. Their depravity in God's sight is emphasized further by the statements made concerning their actions, they "riot in the day time", "spots they are and blemishes", (v. 13), ugly disfigurements upon the professed Christian body, "sporting themselves with their own deceivings". This is very unflattering, to

say the least, no matter how they may boast about their scholarship. Their subjection to the flesh is next stated, they "cannot cease from sin", "beguiling unstable souls", having a "heart exercised with covetous practices", "cursed children", (v. 14), "which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray following the way of Balaam", (vs. 15, 16). Balaam was the hireling prophet, a fitting type of the false teacher who, with no love for the Lord, carries on his work merely for the sake of earthly gain; also of the professed servant of God who, while refusing to teach falsely, yet allies himself with the enemies of the truth because of that which he gains personally from the service. There are all too many of the latter in the ministry these days. The reason Modernism has such influence is not due to the numbers who profess it, but to the Balaams who assist it. 3. The deceitfulness and unfruitfulness of the work of such teachers is shown in the further characterizations. They are "wells without water" dried up. How true of both teacher and people when error is propagated in the place of truth. They are "clouds that are carried with a tempest", (v. 17), unstable, restless, driven hither and thither, ever changing their position. The "assured results of scholarship" when opposed to the Word of God, are surely uncertain quantities, and to keep up with them one must continue to change his position. The Bible alone can stand the tempests unshaken. Nothing but darkness and bondage, present and future, are the lot of such false teachers, (vs. 18, 19). The truth alone gives light and freedom, (John 8:32). Note, sinfulness of conduct and false teaching generally go together, also that the acceptance of error brings darkness into the life and bondage into the spirit.

#### IV. THE CONSEQUENCE OF RE-ENTANGLEMENT IN ERROR, (vs. 20-22).

1. A solemn warning and explanation are contained in these concluding verses concerning those who, having escaped the pollution of this world through knowledge of Jesus Christ, are again entangled therein. It is stated of them that their "latter end is worse with them than the beginning", (v. 20). We find this so in the present day, in many cases; in fact, it seems as if the demon, having left for a short time, he returns with seven demons again to take up his abode in the life, (Matt. 12:45). The individual is harder to reach and in himself he is in a worse condition. 2. Of such persons it is said, it "had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them", (v. 21). In turning thus they are sinning against the light and against the clear direction of conscience. We need not be surprised at their doing it, however, for it is but a matter of the dog turning again to his own vomit and the sow to her wallowing in the mire, (v. 22). It was a case of profession without real change or possession. Emphasize the necessity for real conversion.