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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

A WORD TO BABES IN CHRIST.

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, October 13th, 1929.

(Stenographically Reported)

"As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."—I Peter 2:2.

The morning text you will find in the lesson we have had before us in the School, the first epistle of Peter, chapter two, verse two: "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."

In a really healthy church there are always to be found many young converts, many babes in Christ; and it is necessary therefore frequently to deal with the most elementary truths of the gospel, with the foundation-principles of Christian experience. I shall speak this morning in such a way that the youngest child can understand,—and sometimes I am disposed to believe that the best way to preach to adults is to preach to the children; because there are many of adult years who are still in their spiritual infancy. Even if we have already grown up in any measure, spiritually, it is always a joy to hear something about the first principles.

I.

Let us look for a moment at THE FIGURE BY WHICH THE CHRISTIAN IS REPRESENTED. The Christian is described as a "new born babe". Dr. Stockley read this morning that great chapter in John which tells us that in order to be saved we "must be born again". That great principle is but little taught to-day. Conversion means a change of nature. It is impossible for anyone to describe it, to define it, or to explain it. We must receive the great truth by faith; for when our Lord said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again", and that great master in Israel replied, "How can a man be born when he is old", Jesus Christ did not explain. And if there was anyone who could have explained it,

He could. But it is a divine miracle which the human mind, while experiencing it, can never understand. Therefore our Lord was content to say, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." But if we are really Christians there has been a change within, there has been the impartation of a new life; and even the little boy or girl who has been born again knows that something has happened, that a miracle has been wrought within.

Let me remind you that a *new-born baby, of all creatures, is the most helpless*. I think it is not without design that we are so represented here. I do not know of anything in the world more helpless than a human infant, do you? It is utterly incapable of doing anything for itself; it must have care or it cannot even live. And I would remind you who have but recently trusted Christ, that you have no power whatever to help yourself; you are, in respect to spiritual things, like a little babe, the prey of every evil power unless some help outside of yourself is given. Just as a child cries for its mother, and stretches out its hands because it cannot speak, to make its wants known, so we ought always to be crying, crying for help. I mean that it is just as natural for a genuine Christian to pray, and to be always praying, as it is for a little babe to breathe and to cry.

Do you know what it is to be conscious of need, and hourly to pray to God? I was talking to one not long since, a little child, who said he knew something about what it was to pray in the playground at school, or wherever he was. That must be remembered, that we

have no power whatever to help ourselves; we are, like new-born babes, at the mercy of those who have no mercy, the prey of all evil forces, unless God shall preserve the life He has given.

I would remind you, too, that a *babe's very helplessness is its best protection*: because it is a babe, somebody must look after it. Two or three weeks ago I spoke to you of Moses, whose mother made an ark of bulrushes, and put the child in the flags by the river's brink. Against Moses there were arrayed all the power of Egypt, and, behind the king of Egypt, all the powers of darkness. Pharaoh had said, "I will have the life of that little child". And yet how graciously God protected him, and gave His angels charge concerning him! Although Moses was born at a particular time, when male children were not safe in Egypt, in spite of the king's decree that little babe lived. You will remember a parallel case "when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king", and how Herod sought to destroy, as Pharaoh had done before him, all the male children. Yet God preserved that little Child until it was said at last, "They are dead which sought the young child's life."

Boys and girls, the life that is in you, if you are a Christian, is just like the life that was in Moses. It is the very life indeed that was in Jesus Christ, and the devil hates you as much as he hated Jesus, and would destroy you if he could. You would not be safe for a single hour if God were to leave you. Yet what a comfort it is to know that the life God has given is eternal life, and He will take care of His own children! As truly as a mother would protect her babe and die for it, as surely as the father's strong arm would be stretched forth for the preservation of the life that is precious to him, so all the powers of heaven are engaged to save the babes in Christ. We are pretty well off after all! We are well taken care of.

Remember, furthermore, that *the position in the family of a little babe is secured by virtue of its birth into the family*. It is born into the family, and it belongs there. It does not belong anywhere else. As I have frequently said to young converts, the babe that is creeping along the floor is just as much a child of the household as the grown son who is in partnership with the father in business. He is just as precious; he has the same life within; and he is equally entitled to all the privileges of the household as the older son. If you have believed in Jesus Christ, you are as truly a child of God this morning as you will be when you have been a billion years in heaven. Are you not glad the thing is settled, settled once and for all by a new birth? We have been born into the divine family, the very life of God is in us, and He will preserve us even unto the end.

II.

NOW A FEW SIMPLE WORDS ABOUT THE BABE'S FOOD. The child is to seek, as a new-born babe, the sincere milk of the Word. *It is natural for a child to desire milk*; it is its natural food. Thus the Word of God is the natural food of every genuine child of God.

True children of God have a natural taste for the Word of God; a healthy child wants the Word of God. Let me ask you who are Christians, have you a

taste for your Bible? Do you find enjoyment in it? How many of you have your Bibles here this morning, lift them, will you, every one who has a Bible? (Practically all the congregation raised Bibles). That is very good, only everybody ought to have one. Have you a real delight in reading the Bible? Is it a dry, uninteresting, book to you, or do you find in the Word of God that which interests you, and which feeds your soul? If you have really been born again you will take to the Bible as naturally as a babe takes to milk, because there is an affinity between that new nature of yours and the "word of God that liveth and abideth for ever".

Observe further. *The babe will do better on milk than on confectionery*. Is that not so? Little children should not be given roast beef and potatoes; that would be too heavy for them. Nor do they usually want really nourishing foods; but if they see something sweet on the table, the dessert, or a dish of candy, that is more important than all the rest. They want to get through with everything that they may get at that. But children cannot grow on food of that sort, and a wise mother will insist that the child must have something that will give it strength, something that will make bone and muscle, that it may grow and become strong.

Some of you children will ask me if there is any harm in the movies. I think there is much harm; but even if there were not, let me ask you another question, Is there any good in it? You will never grow on food of that sort. Be careful, you young people, what you read, what kind of books you read. You may open your mind to evil thoughts which you may find it impossible later to eradicate. If you are really a Christian you will need spiritual food, and God's Word is the only food suited to your soul's requirements. If you are really going to grow you will have to be Bible-reading Christians. You can feed only on the Word of God.

Be content with the milk of the Word in the beginning of your Christian life. Strong meat may be relished later. Some young converts are fond of asking difficult questions. Perhaps it is "Will you explain to me, sir, the doctrine of election?" Do you know what that is like? It is like a babe in the high chair saying to father, "Father, I want the whole roast of beef for myself." That is for full grown folks. You will understand a great many of these things by and by. If you cannot digest the meat, be content to take plenty of milk. There is enough in the Bible for you to understand. There are simple things upon which your souls may grow and flourish. Learn what it is to have your sins forgiven, to have them washed away in the precious blood of Christ. Learn what it is to stand before God in the robes of His righteousness. Content yourselves, in the beginning, with the simple alphabet of the gospel, and you will be able to enjoy its great literature by and by.

Once more: we are told to "*desire the sincere milk of the word*", the unadulterated milk, pure milk. Get it from the Book yourself.

I heard Dr. A. C. Dixon, who was to the end of his life a warm friend of mine, say that his father was pastor of one church in the country for more than fifty years. (I think it was fifty-three years).

And he loved the country. It was not a very large church, but he had lived happily for a half century with that little congregation; and he loved country life. Among other things he always kept a cow. When Doctor A. C. Dixon was first called to a city pastorate, his father wrote him a long letter advising him not to accept the call. Dr. Dixon said, "He warned me against all the difficulties and dangers of the city, urging me to be content with a country pastorate somewhere; and he concluded his letter with advice to this effect, 'Above all things, let me advise you, for your own sake, and your family's, never to live anywhere where you cannot keep a cow.' I do not know what some of us would do if we had to take that advice! But when he had told that story, Dr. Dixon lifted his Bible and said, "After all, there was a good deal of common sense in it; and I recommend every one of you to keep a cow. Do not be content with this bottled stuff, but go to the Book itself, desire the sincere milk of the word."

The proper approach to the Bible requires an open receptive mind. Do not allow books about the Bible, or sermons or addresses about the Bible to take the place of the Bible itself. Come to God's Word saying in your heart, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak."

I think I told you of a certain Doctor Brown, who once published an edition of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress with explanatory notes in the margin. One day Dr. Brown was calling upon one of his parishioners, and he found the old lady reading Bunyan's Pilgrim. He saw it was his own edition with his explanatory notes, so he said, "Well, sister, I hope you enjoy Mr. Bunyan?" "Oh, very much, sir, very much", replied the old lady. Then he said, "I hope you understand Mr. Bunyan?" "Yes, Pastor, I understand Mr. Bunyan very well—and I am hoping that some day I shall be so far advanced I shall be able to understand your explanatory notes!"

You have perhaps heard of the negro preacher who, when he had announced his text, said, "Now, my brethren, I shall proceed to 'confound' the text." And he succeeded admirably! There are many people who confound the text, which makes it imperative that each should go to the Bible for himself. You can understand it as well as any theological professor in the world. The Bible was given to you; and if you study it before God, with dependence upon the illumination of the Holy Spirit, He will teach you what it means.

I was telling someone recently a story I read of the great Dr. Alexander MacLaren, the preachers' preacher, one of the greatest expositors of his day, whose expositions were read by thousands of preachers. Dr. MacLaren said that some times, when looking at a text, he felt that there was something at the heart of it that he was missing. He would examine all his commentaries and learn all that had been said by learned men about that particular text. Sometimes he would say, "I feel I have not got it yet". There was a blacksmith nearby who was a Christian man, and when he was in a tight place the great preacher would go around and see the blacksmith at his forge, and say, "John, did you ever think

of this text?" naming the text. He said he never was able to quote a text that the man had not thought about, for he had thought through the Book. The blacksmith would say, "Yes, Doctor, I have thought a little about it." "Well, what do you think it means?" He would lay aside his hammer, stop for a minute, and say, "Well, I have looked at it like this"—and in two or three minutes that supposedly unlettered blacksmith would give him more than all the scholars of the world had given him.

I remember a man who was not altogether kind to the king's English, sometimes he did violence to principles of grammatical construction; but I have heard him again and again in the prayer meeting, take a text out of the Book, and, like an expert jeweler opening his caskets, I have heard that man in half a dozen sentences say more than most of the preachers say in half an hour. Why? Because he was divinely taught.

The Bible is for you. It is your Book. You may understand it. You do not need anyone to tell you what it means. If you are going to be a strong, vigorous, Christian, you must get plenty of milk to begin with—and let it be the "sincere milk", not the canned stuff, not Klim—or whatever you call it. Get the real thing straight from the Book itself. Wait until by and by for the strong meat.

III.

WHY THAT ADMONITION? "That you may grow thereby". That is what the milk is for. That we may feed upon it, and that we may grow. I remind you that *the Christian life is a growth*. It must be begun with a new birth, but it does not end there. You must not expect to be perfect all at once. I expect it will be a long time before you are perfect. It will be just as long as you live anyhow, however long that may be. And do not be discouraged if there are difficulties in the way. Life begins as we trust Christ and are born again by the mighty power of the Spirit of God. The life which is then implanted begins to unfold, that we may "grow up into Christ in all things". We must have the right kind of food that we may grow thereby.

The Christian life is a growth in many ways. There is a *development of the understanding*. You cannot understand everything in the beginning. There are some things that you parents would not think of trying to explain to your children. Some simple matter, if they ask a question, you will explain, because you know they can understand it; but there are profound matters that you know it would be useless to waste your breath trying to explain; the child could not understand. But when its understanding is enlarged and developed, as he grows up to be a boy, then a young man, you share with him your larger knowledge.

Our understandings are enlightened by the Holy Ghost. You remember how it is said, "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures." Our Lord Jesus is a great Teacher, and He will open our understanding; but even in that respect, there is a growth, and there are some things you will have to wait to understand. You hear your father use a big word sometimes. It is a little bit

beyond you, and you must wait until you are grown somewhat before you can use that kind of language, before you can understand what he is talking about. So is it in the Christian life.

There is a growth in the matter of—well, *in the simple matter of walking*. I suppose you remember when you learned to walk, do you? Do you? I do not! As far as I know I was always able to walk—but I suppose I was not. Yet I cannot remember when I could not walk. My feet developed before my mind. Some people have never had any other sort of development, hence there follows the dancing Christian. But I have seen other children learn to walk, and I have seen them tumble a good many times. It is very interesting, is it not, to see a child push a chair before it? And what a wonderful day that is when father comes home, and learns the baby has taken two or three steps to-day! Of course he has to do it all over again for father to see! There never was a marathon race half so interesting as that great accomplishment recorded in the family record—baby walked! He tried a good many times before he walked, and probably had a good many tumbles. When I see some children, I wonder that any of us survived. By all the rules we ought to have been killed a hundred times! A child can fall down stairs apparently without suffering any injury.

In the Christian life we must learn to walk. That is a great accomplishment when you have learned to walk. God said to Abraham, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect." And when we can walk, we have really accomplished something; we have attained to a measure of strength that was not ours in the beginning. But there are some of you who have had a good many tumbles. I have had young people come to me and say, "Oh, Pastor, I fear I am not a Christian." "Well, what is the matter?" "I tried to walk, and I could not; I had a fall." I am sorry, but try again. That is the way we all had to do it. Try again, and strength will come in due time. Children tumble *in* the family, but they do not tumble *out* of the family. They are still the children of the household. And the Lord loves you even if you cannot walk very well. If you lean on Him, He will teach you how to walk.

Then there is growth in respect to *the development of the power of will*. When God comes into the life He enlightens the understanding, He engages the affection, He informs the judgment, and He enfranchises the will. He gives us power to do the things that we cannot do of ourselves. When the Holy Ghost takes possession of us He does not make us to become mere automatons, but He takes possession of the faculties of the mind so that we think God's thoughts, and love the things God loves. Then we are able to do the things God wants us to do.

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Therefore we are to desire the sincere milk of the word that our whole spiritual natures may be strengthened. You will not be able to understand it. I remember a poor man who came to this church some years ago, who had a fad about divine healing. He would not call a

doctor, and he telephoned me one day—I had never met him—and asked me if I would go over to see his wife. I went over and I found his wife dying. She was in a chair in an apartment in which there was not another stick of furniture. This poor man would not call a doctor. I got his wife away to the hospital, but the disease was too far advanced to respond to treatment, and she died the same night. The poor man had been nursing his wife in that apartment alone for six weeks without any help at all, and the woman, dying on his hands. He had to try to take care of himself, beside; living on canned things; and he himself was ill. After the funeral was over I said, "Come over to my house and have something to eat." He had tried to live above the common things—like eating. He was one of those doctrinaires! He had a theory, and he would die for his theory—and die by his theory, if he had gone on long enough. However, he came with me. I can see him now. I think he ate very much as the prodigal did the first day he got home! He ate a really good dinner, and when he had finished he pushed back his chair and said, "Well, I fear I shall have to admit that a good dinner does make a difference; it does give one a different outlook on life, does it not?" Yes, it does. And when we give our souls the proper spiritual food, our outlook will be changed.

Some of you boys and girls, or young people, or older people, are saying to yourselves, "How is it that I am failing in my Christian life?" Or some teacher says, "How is it that I have not the will to do what I ought to do? How is it that I cannot keep myself at my task, that I have no resolution? I cannot keep on with the job. How is it?" Because you are not properly fed. "But I teach my lesson every Sunday." Yes; and you are like many a cook who gets dinner for someone else and does not even taste it himself. See that you get a good meal yourself—and you had better sample it before you give it out to others. They will be all the safer if you have sampled it. Let us feed our souls; and if we do we shall have a clearer understanding, we shall have a deeper conviction, and we shall have power of will to get God's work done. By and by the man will say, "I feel better, I am healthier, I am stronger than I used to be"; "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." An arrested growth brings at last humiliation and a kind of shame. When you see a person of child's stature who is really a man in years, you say, "What a tragedy!"

We must grow *in order that we may be able to serve*. Perhaps some of you feel that you are not very serviceable just now. Well, do the best you can. There is a man who helps to take care of us here—I think he would not mind my mentioning him—Mr. Brisley. I like to see his two children helping him take care of this church. I like to see little Queenie going around, wanting to run the whole business! She does not do very much, but she likes to be with her father when he is doing his work. You could not carry a very big load, but you can carry something; and as we grow in grace after a while we shall be able to help, we shall become increasingly serviceable. That is what we are for in the household of faith. We ought to be helping our Father with His business; we ought to be in partnership with God.

I was in a minister's home some years ago, where, if I recall, there were six children, young people, and as I sat at the table with them, and saw these young men and women, (they were from fifteen years up, I suppose, something like that), I turned to my hostess and said, "Mrs. So-and-So, you are a very rich woman. You must be very happy with a family like this." And she said, "I am. My husband and I think we are very rich—but we have all our capital in live stock." I said, "It is a pretty good investment, it seems to me." It looked to be a good investment. I told you of a woman I knew who had eight children, who always had leisure to do a little more work in the church. The mother with just one, you know—just one—only one, the only one that ever happened—she has not time for anything. But this woman with eight children, if anyone wanted a little more help, could always be depended upon to render it. One day I said to her, "Mrs. So-and-So, how is it you

are able to do so much work, while these women with one or two children are so burdened that they cannot do anything?" "Oh well", she said, "I have eight servants, that is why I have leisure. I have taught all my children to help about the household. Now that they are growing up, instead of one pair of hands, we have nine pairs of hands—of course father did not count—to get the work of the household done."

The Lord has brought us into His family, we are His children; and we are not here to lounge about and do nothing. We are to grow up and become strong enough to share the burdens, if I may reverently so say, of God Himself. "Workers together with him". That is our task, and we can do it only as we feed upon the Word.

I have given you a lesson this morning in your A.B.C.'s, the alphabet of Christian life and experience; but if you apply the alphabet and we shall all be the better for it, I am sure.

BELIEVING WITH THE HEART

A Sermon by the Pastor.

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, February 18th, 1923.

(Stenographically reported.)

"But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)

"Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

"But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."—Romans 10: 6-10.

"We may not climb the heavenly steeps
To bring the Lord Christ down:
In vain we search the lowest deeps;
For Him no faith can drown.

"But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is He:
And faith hath still its Olivet,
And love its Galilee."

It is not necessary that we should ascend into heaven to bring Christ down, or into the deep to bring Christ up; for He is here: "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach." The brother who was baptized this evening was converted last Sunday evening. These miracles are occurring weekly; and we are here this evening, not to entertain you, but to bring the gospel to someone who is not saved, that he may be saved. We are expecting God to visit us with an overflowing blessing. We have been asking Him for it as we have gathered together in prayer these many months, and many are asking for it every day and many times a day; and we are sure that God has heard us and that He will answer in His own good time. We rejoice in the conversion even of one soul; but we see no reason why we should not have a Pentecost. And as I face each evening service I ask the Lord to give me the simplest message possible that

He may use it to bring some soul from darkness into light.

Therefore, I bring you this text, which we have quoted here so often; and I trust that every Christian here this evening will pray that the Holy Spirit will take this word to-night and make it a means of grace and salvation to unconverted persons present. I want to talk to you as though I were sitting down beside you; I should like to talk to everybody here this evening as though you were the only person present, and we were having a personal conversation about the things of God.

This text tells you that "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus—or Jesus as Lord—and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." I shall ask two questions: What does it mean to believe with the heart? And what does it mean to confess with the mouth? For if we can understand these two simple things we shall be saved. That is the promise of the Word of "God, that cannot lie."

I. First of all, then, WHAT IS INVOLVED IN BELIEVING UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS? We must be careful in the matter of our analogies; we must be careful in our endeavour to illustrate the gospel that we do not lead people astray. I want to explain to you, therefore, at the outset, that while the faith that relates the soul savingly to Jesus Christ in principle has much in common with the faith which we exercise in each other; yet, in some respects,

it is different from every other kind of faith, because it is reposed in a Person Who transcends all others.

This faith is vastly different from mere mental acquiescence in a certain statement of truth. As for instance, you read in the papers of the wonderful discoveries made by Lord Carnarvon and his associates in Egypt at Luxor. And when you read the story of their entering into that inner chamber and finding it ablaze with glory after having been sealed for more than three thousand years, finding the elaborate furniture of the Egyptian court, and all the evidences of the king's station surrounding his dead body, you say, "It is an extraordinary story;" yet you do not doubt it at all. There is no reason why you should. In this instance there is no moral element in your faith at all. It is easy to believe a matter of geography, or of history, which does not affect our characters or conduct: it concerns a truth that is apart from ourselves. The statement is there; it is made by reliable witnesses; and as an intellectual act we accept the statement: we say, "Yes, I have read it. I believe it." But there is something vastly more than that involved in believing the record which God has given us of His Son, in believing unto righteousness. If it should later transpire, when examination has been made of all the contents of that Egyptian king's splendid resting place, that there is something there, for instance, which bears directly upon the truth of Scripture,—if there should be found within that which would tend to establish the truth of certain disputed passages of Scripture, you would be surprised to discover how many people would immediately say, "We must accept these reports with reserve." As long as it is a mere matter of history that has no bearing upon moral and spiritual issues, it is comparatively easy for the sensible man to accept a well authenticated and substantiated story. But there is vastly more than that in the faith which we are required to exercise in Jesus Christ; hence the difficulty of believing in Him.

Why should salvation be conditioned upon faith? Everywhere you meet with men who speak disparagingly of creeds. They say a man's creed is of no consequence: it is his conduct and his character that matter. Let no one imagine that men who reason thus are leading people into intellectual depths; because I do not care who the man is who talks thus, he has not learned the alphabet of correct thinking; he has not learned how to think who says, "It does not matter what a man believes." One says, "It is what we are and what we do that will determine our destiny." And you are perfectly right in saying that. It is what you are and what you do which will determine your destiny; but what you are and what you do will inevitably, in the nature of the case, be determined by what you believe. A very wise man long ago said, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." It is what we think in our hearts, what we really believe, that determines what we are, how we live, what we say, what we do. The fundamental thing is the thing we believe; and everything else depends upon that.

I want to take for example a very ugly subject, to illustrate the question of whether it makes any difference what a man believes. Let us take for example the Mormon doctrine of Polygamy. Does it make any difference whether a man believes it is morally

right to have half a dozen wives or not? "Why no," a man says, "it does not make a bit of difference what he believes, so long as he does not practise it. It is what he practises, not what he believes, that matters." But go and talk to his wife about it. Find out whether she cares what he believes. She may be absolutely sure beyond all peradventure that so far as his practice is concerned he has but one wife; but if she knows that he believes he might rightly have more, and desires to have what he believes he is entitled to, do you suppose she would be content? It is what a man is in his heart that matters; it is the thing that has entered into his very being as the deepest conviction of his soul that determines what a man really is, whatever his practice or profession may be. And the man who believes the thing that is wrong, given the opportunity, will invariably practise the thing he believes.

Well now, let me ask another question: *What is salvation?* I am considering faith in relation to the matter of the soul's salvation. The text says, "Thou shalt be saved." What does the Scripture mean when it says, "We shall be saved." I am assuming that we, none of us, deny that we have sinned:—"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"—and that we need to be saved from the consequences of our sin; we admit that "sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death"; that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Therefore, *salvation must have in it this provision that it will save me from the consequence of my sin.* It will save a man from hell, whatever that may mean; it will save a man to heaven, whatever that may mean. But salvation is more than salvation from hell to heaven: it is salvation from hellishness to heavenliness. Salvation is not merely a condition, nor is it a place: *salvation consists in a relationship;* salvation consists in oneness with God, agreement with the Holy One. He made us for Himself; and if I am to dwell with God, then I must be akin to Him; I must be partaker of the divine nature. Who is God? What is God? Will you define God in terms of human relationships? Will you say, "God is my Father"? Will you say, "Christ is the husband of the Church, the bridegroom of the soul"? Yes; but He is more than all these things: "God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Now, suppose it were possible for us to discern each other's thoughts. I do not know what is to happen in days to come. We are getting so clever we may be able to do that after a while. It may be possible some day that when you call someone by telephone, you will not only hear him, but see him, too. Although, perhaps, sometimes you won't! But I do not know what we shall do if ever we come to the time when we can accurately read each other's thoughts. Concerning a man who is very polite to you, and who shakes hands quite cordially with you, as some honeyed speech drops from his lips, and in this present condition you would say, "He is a most amiable man;" but if you had the ability to read behind his countenance and to know that he was only approaching you in that amiable way in order to win your confidence with a view to cheating you out of everything you have, what then? Suppose it were possible for any two people to know each other so intimately, to come into such relationship to each

other that it would be impossible for one to have a single thought that the other did not know instantly? Might it not be rather difficult for most people to live together? Now come, be honest: it would, and you know it. Comparatively few people have learned to govern their tongues: they ought to learn. But if in addition to the mastery of the tongue, it were necessary to master our thoughts so that we should never entertain for one moment in our hearts an affection, a thought, that we would be unwilling for all the world to know, and for every solitary individual of our acquaintance perfectly to understand; if that condition were ever to obtain, we should all have to be made new creatures, or there would be no living with each other.

But, my friend, that is just exactly the truth of the spiritual realm. The Psalmist said, "Thou understandest my thought afar off . . . Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is too high, I cannot attain unto it." How shall I ever be fitted to dwell in the presence of a holy God, Who knows every thought and intent of my heart, and of Whom it is said, "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." Once realize that, and hell is an accomplished fact for every man and woman born unless God finds some way to make a new man of him! I am aware of that superficial practice of calling people to the front and urging them to join the church, which act often passes for conversion. But we are dealing with God, we must be brought into right relationship to God; we have to be fitted to stand before God, and so cleansed and purified that we can dwell happily in the light of His holy countenance.

If that be true, does it make any difference what you believe? If that is what salvation is, does it make any difference what you believe? Somebody says, "I had not thought of it in that way. I thought it was believing something in a book." There is in the faith that saves the soul a moral element: it is not primarily an intellectual matter: the intellect is involved; all the faculties of the soul are involved; the whole man is involved in the act of faith. In conditioning salvation upon faith, God has conditioned salvation upon the thing that regulates the whole man; in conditioning salvation upon faith He has demanded the absolute surrender of every faculty of the soul to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners.

The faith by which my soul speaks, has to do with moral judgments; faith is a faculty of the soul that chooses between certain moral values, that makes choice between light and darkness, between good and evil, between heaven and hell, between God and the devil: it is the faculty of the soul that unites a man with one or the other, and determines whether he shall go down into everlasting darkness or dwell in the eternal light: "He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Simple, yes; but so profound that it will take all eternity for you to discover the content of that word, what it means to believe the Son.

We believe that, therefore, which engages our affections: "With the heart man believeth." We may read and believe the reports, to which I have referred, of the excavations yonder, because they have nothing

to do with us; we believe it in an intellectual way because there is nothing in our hearts to protest against the acceptance of that truth. But it is with the affections men believe; and until Jesus Christ has engaged the affections of the soul no man will ever believe on Him. Somebody says, "Yes, sir, I accept the Bible as the Word of God. Why, I was brought up to that. My father and mother were the most devoted Christians, and they always trained me from my youth to believe that this Bible from the first word to the last was really the Word of God. I believe it with all my heart; I am not at all disturbed by these modern problems; I accept the written record of the life and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ without any question at all". Are you a Christian? "Well no, sir, I should not like to say that; but I believe the Bible". You do not believe the Bible. "But sir, I do. I was brought up to it. I have always believed it". Are you a Christian? Have you passed from death unto life? Have you been born again? "No, I cannot say that". Then you do not believe the Bible. "But I do, sir". I repeat, you do not believe the Bible. It is impossible that any man should believe that Word and ignore it. And you do not do what it says. You have not submitted to its authority. "But I still do not understand you, sir. I think I do believe it. I never question it". Yes, you believe the Bible just as you believe the newspaper story of the excavations in Egypt: you believe it with your head; you yield an intellectual assent to the truth; but until your heart is engaged you really do not believe it in a true sense at all: "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness"; and the faith that saves, I repeat, has in it a moral content; it has to do with what a man is in his deepest nature. And it will change his whole character and conduct and make him a new creature when he really believes in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Can I make that plain and simple? What does believing with the heart involve? "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead" — He could not raise Him from the dead if He had not died; He could not die if he had not been born. I take it that the inspired writer means that in our personal acceptance of our Lord Jesus Christ, we believe that parenthesis marked by His descent from the Father, His birth of a woman, His life under the law, His death on the cross, His resurrection and ascension to the Father's right hand—that is the thing you have to believe to be saved. But you say, "I believe that. Did I not tell you I believe the Bible? I have always subscribed to that". Let me tell you what it means: believing in the Lord Jesus thus certainly means coming to His point of view, and accepting His own estimate of the character of sin. Why did Jesus come from heaven? Why was He made under the law? Why did He go to the cross, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God"? Because He knew what sin was, and because He knew that that was the only way by which sin could be put away.

What does it mean to believe on Jesus? It involves the changed attitude of one of the thieves upon the cross. While one railed on Him, the other said, sharing the agony of Jesus, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds". That penitent thief said, "I share the cross with Him, and I de-

serve to share it with Him. I have sinned unto death, and as God is my judge, I deserve every bit of it". Is that your estimate of sin? Do you believe what Jesus believes about sin?—that it is a damning thing, that it is a thing that would overturn the very Throne of God, that it is a thing that God can never pass over without dealing with it, even the evil thought as much as the spoken word, or the sinful action; do you accept Christ's estimate of our sin?

Why am I speaking thus? *To show you that faith without repentance is an absolute impossibility.* Some evangelist cries, "Believe, believe, believe". Believe what? Believe whom? Believe for what? Find salvation at the end of a syllogism, as somebody has said: "All have sinned, therefore you are a sinner; He died for all, therefore He died for you. But whosoever believeth in Him hath everlasting life. You believe in Him, therefore you are saved". Is that salvation? No: not by any means. Many people have been swept into the church by that superficial kind of teaching, who have never been partakers of the divine nature; they have never come to see what a damning, hellish thing sin is; they have never understood the cross; and they have never really believed. "Believing unto righteousness" means accepting that cross with all its implications: yes, *and it means accepting, too, the adequacy of the atonement.* I have not believed on Jesus so long as I think I can do anything to add to the value of His precious blood.

"O why was He there as the bearer of sin,
If on Jesus thy guilt was not laid?"

O why from His heart flowed the sin-cleansing
blood,

If His dying thy debt has not paid?"

Very simply, believing on Jesus means accepting God's bill without dispute,—not doing as you do when you get your electric light bill or your gas bill, when you declare it is all wrong, so that you call up the office and tell them you want another meter put in. We are disposed to be always finding fault with the bills that are sent to us, and to insist that there must be some mistake somewhere. But when God renders His account, believing on Christ means believing that God's book-keeper makes no mistake, and that when He says you are a sinner and a condemned sinner, and a hell-deserving sinner, He means what He says, and there is no escape from it. That is what it means on the one hand. On the other hand, it means that when His Word declares that "the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many"; that when Jesus on the cross, knowing that all things had now been accomplished, cried, "It is finished", that you accept His word as final, that you have not another word to add, but to say, "Praise God! That is true. My debt is paid".

"Jesus paid it all,

All to Him I owe:

Sin had left a crimson stain;

He washed it white as snow."

One other thing: "And shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead"—to believe not only that my account is accurately rendered, but *to believe that the prison is open, and that in the person of his Substitute, the sinner has been judicially acquitted, and raised to walk "in newness of life"*.

To believe on Him "unto righteousness",—how can I? I know that He died for me, that He paid my debt; but "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death"? Though that is done objectively, and my books are balanced, how shall I be so changed, and so cleansed, and so purified, and so transformed into the image and likeness of God, that I may stand without fault before His Throne at last? How can I believe that in a world so full of temptation, and with a nature like mine that is so full of evil, always dragging me down—that I can ever be sanctified as well as justified? It seems so hopeless. If thou shalt believe in thine heart that God hath "raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come;" and if thou dost really believe thou wilt believe that what He did as my substitute, He will do for thee. If I was in Christ when He died, and when He was buried, and when He rose from the dead, and when He ascended into the glory; to believe that is to believe that I shall be like Him in God's good time, and see Him as He is. That is very different from taking a pen and writing something down, and saying, "I believe it". Only the Holy Ghost can enable us to believe in the way I have described; for only when He quickens the soul do we desire the Lord Jesus and really trust Him.

Let me try to identify the faith that is in you. I wonder if there are people here who have the beginnings of this saving faith and do not know it? Let us enquire for just a moment. You remember what the leper said to Christ? He had been to the priest and he knew that the infallible signs of leprosy had been recognized. He was under sentence of death, separated from his fellows, and walked on the other side of the road, crying, "Unclean". But he saw Jesus, and he said, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst save me from going down into the grave". No, he did not say that. "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst put an end to my banishment from my friends, the separation from all I love". No, he did not say that either. What was the deep longing of his heart? What did he believe that Jesus could do for him? He said, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean". As though he had said, "I am not afraid of death, I court it; I would rather die than continue to live as a leper. But I know the nature of my own disease; I know my own plague, and I loathe myself; I cannot get away from myself: I am a leper; I am unclean to myself, no matter what other people say. If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. Thou canst cleanse the very blood that flows from my heart; and thou canst take away this leprosy so that I shall be unashamed in my own presence". Is that what you say? There are men and women who are not ashamed of their fellows, but are ashamed to look themselves in the face; people who are never in such bad company as when they are alone. Has the Spirit of God put within you a desire to be clean; yes, cleansed through and through in the sight of God? "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean"—that is the beginning of faith. The man that cries thus shall be saved.

II. I need spend only a minute or two on the other question. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the

Lord Jesus," or Jesus as Lord. Brother Fraser told me that he was in a restaurant last night and he heard a group of men talking. They were taking the name of God in vain; and taking the name of Christ in vain, cursing and damning everybody and everything of whom they spoke; and he went to them and asked them if they knew what they were talking about. He told me this in the vestry this morning after the service, and they said, "Who is God? I do not believe there is any God. Who is Christ?" Not thus vulgarly do all people express the thought of their heart; but that is the thought of the natural man always. It is the answer of Pharaoh to Moses, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go." "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus," or Jesus as Lord—not the confession of the mouth only: that is the beginning, but there should be the confession subsequently of the whole life. It is simply an outward confession of the thing you have believed. Now mark this, you young men who perhaps are attending university! As you look through your microscope you are amazed at the wonders there revealed. A friend told me of a conversation he had with Dr. Banting, how after many experiments one night he thought the problem through, and he said, "I think I know where I can find the thing I want." In the small hours of the morning, and he could scarcely wait for daylight, he got on his bicycle and away he went to the place where he could find the animal for dissection, to find the thing that he believed God had put there. He had observed the operation of God's laws; he could not counteract that law; he was only observing the operation of that law; and he wanted that substance, that element, that would neutralize the deadly thing that produced diabetes, and he said, "I believe I know where I can get it at last." At last, like a gold-digger who comes upon his vein of gold, he found it. How wonderful when the astronomer has figured out that there ought to be, by the law of probability, in a certain region, a new star! He cannot see it, but he thinks it ought to be there. He has reasoned the thing through, just as Dr. Banting thought he ought to find what he needed in the body of the animal. And at last he brings that distant world within his view; and if he were a religious man he would say, "I was so sure of God's law that I knew it ought to be there." And so in all the material universe, you may see God working. Take your shoes from your feet and say, "This is holy ground." Science and religion have no quarrel. True science is the handmaid of religion always. It is only the science, falsely so-called, that conflicts with this divine revelation. To what am I leading you? Why am I reasoning thus? "To confess Jesus as Lord" means to confess what we instinctively feel, that in Him we have the incarnation of the great Law-Giver; that He is Lord of the infinitesimal, the Creator of it, and that as well, in those far-flung spaces myriad worlds obey His command, that the Jesus Who died is Lord over all, blessed for ever! To confess Jesus as Lord in all realms, especially as Lord of this little life of mine, to recognize publicly, to acknowledge that it is His personal right to command me; that is what God requires. If I could make my confession to-night, it would be simply this: That I recognize in all the

universe no higher law than the command of the Lord Jesus Christ. I will put Him before science; I will put Him before all religious leaders; I will put Him before kings and above everyone and everything in all the world.

We are to confess that "God hath raised him from the dead," and confess Him as Lord. Why was He "the firstborn from the dead"? "That in all things—not in some, and Paul had been speaking about thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and powers, things visible and invisible, in all realms—that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." And to confess Jesus as Lord is to accord Him that solitary place: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Do you believe that with your heart? Men, how many are ready this evening to confess with their mouth Jesus as Lord?

THE EDITOR'S JOURNEYINGS.

Some of our friends wonder how the Editor manages to occupy his time since being relieved of the Des Moines obligation. He confesses to a feeling that life is much less strenuous. Notwithstanding, with the church and the Seminary, and *The Witness*—and a few other things, he is not altogether idle. We have received letters from Australia, South Africa, England and Scotland, and many places on this continent, telling us of many who pray that the Editor may be kept in health. For this we are very grateful. We have never complained of being busy, because it has been a maxim with us for years that the man who complains of being busy merely advertises his incapacity for a bigger job. If a man's hands are full with what he now has to do, why ask him to do anything more?

September 24th, the Editor preached at the ordination of Mr. Ferns, at Wingham, Ont. This involved a motor ride of about 300 miles. September 27th, he preached in Mitchell Square, a drive of about 130 miles; October 4th, preached at the recognition service of the Hiawatha Street Church, St. Thomas, another motor drive of 268 miles; October 8th, preached at Cannington, Ont., a motor drive of 130 miles; October 11th, Preston, Ont., by motor, 132 miles; October 15th and 16th, Lachute, Brownsburg, and Dalesville, Quebec, via Montreal, by rail, about 700 miles; October 18th, Tiverton, Ont., by motor, 380 miles; October 22nd, Boston, Ont., by motor, 160 miles; October 25th, by motor to Barrie, Ont., 120 miles; November 1st, Essex, Ont., by rail, via Windsor, 520 miles; November 5th, Lindsay, by motor, 150 miles; November 11th, Montreal by rail, 666 miles; November 12th, Woodstock, Ont., by motor, 192 miles.

Engagements in the near future: November 15th, Fenelon Falls, about 180 miles by motor; Owen Sound, November 29th, by motor, 236 miles.

THE WEEK-END IN JARVIS STREET.

We write this paragraph about the occurrences in Jarvis Street because hundreds of our readers, many of whom have never seen Jarvis Street, tell us that this is the first thing they look for.

Thanksgiving day being on Monday, many Jarvis Street people were out of town over the week-end. This fact affected our Sunday School somewhat. The attendance for the day was 1,343. The church was filled at both services. A large number responded to the invitation in the morning, and a good number, but somewhat fewer, in the evening. Three were baptized at the evening service.

We have been furnished with a conservative estimate of the aggregate number of people attending all services in Jarvis Street from Sunday morning to Saturday night of the week beginning November 3rd. There were no special services, and no special addresses during the week; but in the carrying out of the regular programme of the church services for the seven days, we are informed that the services were attended by an aggregate of 6,095 people.

"TRANSFIGURED"

By Dr. T. I. Stockley, Dean of Toronto Baptist Seminary.

There is a beautiful word which we find used four times in the New Testament. It is represented in the Authorized Version by three English words: in Matthew, chapter seventeen, verse two, and Mark, nine, verse two, it is translated "transfigured"; in the second verse of the second chapter of Romans it is rendered "transformed"; in Second Corinthians, three and eighteen, it is represented by the word "changed".

If we could have ascended Mount Hermon with our Lord and the favoured three we might have seen our Lord's transfiguration, and if so we should have seen His whole body suffused with glory,—covered with a lustrous whiteness, and we should have seen that that glory was not like the shining on the face of Moses, a reflection of brightness from without, but a raying forth of the indwelling Shekinah, a glory shining through the thin veil of His humanity and covering it with a divine beauty.

In Romans twelve, verse two, we find a two-fold exhortation: first, that we should not be conformed to this world. Here the word rendered "world" has the time thought rather than that of space, and so denotes the present age, or the state of things now in contrast with that which is to be dominant in the age to come. Dean Vaughan renders it thus, "Be not like the men of this world whose all is in the present. Wear not the garb of time: live for eternity." Archbishop Trench renders it, "Do not fall in with the fleeting fashions of the world, nor be yourselves fashioned to them"; and in contrast with that the Apostle says, "Be ye transformed" or transfigured, by ever undergoing a transfiguration, "by the renewing of your mind". Christians are to avoid even the appearance of moral assimilation of the life of the world, and are to be changed really and inwardly to a new moral type. A transfigured man is, so to speak, a new species, a "new man". The fourth occasion where the word occurs is in Second Corinthians three, verse eighteen, where the apostle says: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Here we see that the change, or transfiguration, takes place while we behold the glory of the Lord. He is now the Lord of glory, and as we gaze upon Him in the mirror of the Gospel, the Holy Spirit does His transfiguring work. The transfiguration is not wrought by our beholding, but *while* we behold the Holy Spirit does the work. The Holy Spirit is within us in order to do that work, and happy are we if we can sing:

"Thou hast come to me, Thy temple,
With Thy richest floods of power;
Thou hast filled me with Thy Spirit,
And heaven's beautifying Dower."

We will take a glance at the teaching given us by the use of this beautiful word, "transfigured". First, the life of the Christian man is to be a transfigured life, a life covered with a divine beauty. In Luke nine, verse twenty-nine, we read of our Lord that "the fashion

of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering." The glory within the Christ shone through countenance and clothing, until the rough dress of the Galilean Peasant "gleamed and glistened as robes of silver sheen." Would it not be a lovely thing if all justified souls; those who are covered with the righteousness of Christ before God, were covered with the beauties of Christ before the world?

The tense of the verb tells us that it is to be a growing thing. The surrender of Romans twelve, verse one, is to be instant and entire, but the beauty of Christ is to steal over the life increasingly until we "wake up" in His perfect likeness. What a power such lives would have! It is said that when Robert Murray McCheyne passed down the streets of Dundee all ribald speech and coarse laughter were hushed, and a demeanor of respect and reverence was assumed. Dr. Jowett tells of a servant of God in Durham, concerning whom a working man once said, "I never see him cross the common without feeling the better for it." And a young man who was rescued from the darkness of infidelity said, "There was one argument that I could never resist, and that was my father's beautiful life."

Then if the question is asked, How can our lives be covered with such transfiguring beauty, we have to note the teaching which the scriptures already quoted, give us. In Romans twelve, Paul says, "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind". Therefore it is not by something superficial, external, transient: it is brought about by a deep, inward, permanent change, for it is not the "old man" in a new dress. Satan may appear as an "angel of light", but he is Satan still. God's work is never a tinkering with the exterior; He goes to the root of life, and does His renewing work there. But He needs our co-operation if the life is to be covered with beauty. The Holy Spirit tells us that there must be a *dedication* of the body as a living sacrifice to God. We are to hand ourselves over to God once for all in response to His boundless "compassions". As our Lord loved us and gave Himself for us, so we are called upon by His infinite "mercies", to give ourselves utterly to Him. This gives the Lord the opportunity to do His beautifying work. If the diamond is not wholly in His hand, He cannot polish it as He would.

The next step is *detachment*: "Be not conformed" to this age. This age is a passing thing, unreal, and a doomed thing at the best. The spirit of this age is a craving for its pleasures, to enjoy the world; the craving for its property, to possess the world; a craving for its glory, to be honoured by the world. And the way to be detached from the world is to be devotedly attached to the Lord Jesus, to "set the mind on things above". We shall then be liberated for growth.

A further step leading to transfiguration is *communion* with Christ. Jesus went up to the mount to pray, and as He prayed He was transfigured. So we must have spaces in life when we can get away from the noise

and din and hubbub of life, to be "apart on the mount". Surely we know something of the beautiful influence of such communion! How it uplifts and purifies and enriches the life! But we need so very much more of this mountain-top fellowship with our Lord.

"Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take;
What parched grounds refresh as with a shower.
We kneel, how weak; we rise, how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,
And others, that we are not always strong;
That we are ever over-borne with care,
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy, and strength, and courage, are with Thee?"

Contemplation, too, is needed. The word of God is a mirror; it is our privilege to gaze upon our Lord and behold His glory there. Paul's first vision of his glorified Saviour dominated his thought: Christ was the Lord of Glory to him indeed. We should deliberately take our Bible in order to gaze upon our Lord, Who is therein revealed. The great work of transfiguration is not wrought in our sleep, that is, in our indifference and inattention to the word of God. There must be face-to-face intercourse with Christ in the Word if we would have the divine beauty upon us. And it is the Spirit's gracious ministry and congenial work to unfold the glory of Christ to the eyes of faith, and to transfigure us with His glory.

Second Corinthians three, verse eighteen, speaks of degrees of glory, of progress in the glory life, of gradual conformity to the Lord of glory through successive stages of glory, effected by the Spirit of glory. "By His inward transformation the Holy Spirit is to be daily repeating in us the Lord's glorification, separating us from the present age of sin and death, and assimilating us to the age to come, with its resurrection triumph, and its perfected restoration to God, when we shall be presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

Thus we are to make a step-by-step advancement into the predestined glory, and each peak we climb opens wider and clearer prospects into the untravelled land before us.

LANSDOWNE HALL CHURCH.

New Minister Recognized.

(From *The Christian*, London, Oct. 17, 1929.)

The well-known Evangelical Free Church, having its home in Lansdowne Hall, West Norwood, S.E., for many years the scene of ministry on the part of Rev. W. Fuller Gooch, has, for the past two and a-half years, been without a pastor. The pulpit has been served by visiting preachers, but service of a pastoral order has been largely in abeyance. While there has never been a time when faithful men have been wanting as public witnesses to Gospel truth, such oversight as a settled pastor may exercise, has awaited the coming of a minister, for whom the members of the church have been engaged in earnest prayer to God! The interest of the great Head of the Church has never been in doubt, but until quite recently an under-shepherd, embodying the qualifications de-

manded for the particular sphere, has not seemed to be in view. Now at length, however, to the great joy of the officers and members of the fellowship, a pastor has been settled.

The new minister is Rev. C. Fisher, M.A., formerly vicar of St. John's, Harborne, Birmingham, and for some time past engaged in Gospel work in Canada and the United States. The name of Mr. Fisher was brought before the members of the church by Rev. R. Hindle, of the World's Evangelization Crusade, and for some years minister at Waltham Cross, who, from time to time, has served as preacher in the Lansdowne Hall. In circumstances that are quite exceptional, and with signal confidence, the church elected with a unanimous vote, a man whom they had never seen, but whom they hopefully believed to be God's provision for ministry in succession to the beloved Mr. Fuller Gooch. The time of waiting had brought days of weary disappointment; but with a forward look, the members of the fellowship are now counting upon days of blessing, through the pastoral service of Mr. Fisher—a man of large experience, and determined to devote himself, heart and soul, to the welfare of the people in the service of God.

Induction Sermon.

The recognition of Mr. Fisher as the new minister was celebrated on Wednesday last week, by services held in the familiar edifice. In the afternoon an induction sermon was preached by Mr. Montague Goodman; and in the evening a public meeting was held, presided over by Mr. H. Martyn Gooch, son of the founder of the church. The gatherings were large, and a spirit of buoyant thankfulness to God pervaded the proceedings.

The discourse delivered in the afternoon was based on Col. 4:17, a passage which Mr. Goodman described as a word from a minister to a minister; from a well-known minister, even the Apostle Paul, to an almost unknown minister, about whose work we know practically nothing. Mr. Goodman then analyzed his text, and under four distinct headings brought out (1) The fact and duty of service, for all sons of God; (2) that it was a bestowed ministry of service—not something taken up or selected by the individual; (3) it was a directed service, "in the Lord"; carried out under the direct guidance of the Spirit of God, and in acknowledgment of the Lordship of Christ; and (4) the responsibility of fulfilling it. The preacher forcefully applied his message, holding that any successful ministry must be zeal-filled, love-filled, and Spirit-filled.

Public Meeting.

The evening meeting might well yield great encouragement to the mind of the new minister. After preliminary exercises, including the reading of Eph. 2, by Principal Curr—read from a copy of the Holy Scriptures used by Mr. Fuller Gooch for fifty-four years, and originally presented to him by a Young Men's Association at Falmouth—letters of apology for unavoidable absence were announced by Mr. G. W. Laxton, senior elder; among these was one from Rev. J. Russell Howden, B.D., who had intended to be present, but found himself detained in Manchester. He invoked the blessing of God upon Mr. Fisher's ministry, and hoped in the near future to be able to join in the worship of the assembly.

In some opening remarks, the Chairman handed on to the new minister the "Flaming Torch" of Lansdowne Hall, the charter of the work—the glory of God in the maintenance of revealed truth, the union of all believers as members of the one body, and the salvation of souls. With such a min-

istry the blessing of God would be realized, not only in the Church, but also the district around. Following upon a hearty introduction, there came a series of brief addresses. Mr. F. W. Chapman, of Sheffield, was able to describe the doctrinal basis and evangelical method of Mr. Fisher's past ministry; Rev. R. Hindle pressed home lessons from Hag. 2: 3, predicting with the utmost confidence a ministry upon which the blessing of God would be given: he also offered the dedicatory prayer. Short speeches were then delivered by elders of the church—Messrs. G. W. Laxton, church secretary; E. J. Pounds, P. J. Angles, and J. B. Gould. It was the assured conviction of one and all that God had been in the arrangements, as they had proceeded during the time in which the church was seeking its new minister.

The New Minister's Outlook.

Rising to acknowledge the confidence reposed in him, Mr. Fisher was received with tokens of warm affection. He read Col. 4, and in the words of the Apostle, urged all those present to "continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thankfulness." In some explanatory passages, he made it clear that any anxieties or difficulties that might have been experienced by the eldership, were not on account of financial demands made on his part. For a long period he had held the views for which Lansdowne Hall is known to stand. Alluding to the past, he said that he had not been thrust out of the Church of England: many of his closest friends were there, and, if necessary, he could name bishops who would still extend to him the right hand of fellowship. It was a case of changed views and the Word of God. In his new relations he had one main desire, and that was to show forth the praise—manifest the glory—of Him who, though He was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we, through His poverty, might become rich.

In some further remarks, Mr. Fisher said he had sought the will of God, assured that the way would be made plain; and now he entered a door which he had done nothing to open. He invoked the prayers of the fellowship, while pursuing a ministry whose definite design was to get people to follow on in the knowledge of Christ.

When separating at the close of the meeting, one and another of the membership agreed that the proceedings as a whole spelled new things for Lansdowne Hall.

PASTOR THOMAS SPURGEON'S ATTITUDE TO THE BAPTIST UNION AND WORLD CONGRESS.

(The Baptist, London, December 21, 1905.)

(Reprinted from a copy of *The Baptist* (London) of twenty-four years ago. Both the Baptist Union of Great Britain and the Baptist World Congress and Alliance have gone much farther down the hill since then.—Ed. G.W.)

Why He Took No Part in the Spurgeon Statue Unveiling.

"When, says the *Western* (Baptist) *Recorder*, of the United States, the question of the relation and the attitude of Pastor Thomas Spurgeon, and those he represents, to the Baptist World Congress was raised in this country, we wrote him a letter asking for an expression on the subject. We received the reply given below. In view of all that has been said, it is fair to him as well as just to others that this brief statement from him should be published:

"Dear Sir and Bro.—I cannot help regretting that any discussion has arisen in your country regarding my attitude to the recent Congress. Let me say at once that I did all that lay in my power to prove that I was not unfriendly to those who came from far. The fact is, of course, that I do not belong to the British Baptist Union. That made it a little awkward, the more so as my church also is outside the Union. I was invited to take some part, but it was a part that I could not conscientiously accept, viz., in connection with the unveiling of my father's statue. To that project I had shown no sympathy, for it always appeared to me a most strange proceeding to set up a statue of the man who had protested and withdrawn—unless, indeed, some admission has been made of his warrant for doing both.

There had been no such expression—quite the contrary, in fact.

"It ought, perhaps, to be said, that I entertained some of the foreign delegates to tea on the Monday of Congress week; that we lent the Tabernacle free of charge for the sermon; that I was present at two of the gatherings of Congress (though only one on the platform), and that Mrs. Spurgeon and myself accepted an invitation to the garden party. Under all the circumstances, I could hardly do more.

"I am, of course, still outside the Union, and I shall continue so while the present state of things exists. Dear father urged the adoption of a simple evangelical basis. This they will never have. So there the matter stands.

"I am, with every good wish, yours heartily,

THOMAS SPURGEON.

"This letter (adds our American contemporary) clearly tells the story. Pastor Spurgeon had no sympathy with the Congress, but was careful to show that he 'was not unfriendly to those who came from far.' Certainly he showed that. Of this there can be no question. He and those he represents should bear in mind that 'those who came from far,' as a rule, to the Congress, were not aware of the Baptist situation in England and had no thought of lining themselves up in opposition to the great and good Charles H. Spurgeon, or against anything for which he stood.

"The situation was made more acute when the Baptist Union refused to rescind their resolution of censure against Charles H. Spurgeon, although they passed very complimentary resolutions in regard to him, and decided to erect a statue to his memory. Yet that resolution of censure still stands. It is not surprising, in the circumstances, that Pastor Thomas Spurgeon should have 'shown no sympathy' to the erection and unveiling of the statue.

"We are told that the members of the Union resent Spurgeon's accusing their leaders of holding Unitarian views on certain points. If the accusation were true, he did not deserve the vote of censure, and it should be rescinded. If the accusation were false, and so hurtful as to warrant the refusal to rescind the vote of censure, then the complimentary resolutions should not have been passed and the statue should not have been erected. Certainly if his memory merited the resolutions of compliment and the statue it also merited the rescinding of the vote of censure. The affair strikes us as quite incongruous, whatever be the merits or demerits of the accusation and the censure."

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The Union Baptist Witness

These pages (13 and 14) 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.

DELEGATES

1. Delegates appointed to represent Churches at the Second Annual Convention of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec to be held in Brantford, November 19th and 22nd, must advise Mr. Clarence Misener, 88 Dundas Street, Brantford, Ontario, if billets are required.

2. Delegates and visitors to the Convention, living east of Toronto, may take advantage of the railway rates in force for the "Inter Fair" held in Toronto.

Pastor W. Gordon Brown of Orangeville, editor of *The Union Baptist Witness*, and Teacher in The Toronto Baptist Seminary, is recovering satisfactorily from the attack of scarlet fever which he contracted some two weeks ago.

During the past several weeks the Secretary-Treasurer of the Union, Rev. W. E. Atkinson, has had the privilege of visiting the following Baptist Churches—Buckingham; Sawyerville; St. Paul's, Montreal; East Zorra; Lindsay (Regular); Shedden; Melrose Park, Fairbank and Willowdale, Toronto; Cannington; Courtland; Immanuel, Hamilton.

THANKSGIVING DAY RALLIES:

The F.B.Y.P.A.'s of Ontario and Quebec held four Rallies on Thanksgiving Day. These were enthusiastic meetings and reports will be of interest. The Rallies at St. Thomas, Ontario; Boston, Ontario, and Emmanuel, Verdun, Que., were well attended and greatly blessed of the Lord and will be fully reported in a later issue.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S RALLY AT ALTON.

Busses, trucks and cars carried hundreds of young people to the Thanksgiving Day rally at Alton, until the village of Alton looked like a down-town section of Toronto, and the commodious Alton church was packed to the doors.

From the time Rev. D. Alexander announced the first hymn, until the benediction was pronounced in the evening, the presence and power of God was manifested. Rev. T. Summers gave a stirring inspirational address, Rev. J. H. Peer led a splendid conference on soul-winning; and Rev. W. J. H. Brown brought the afternoon meeting to a climax with a glorious message on the blood of Christ.

Supper was served to some hundreds of visitors by the Alton church, and then a large number of the delegates held an open air service. At seven o'clock every seat in the building was occupied,

and many had to stand. Rev. P. B. Loney, as president of the Toronto fellowship of young people, gave a brief but telling address. The closing message of the conference was a simple Gospel message on "Noah's Ark" by Rev. B. R. Lakin of Fort Gay, West Virginia. When the invitation was given, two came weeping to the front of the church to accept Christ as Saviour, and a third came in renewed surrender. God assuredly placed the seal of His approval upon the meeting of these young people who are standing against error and for truth.

SPECIAL MEETINGS AT FAIRBANK.

The Fairbank Baptist Church has just concluded an evangelistic campaign, under the ministry of Rev. B. R. Lakin of West Virginia. Many Christians who were the subject of prayer have been restored from a cold, backslidden state. Quite a number have accepted Christ as Saviour. Last Thursday, the Pastor, Rev. J. F. Holliday, led four believers through the waters of baptism, and at the next reception service will be giving the right hand of fellowship to more than a dozen persons.

The Southern Evangelist preached a ringing Gospel message, was thoroughly loyal to the great fundamentals of the faith, and emphasized strongly the truths for which Regular Baptists earnestly contend. God blessed his ministry richly while in Fairbank.

Keep praying for the North Bay Regular Baptist Mission. Special meetings are being held in the theatre, Pastor James Forrester in charge.

BUCKINGHAM, QUE.

Rev. Matthew Doherty reports encouragement. The Lord is working and there is increasing interest in the services, in the study of God's Word and in the meetings for prayer. The voices of some who have not been in the habit of publicly witnessing are now heard in prayer, pouring out their hearts in a desire for blessing. In preparation of special meetings in charge of the Rev. James Hall of Calvary Baptist Church, Ottawa, a week of prayer has been held.

Anniversary services held on September 22nd with Rev. W. E. Atkinson as special speaker, were blessed and three came forward at the close of the evening service in response to the invitation to accept Christ as Saviour.

Mr. Doherty has been asked to serve from time to time at St. Amedee, Papineauville and North Nation Mills during the winter months and this he has promised to do.

PASTORS' AND PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE.

Following the customary order, the Pastors' and People's Conference, which

met at Courtright recently at the invitation of the Courtright and Wilkesport Churches, opened at 10:30 a.m. with a prayer session, which gave the tone to the day's proceedings, and provided an opportunity for waiting upon God and laying before Him our various needs. In turn, Mr. H. B. Steer and Rev. T. J. Mitchell, the President of the Conference, spoke on the subject of "Revival", giving to those present a real spiritual feast.

At the afternoon session an outline study of the Epistle to the Ephesians was given by Rev. W. N. Charlton of Chatham.

A well-filled church greeted Rev. Jas. McGinlay, the evening speaker. Clear and incisive as ever, Brother McGinlay has the happy gift of going directly to the root of things. Speaking from Rev. 12:11, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony", he presented the truth in a fearless and convincing manner. Now and again a flash of humour illuminated a point and sent it home like an arrow from its quiver.

The general feeling of those present seemed to be that the Conferences are becoming more helpful each month and that the meeting at Courtright reached high water mark, and will take its place amongst the most successful and most fruitful yet held.

The next meeting will be held at Essex, Thursday, December 5th, when Rev. John Dodds, Rev. C. E. Scott, and Rev. W. Fraser will be the speakers. All are invited to set this date aside and plan to be present with us at this next Conference.

CHATHAM.

"We had the Instrumental Quintette from Jarvis Street here last Sunday", writes Rev. W. N. Charlton, Pastor, "and although the weather was very bad we had splendid attendances at all services. The Bible School had a record attendance. In the afternoon we were on the air. The children's choir sang, the Quintette played and I preached. We have had a number of responses from this already, one coming in by long-distance telephone from a place called Highgate, about 30 miles from Chatham, before the Broadcast was completed. Just a few minutes ago a call came in telling me of a blind man, unable to get out anywhere, who listened in and enjoyed the message and sang the old time hymns with the children. I am hoping to make a contract with the Station to be on the air regularly; possibly every other week".

ST. THOMAS.

A result of the two weeks effort by Evangelist Anthony Zeoli in St. Thomas about thirty souls came forward besides a number who took their stand for

Christ and denounced the error of Pentecostalism. Among those who professed conversion were two of one family for whom much prayer has been offered. The church members greatly enjoyed the scripturalness of Brother Zeoli's preaching and outstanding among his messages were "The Deity of Christ", "Light on Roman Catholicism" and "The Baptism of The Holy Spirit and Tongues". The last named subject was advertised for a Friday night but owing to inclement weather was postponed until the Monday. Interest in this message intensified and before a well-filled church four who belonged to the Pentecostal movement raised their hands, thus deciding to have done with that teaching forever. Several more decisions of this kind were made at the close of the service. Each Sunday afternoon and evening a local theatre was used for the services and many non-church-goers were reached. On the last night a great consecration service took place and practically the entire church membership assembled round the platform praying and rejoicing in the Spirit, yielding their lives afresh to God. Mrs. Zeoli assisted her husband throughout the meetings in service of song which was much appreciated. It is expected that Mr. and Mrs. Zeoli will return to St. Thomas at the end of May for another soul-saving campaign.

* * *

COURTLAND.

Reception for Pastor.

The Regular Baptists of Courtland held a reception for their pastor, Rev. R. D. Guthrie, and his bride, at the Baptist church on Thursday evening, Oct. 10th. Rev. Jones of Woodstock and Rev. White of Scotland took charge of the program, which consisted of speeches by the chairmen, Rev. Jones and Rev. White, also Rev. McClelland and John Byerlay. A quartette from Scotland was present and favored the audience with several musical numbers, which were much enjoyed. There was also special music by the choir, and the Misses Catherine Jones, Woodstock, and Nellie Byerlay sang two pretty duets. Rev. and Mrs. Guthrie were then called to the platform. Frank Lovell read a nicely worded address and Freeman Cousins presented Rev. Guthrie with a purse, and Mrs. Lovell presented Mrs. Guthrie with a beautiful fern, the gift of the ladies of the church. Rev. and Mrs. Guthrie thanked the members of the church for their generous gifts, after which Miss Catherine Jones sang a very appropriate solo. The social committee then took charge and all went to the basement of the church, where a delicious lunch and coffee were served. The following address was read to Rev. and Mrs. Guthrie:—"Dear Pastor and Mrs. Guthrie: We, of the Courtland Regular Baptist church, wish to congratulate you both on the fact that God has joined you together in marriage. We praise Him for this, remembering that Christ also loved the Church (His bride) and gave Himself for it. He, too, will return and receive His own unto Himself, to be with Him forever. With deep grat-

itude to God we call to mind your faithful witness for the truth, dear pastor. You have shown us your faith by your work. We give glory to God for the number of souls brought to Christ during your most fruitful ministry, both in our midst and in other places. To your beloved wife, we extend a most hearty welcome. Our hope and our most earnest prayer is that you may together be used of God in that greatest of all tasks — soul-winning. Feel assured of our Christian love and prayerful co-operation. Will you kindly accept these gifts as a token of the esteem and affection of your friends in The Courtland Regular Baptist Church "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths."—Proverbs 3:5-6.

* * *

BARRIE.

Dr. T. T. Shields delivered a convincing address from Hebrews 11:12, to a large audience in the Collier Street Regular Baptist Church, Barrie, on Friday, October 25th. Nearly every religious body was represented and several ministers were in the audience. Dr. Shields' visit has done much to scatter prejudice in Barrie and to clarify the issue between Fundamentalism and Modernism, that is being fought out among Ontario and Quebec Baptists.

On Sunday, the 27th, more than sixty people from Jarvis Street and Grace Baptist Churches motored up to Barrie for the evening service. Under Mr. J. Coghill and Mr. Chisholm, a choir and orchestra led the congregation in the well-known hymns; others of the party sang, gave testimonies and did personal work among the congregation. It was a great night. May this work continue. Both the churches and the visitors will be blessed.

* * *

Michigan Notes.

By C. R. Peterson.

LANSING.

Some eight or ten years ago the South Church was thrown out of the Shiawassee Association. This action was aided and abetted by the convention officials. The church then severed all connections with the convention, and under the able leadership of Pastor C. H. Heaton helped in the formation of the new Berean Association. This new and happy fellowship continued several years into the following pastorate. When this new pastor's name began appearing on convention gatherings of various kinds, the writer predicted that the "machine" would some day capture this church and its popular pastor. And it came to pass! When the church voted to sever connections with the Baptist Bible Union, it lost a group of its finest and most spiritual members. A part of this group organized the Bethel Baptist Church, which meets in a new store building on South Cedar Street, a mile outside the city limits. This is a growing suburb of 4,000 to 6,000 population, affording an excellent opportunity for a real Baptist work. Bro. F. B. Mixter has been called as pastor. Bro. Mixter

is Secretary of the Union of Regular Baptists of Michigan. The church was organized last August, and there have been eleven baptisms since that time. They have a growing Sunday school, and the building is packed for the regular services. They contemplate holding evangelistic services early in the New Year.

* * *

DETROIT.

About three years ago a Baptist work was started at Lincoln Park, a suburb of Detroit. The Detroit Baptist Union bought the Methodist church at that place for about \$6,500, and the church began paying the Union for the property. The title to the property was, of course, held by the Union. Pastor W. Clay Wilson was called to the pastorate of this church Feb. 1st of this year, coming from Tennessee. Under his leadership the church decided it could not support the modernism of the convention, and withdrew its support of denominational activities. This action brought down upon their heads the ire of the Detroit Baptist Union. The general superintendent of the Union, together with his son-in-law, called on Pastor Wilson and in the name of the Detroit Baptist Union demanded the keys to the church building. The pastor informed them that this was a Baptist Church, that he had no authority to give the keys to anyone, and that the church was meeting that night when he would place the matter before the body. They would not wait, and without any legal process or Baptist fairness, they padlocked the building. Next Sunday morning the Union sent out a preacher to conduct services, and he had for a congregation one woman and two children! (Or was it two women and a child?) This was the last service held in the building. The church immediately secured a store building, and have continued their meetings without interruption, relinquishing all property, including a parsonage which the church built, to the Detroit Baptist Union. They have purchased a lot, and plans are drawn for a tabernacle to be erected thereon. The church was incorporated several months ago with the stipulation that it shall forever be separated from the Northern Baptist Convention, the Michigan Baptist Convention and the Detroit Baptist Union. This growing church now numbers 200, of which 100 have been added since the coming of Bro. Wilson, most by baptism. Pastor Wilson preaches the gospel of the Son of God with power, and this promises to become an important church.

* * *

GENERAL NOTES.

Should there be any reader of *The Gospel Witness* who has not discerned the encroachments of the ecclesiastical machine on the autonomy of our churches, or who fails to see the growing ecclesiasticism that strikes at our Baptism liberty and privileges, let him ponder the recent action of the Detroit Baptist Union at Lincoln Park, mentioned above. And this is not an isolated case; others will be cited in future issues.

Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

Vol. IV

No. 4

REV. ALEX THOMSON, Editor.

Lesson 48 December 1st, 1929.
Fourth Quarter.

WALKING IN THE LIGHT.

Lesson Text: I John, chapter 1.

Golden Text: "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." I John 1:7.

1. CHRIST THE WORD OF LIFE (vs. 1-4).

1. The writer of this epistle was the apostle John, one of the intimate disciples of our Lord. The purpose of the writing was of a practical nature imparting knowledge concerning assurance of salvation, (v. 13), and holy living. The epistle evidently was not sent to any church in particular, but meant for Christians in general. Its teaching is precious, deep and inspiring and well repays careful study. 2. The epistle opens in a somewhat similar manner to the fourth gospel with its reference to the beginning and to the Word (John 1:1), denoting similarity in subject matter, and style, resulting from identical authorship. The implication from the opening phrase, "That which was from the beginning" (v. 1), is not that our Lord was a created being but that He was in existence at the beginning; He was from all eternity (John 1:1-3), God the Son as well as Son of God equal with the Father, (John 10:30-33). As the Word He was the expression and manifestation of God, and John attests the truth of this manifestation by appeal to his personal experience. He says concerning Him, "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled". John remembers well the time when his Lord was in the flesh, and he had the privilege of fellowship with Him. He was an eye-witness of that about which he was writing, and bore testimony to his Lord, (v. 2). 3. The expressed desire of his writing is that those to whom he wrote would have fellowship with him. He desired them to share in his blessing, and in doing so their fellowship would be "with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ", (v. 3). For all fellowship there must be a common basis, and a likeness of mind and spirit, and the highest type of this is stated here. An association of godly people in communion with each other, and united in the worship of God are just as near the heavenly state collectively as any body of people could be. Of them it may well be said, their joy is full, (v. 4). Their hearts are also full, their spirits are exalted, and they have nothing higher to wish for. 4. Explanation may be made of the nature of fellowship with God, with its union of mind and heart and communion of spirit; of its blessedness in strength, comfort and joy and of its necessity for each child of God. Our

Lord's Deity should also be emphasized, and the nature and purpose of His manifestation in the flesh explained.

II. WALKING IN THE LIGHT, (vs. 5-7).

1. After giving testimony to the manifestation of the Word of Life John declares the message which he had heard of Him, in which two things are stated, first that "God is light", and second that "in him is no darkness at all", (v. 5). These are plain statements easily understood, the first setting forth an aspect of the character of God, the second giving added emphasis to it. God is light in a very real sense in all realms. In the physical universe He is the source of it, and the light which shines from Him is brighter far than the sun. (Acts 22:6), there is no need of any luminary where He is, (Rev. 22:5), and the least reflection of His light man cannot look upon, (Ex. 34:29-35). In the spiritual realm He is light, and apart from Him men are in darkness (Eph. 4:18), and there can be no understanding of such truth without His presence. In both heathen and civilized lands there are many examples of those who are endeavouring to apprehend spiritual truth apart from the help of God and their efforts are futile. They are merely groping in the dark. The supreme manifestation of God's light is seen in our Saviour Jesus, of whom it is stated he was "the light of the world", (John 8:12), and to us, is given the privilege of bearing that same light, (Matt. 5:14). God desires everyone to benefit from His light, therefore the inestimable privilege of His service. 2. Having declared this wondrous truth the apostle makes a practical application of its teaching using strong and expressive language in doing so. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him" he states, "and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth", (v. 6). There would be many in those days as in this who would claim such fellowship, and John tests their profession. Such a test centres in the life. Those who are in fellowship with God walk in light, spiritual life is present, the spiritual understanding is enlightened, communion with God is enjoyed and there is a delight in doing the will of God. To walk in darkness is the opposite experience and implies being out of touch with God, therefore to profess to have fellowship with Him, and yet be out of touch with Him means to lie. In the light of God's word we can test our profession and conclude concerning its nature and reality. 3. The blessed results of walking in the light is then stated, "we have fellowship one with another", (v. 7). To have real fellowship there must be a common purpose, and a central basis, and these we have in relation to God, the common purpose is to walk in the light, and the central basis is that light. And blessed indeed are the people who fellowship together under such conditions. It is further stated in reference to such as walk in this manner that "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin". Several things are mentioned in this brief statement. There is first "the blood of Jesus Christ". There are some so very fastidious these days they do not care to hear anything about blood in the preaching of the gospel, but

Scripture is not reticent concerning it. The Old Testament sacrifices proclaim it loudly, and the New Testament teaching is based upon it. The blood speaks to us of our Lord's work on Calvary when He died to effect our reconciliation with the Father. It also reminds us of God's love for guilty sinners. In the second place we note the efficacy of that blood,—it "cleanseth us from all sin". It purifies us from every stain, and fits us for the presence of God. We can truly praise God for the power of the blood. And third we note that from which we are cleansed,—"sin". Explanation should be made of its nature, its heinousness in God's sight, and its awful consequences. Emphasis should also be placed upon the necessity for walking in the light.

III. CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS OF SINS, (vs. 8-10).

1. Three verses comprise this section, and each one begins with the little word "if", denoting certain conclusions following definite modes of action. The first deals with the present consciousness of sin. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us", (v. 8). The fact of sin cannot be denied by reasonable persons who have a knowledge of themselves and of the Word of God, yet there are some who from time to time claim exemption from sin. Concerning them it is said, "they deceive themselves". They do not deceive God, nor are men deceived by them. They live in error and understand not the truth. It is a fact to be emphasized that the nearer we live to God, the more we are conscious of our sin, and contrary to this the farther away we are the less are we conscious of it. 2. The second verse deals with the removal of sin's guilt, (v. 9). The whole gospel is wrapped up in it. First there is confession of sin, which implies repentance and faith, falling down in all humility before God as a guilty sinner. Second there is the righteousness of God in forgiving the guilty, which is based upon the work of our Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary, for now through His propitiatory work God may be just, and the justifier of those who believe in Jesus, (Rom. 3:25, 26). Third there is the result of confession, forgiveness, and cleansing. The guilt of sin is forever put away. Our sins are blotted out, (Is. 44:22); they are put behind God's back to be remembered against us no more, (Is. 38:17); therefore happy indeed is the lot of the child of God. It is worthy of note that we are cleansed from all unrighteousness. God makes a clean sweep when He takes anything in hand. 3. The third verse emphasizes our past sins, "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us", (v. 10). God has stated that all have sinned (Rom. 3:23), therefore to claim the opposite is necessarily to do what this verse states, make God a liar, committing therein a great sin. Emphasis in teaching may be placed upon the necessity for confession of sin, and its blessed results.

ABOUT THE GOSPEL WITNESS

The Gospel Witness has grown since its first issue in May, 1922, from a small church paper into a 16-page weekly paper, circulating in 43 different countries, having about 3,000 ministerial readers alone.

The regular weekly issue contains: A Sermon by Dr. T. T. Shields, preached in Jarvis St. Pulpit—usually the preceding Sunday, and stenographically reported.

Hundreds of Preachers find in these sermons wheat from which they grind their own flour and make their own bread. Many find in the illustrations useful windows for sermons.

Each issue also contains An Exposition of Scripture in the Whole Bible Lesson Course, by Rev. Alex. Thomson, B.D., of Mount Pleasant Baptist Church and Toronto Baptist Seminary.

A weekly article by Dr. T. I. Stockley, Dean of Toronto Baptist Seminary.

Canadians especially will be interested in the two pages The Union Gospel Witness, edited by Rev. Gordon Brown, B.A., Teacher of Greek in Toronto Baptist Seminary; and Book Reviews and other occasional contributions by Miss Olive Clark, M.A., Teacher of Greek, Toronto Baptist Seminary.

Beside these special features every issue contains many pages of editorial matter by Dr. Shields, dealing with the Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy throughout the world, as well as theological, ecclesiastical, and devotional matters in general.

The Gospel Witness,
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