

# The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF EVANGELICAL PRINCIPLES AND  
IN DEFENSE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.

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

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## The Virgin's Son

The universal observance of Christmas is a testimony to the historic fact of the birth of Jesus, the Son of Mary. There is no more thoroughly attested fact of history than that "Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king". He Himself in His later life declared that the Old Testament Scriptures were fulfilled in Him. Matthew and Luke, who record the circumstances of His birth, draw a picture unique in all human history. Matthew says: "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." Luke is equally clear in his statement of the virgin birth of Jesus, as appears from these words, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

While Mark and John do not specifically, and in so many words, state that Jesus was virgin-born, their gospels everywhere assume it. We are therefore compelled to accept the truth of the virgin birth of Christ if we accept the Bible as the inspired and infallible Word of God. It is not possible logically to reject the truth of the virgin birth of Christ without impugning the divine authority of the whole Bible. Evangelicals, however, the world over receive this truth with gladness, and rejoice in the fact that we have a Saviour who is really the Son of man, and, at the same time, the Son of God; Who was born of a human mother, but had no human father; and Who came into this world as no other person entered it since the world began.

At this Christmas season therefore we do well to reflect a little upon the implications of this great truth.

The virgin birth of Jesus affords a verification of the Scriptures, not only because it was itself a fulfilment of prophecy, but because it attests the divine character, and hence the infallibility of the One Who certified the infallibility of the Old Testament and promised the New. The virgin birth proves that the

Bible is a letter from Heaven, a Christmas message from the Skies.

Moreover, the virgin birth is the foundation of the truth of the Deity of Christ. He is both human and divine, the Son of man and the Son of God. This gives special value both to His life and to His death. In the light of the virgin birth we can understand how Christ could pay the penalty of a world's sin, and how His precious blood can wash all sins away.

The virgin birth also establishes the principle of divine interposition in human affairs. It rings the death knell of any mechanistic theory of the universe. At one point at least God has interfered with the ordinary course of nature, since a child was born as the result of other than natural generation. The child's dream of Santa Claus' coming down the chimney laden with good things is not half so wonderful as the historic fact that God came down from heaven, to take up his abode among men.

The virgin birth may be said also to be the cornerstone of supernaturalism in religion. No miracle, either of the Old or of the New Testament, is incredible if the virgin birth be a fact. The truth of the Virgin Birth is not more staggering to the reason of the natural man than is the fact of the resurrection. If the Virgin Birth be true, there can be no good reason for questioning the resurrection.

It may also be said that the Virgin Birth holds promise of a new life to everyone of us; by the power of the Holy Ghost Christ "may be formed in us the hope of glory". The spiritual generation of Jesus Christ is the mightiest argument for regeneration. The birth of Bethlehem's Babe promises the possibility to all of us that we, by spiritual power, may be born "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God".

In short, the supernaturalism of the Virgin Birth attests the supernaturalism of the Christian revelation and of all Christian experience. The birth that was heralded by a star, acclaimed by heavenly choirs, and welcomed by wise men from the East, may well be celebrated as the greatest event in the history of the race.

# The Child Jesus

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

At this season of the year we are carried in thought to Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus our Saviour. Bethlehem teems with biblical associations. From Jerusalem the journey is only six miles south. Bethlehem stands on an elongated hill which is well cultivated in terraces around the sides, and with fertile corn fields in the valley below. On the terraces vines and fig trees are numerous. When it was our privilege to visit Bethlehem we approached it not from Jerusalem but from Mar Saba, a convent situated in the midst of scenery grand and wild, utterly barren and desolate. This convent is one of the most weird places in the world, and it is almost difficult to distinguish it from the natural rock upon which it is built. It is here we suppose that Stephen the Sabite composed the well-known hymn, "Art thou weary, art thou languid?" From Mar Saba it was about three hours' journey on horseback westward. The narrow path lies over hill and dale, and affords fine views at different points, the Dead Sea back on the left hand, and Jerusalem away on the right; then there were patches of richest green, and slopes covered with flowers: the deep red Anemones, Bluebells; and the pretty White Star of Bethlehem, and many others. The whole district here abounds with biblical associations. All along the way we could not but think of Ruth and Boaz, of David and his daring defence of his father's sheep, and more than all the shepherds watching their own flocks, of the appearance of the angel, and his glorious message, and then of the multitudes of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Bethlehem (the house-of-bread) stands out boldly on the lofty ridge. The houses have a substantial appearance, while the Church of the Nativity, and the three adjoining convents representing the Latin, Greek, and Armenian churches, are fortress-like buildings. On entering the town much of the glamour fades away, for the streets are narrow, steep, slippery, and by no means clean, while many of the houses are very poor and wretched. The population of some four or five thousand people are noted for their ruddy beauty, and the children were certainly the healthiest and the brightest looking young folks whom we had then seen in the Holy Land. The people are sturdy, hard, and fearless. They seem ever to have been of this type, for in the old days, with Philistines on the west, and Arab robbers on the east, and with bears and lions in the wild wadies, they were trained to brave every kind of danger, and to fight every kind of antagonist. David belonged to such lion-like men.

Was the Child Jesus a cave-born Child? We cannot be sure. Dr. David Smith says, "An inn or caravanserai was a rude structure consisting of an open court yard for the beasts, with a raised platform along the walls, roofed over and divided into compartments where travelers lodged." As all these compartments were full, he thinks Jesus was born in the court yard, and that there Mary laid Him in a manger. But the great centre of attraction in Bethlehem is what is called the Chapel of the Nativity. It is a cave beneath

the present Church of the Nativity. It is thirty-three feet by eleven feet encased now with Italian marble, with sixteen lamps hung up over the silver star on the floor, around which is the inscription: "Mic de virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est," that is, "Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary." Over the place of the manger are the words, "Peace to men of good will." And when I visited the cave, a Mohammedan soldier was kept there all the time to keep the worshippers belonging to three sections of the "church" in order! Alas, for the irony of the scene! The tradition that this was the birthplace of the Child Jesus can be traced almost up to the time of the death of the Apostle John. Dr. Thompson says, "It is not impossible, to say the least, that the apartment in which our Saviour was born was in fact a cave. I have seen many such, consisting of one or more rooms in front of, and including a cave where the cattle were kept." This looks more like the fact than Dr. Smith's suggestion, because Matthew speaks of a "house." Perhaps, then, Jesus was a cave-born child. At any rate, his birth was marked with extreme lowliness.

He was also the Holy Child. There was something altogether unique in Him, for before He was born He was called, "that Holy Thing." There was no stain of sin upon Him. His heart was purer than the newly fallen snow; it was whiter than the whitest lily. There was no hereditary taint whatever. And so must it be, for He was the Lamb of God, and the Lamb could not take away sin if there was any taint of sin in him: he must be spotless, and without blemish. The clear white beam of unmingled truth daily streamed from that life of radiant purity. Our children are often naughty: they display bad temper and selfishness, and license. They sometimes carry wicked looks, and utter wicked words. All of which tells of a wicked heart within. But in the Child Jesus there was no sin. And so He was a supremely happy Child. A naughty child is anything but happy. Jesus, as a Child, was tempted in all points as other children are, perhaps more than others, but He was always "separate from sin." Where the first Adam failed, Jesus, the last Adam, triumphed. When the Father at our Lord's baptism said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," He looked back with infinite love and delight over the days of the beautiful boyhood of Jesus as well as on His later days.

He was also the incomparable Child. He was truly matchless. There never was one like Him: a true Child, and yet so absolutely different from all others. He stood alone in His undimmed faith in the Heavenly Father, in the purity and warmth of His love, in His radiant and contagious joy, in the deep calm which was never upset by any circumstances, in His unflinching patience, which must have been a constant wonder to His mother, in His beautiful gentleness which could never hurt any thing, nor cause pain to any one whom He touched, in His great goodness, which led everyone to see what goodness is like when it shines in a child, in His faithfulness in all the smaller or greater duties

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## SPEED AND PERSPECTIVE

At first blush, speed and perspective may not seem to be very closely related, and yet when one recalls his observations motoring over long stretches of straight highway he will recognize there is a close connection. Many of life's values can be correctly appraised only as they are viewed perspectively. This is true in a sense of the seeds we plant in our gardens. Most of them seem to be insignificant, and resemble each other especially in their unattractiveness. But seen in a summer's perspective, or in the perspective of several years, they are as different from each other as a giant oak which requires the freedom of the forest for its unfolding, and a lily which may reach its maturity in a pot on the parlour table.

Principles are like seeds: they may seem to be small and unimportant; but when viewed perspectively they may be seen to be as different from each other as east from west, or good from evil, or light from darkness, or life from death, or heaven from hell.

It is interesting to look from the rear of a train on the labyrinth of tracks when leaving some great metropolitan railway station. The track-way may be acres in width, and when the flange of the engine wheel takes the frog, and the train is slightly deflected from the course it has been taking, it seems for a few moments as though the train were being transferred only to another track running parallel with the one along which it has been proceeding. But as the train gathers speed, a careful observer will discover that before long the train is travelling perhaps at right angles with the direction from which it started, and is headed for a destination thousands of miles removed from that it would have reached had it pursued the course along which it was headed when it pulled out from the station.

There are many people who fail to see the far-reaching effect in matters of principle of taking the frog in the track with the flanged wheel. If one should study the present-day ecclesiastical organizations, the various branches of so-called Protestantism,—in England, for instance, the different branches of Methodism and Presbyterianism and the Established Church; in Canada, the Anglican Communion, the United Church, the Presbyterian Church; in the United States, Methodism and Presbyterianism, north and south, the Northern Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention; the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec in Canada; in England, the Baptist Union; and perhaps the strangest of all religious inventions on earth, the Baptist Union of Western Canada, and compare any or all of these with the simplicity of the New Testament churches, no candid investigator could escape the conclusion that these ecclesiastical organizations are travelling in a very different direction from that of the churches of the New Testament of the apostolic age.

Yet not one of these organizations deliberately set aside and repudiated the principles of the New Testament. They probably began by permitting themselves to be directed by considerations of expediency in matters which seemed to be of minor importance, little dreaming that they were taking the frog in the line

which would ultimately set them completely at variance with the whole New Testament programme.

A man sits in his well-appointed home, boasting of his freedom moderately to indulge in alcoholic liquors under "Government Control"; and perhaps gently remonstrates with a guest who is a total abstainer, pleasantly demanding that his guest should show him what possible injury his moderate indulgence could do to anyone. But if the guest could see perspectively he might be able to show the "moderate drinker" his own son being laid in a pauper's grave, the victim of alcoholism, twenty or twenty-five years ahead.

When Jeroboam substituted expediency for principle, and set up calves of gold in Dan and in Bethel, to obviate the necessity of the tribes, going up to Jerusalem, no doubt he prided himself that he was, politically, very shrewd. He may have called his artifice a piece of genuine, religious, statesmanship; but when the principle of idolatry had borne its full fruit, and the nation was carried away into Assyria, and its land left desolate, the full significance of that departure from principle found utterance in the prophet's pathetic cry, "Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast thee off."

In the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec many people have formed their judgments without regard to perspective values. Some would say that the criticisms launched by this paper against McMaster University have had to do merely with certain "theories" of inspiration, and with certain "theories" of the Atonement; and that disagreement respecting these alleged "theories" was of less importance than co-operation in support of the denominational budget; therefore let us have done with all discussion of these differences, and take up the collection!

We have never been more convinced than we are at this moment that the denominational train, so far as the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec is concerned, has crossed the frog in the track. They have left the track of supernaturalism and a clear witness to the foundation truths of evangelical Christianity,—not to turn right-about-face and become anti-supernaturalists, but to cross track after track, ever bearing away in a direction diametrically opposed to the principles of New Testament Christianity.

Of course, there are many people who do not know this, and will not believe it. How can a man know where he is going when he rides in a sleeping-car? We drew the blind in the sleeping-car called "Walmer Road" a week or so ago, and showed that it was coupled to a train that was making rapid progress on an anti-scriptural, anti-evangelical, track.

An incident occurred recently in another sleeping-car coupled to the same train, and travelling the same track. The other car is named "Yorkminster". That car is equipped with the newest sort of shock-absorbers, guaranteed to prevent any sort of jolt that could disturb the slumber even of the lightest sleeper. But the other day the voice of one who bore the significant name of Barker was heard in "Yorkminster"—only last Sunday, in fact. This man Barker in his liberalistic sleep snored so loudly that one of the sleepers actually called out in meeting—rather a mild

protest, we judge, but still a protest. The conductor of the car, (usually called the minister) to avoid waking up the other sleepers, speedily pronounced the benediction. Barker ceased his snoring, and the passengers, each in his separate berth, slept on!

Travelling on a certain line in the United States,—and in a Pullman sleeping-car, by the way—we found one of our fellow-passengers was a locomotive engineer who had been to California for a vacation. At one point the train seemed to rock violently, and had it been night-time, it seemed to us the motion of the train must have awakened everybody. We remarked

to this experienced trainman, "This is rather a rough road, is it not?" "Oh no", the engineer said, "we are travelling just now at a mighty fast rate." The Baptist Convention train, carrying the cars, "Walmer" and "Yorkminster", and many others, is just now "travelling at a mighty fast rate". It will not be long, at their present speed, before thousands of evangelical believers in the old Convention will wake up to discover that they have left all evangelical stations far behind them, and are headed straight for the dreary and desolate wastes of Modernism.

## Mr. Gideon Grant's Vain Threats

A week or so ago we found it necessary to refer to a threatening habit contracted some time ago by Mr. Gideon Grant, K.C., and which recently became quite acute. Our readers will remember that Mr. Grant wrote some threatening letters both to London and Fenelon Falls, arguing that a judgment given in the case of the Hughson Street Church, Hamilton, gave the property to certain members who opposed the church's joining the new Union of Regular Baptist Churches. In each case Mr. Grant generously suggested that the Pastor resign. In the case of Mr. Carew of Fenelon Falls, Mr. Grant wrote to one of the members of the church offering this suggestion; in the case of Mr. Mitchell, of Wortley Road Church, London, Mr. Grant wrote to Mr. Mitchell directly.

In each of the letters Mr. Grant cited the Hamilton case very much as a highwayman might put a pistol at a man's temple commanding him to stand and deliver.

In the article we wrote a couple of weeks ago we took the position that the judgment in the Hamilton case simply amounted to "as you were". It leaves a sovereign church in a position to deal with its disorderly membership as any church has the right to do. The value of the judgment is to the effect that the Articles of Faith written into the Trust Deed constitute the standard by which property rights are to be determined. (A deadly judgment for the old Convention which has violated nearly every element in the Statement of Faith contained in its Trust Deed.)

It happens that the tentative Constitution of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches included three statements of faith, one of which was word for word the same as the statement in the Trust Deed of the Hughson Street property; another was the statement of belief contained in the Trust Deed of McMaster University; and the third was an amended form of the Baptist Bible Union Confession of Faith, which, in turn, is but an amplification of the New Hampshire Confession of Faith. In the printed form of the Tentative Constitution of the Union the first two statements of faith appeared on page two, and the third on page three. By a clerical error the letter to the members of Hughson Street Church named page "three" instead of pages "two and three".

The authorities of the Convention of Ontario and Quebec behind them, three of the Trustees of Hughson Street Church entered suit to have it declared

that subscription to these additional statements of faith constituted a departure from the Trust Deed. Judgment in the case was rendered by Mr. Justice Kelly, from which the plaintiffs, the Hughson Street Church, appealed. The case was recently heard, and when the judgment of the Appellate Court was handed down, Mr. Gideon Grant seemed to think it was somewhat ambiguous, and appealed, according to the newspaper statements, "for a more inclusive judgment in their favour". Judgment in the case was delivered yesterday, December 18th. The report in *The Evening Telegram*, Toronto, of that date, was as follows:

### REFUSE TO BAR "SHIELDSITES".

#### Appeal Judges Dismiss Motion of "Modernist" Faction of Hamilton Church.

In the action, Wodell vs. Potter, the Second Divisional Court in a judgment delivered at Osgoode Hall to-day dismissed the motion made the other day by Gideon Grant, K.C., on behalf of the plaintiffs, the so-called "modernist" portion of the congregation of Hughson Street Baptist Church, Hamilton, asking that the judgment made by Justice Kelly be made more inclusive.

In effect, what the Court of Appeal was asked to do was to declare that the plaintiffs, those who are opposed to the faction favouring Dr. T. T. Shields, have alone the right to use the property. This the Appeal Court refuses to do. Neither will the Court of Appeal declare that the plaintiffs are the only ones who shall be permitted to determine the religious or denominational relations of the Hughson St. Church.

Justice Riddell, who writes the judgment for the full court, says that, assuming that the defendants (the followers of Dr. Shields) believe in certain new Articles of Faith, he can find nothing that proves or even tends to prove that the defendants do not believe in the original tenets set out in the Trust Deed.

The report in *The Toronto Star* was a little fuller, and was as follows:

### COURT WON'T INTERFERE IN BAPTISTS' DISPUTE.

#### No Jurisdiction Is Finding, Regarding Fundamentalist and Modernist Dispute.

#### HAMILTON APPEAL.

Dismissing the appeal of the trustees of Hughson St. Baptist Church, Hamilton, for a more inclusive judgment in their favor as against those members of the church who followed Dr. T. T. Shields' lead in the recent Baptist fundamentalist and modernist split, the Second Divisional Court at Osgoode Hall to-day puts itself on record as being opposed to any court interference in the beliefs and tenets of a religious body.

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# The Jarvis Street Pulpit

WHEN HEAVEN WISHED EARTH A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, (Sunday Morning, December 25th, 1927.

(Stenographically Reported.)

"The angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

"And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."—Luke 2:9, 10.

This text is really Heaven's Christmas message. We do well to wish each other a Merry Christmas, for the Lord Jesus came into the world to make all hearts merry. The religion of the Lord Jesus is designed to banish fear and dispel the darkness, to bring in all the joy and gladness of the morning. When the people of God carry long faces, and exhibit a gloomy and despondent spirit, they misrepresent the purpose of the Advent. Religion never was designed to make us gloomy and joyless. I remember on one occasion attending a funeral service when I had to ride with the undertaker, and he expressed his profound sympathy with me. He thought I had the most melancholy of all callings! I ventured to suggest that I thought the undertaker rather monopolized the gloom. But he shook his head and said, "No, we are called in when the end has come; but the minister is the companion of those who are in sorrow."

I know that when the Lord Jesus was upon earth He was oftener called to beds of pain to minister to those who were physically ill, and comfort the broken-hearted, than He was invited to festive occasions; but that was because there was then as now so much sorrow in the world. He came to bear our sorrows, to carry our griefs; He was Himself a man of sorrows. But He came to give us joy; and His birth was heralded by angels who said to the shepherds who feared because of the greatness of the glory that burst upon them, "Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

Why is the message of the birth of Jesus so described? Why should this particular birth, one of uncounted millions, be distinguished from all other births? Why should the coming of this Child into the world be differentiated from every other human advent? What is there peculiar and distinctive about Him Who was born at Bethlehem, that the message of His coming should be described as "good tidings of great joy", not for a limited family circle, but for "all people"?

## I.

First of all, JESUS CAME INTO THIS WORLD FOR THE REDEMPTION OF THE PAST. We observe His birth at the year's end. The year is behind us, and we cannot wholly forget our yesterdays. There are people this morning whose records are open to public inspection; whose life story has been written in a very public way, and the page is black with stains—which everyone may see. There are those in the world to-day whom no Christmas present could possibly make happy;

even though you gave them millions, it would not drive their fears away, because they are inseparably joined to a wicked past. Unless a man can get rid of his record, unless he can divorce to-day from his yesterdays, he must be miserable. We cannot live for to-day alone, we cannot be unmindful of that which we have sown, and which, inevitably, we must reap. How many hearts are darkened! How many prospects are clouded this morning, not because the sun is not shining, not because their present situation is not comfortable and happy, but because of yesterday! The thing that is written cannot be unwritten. That is the record of the individual, it is the record of the race. And here is the miracle, that our Lord Jesus came into the world to unwrite the past, to blot out the record of transgressions. He came that He might die for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant.

We must not think of the birth of Christ as unrelated to His death, nor must we think of either as unrelated to the long purpose of God, conceived in the mind of the Eternal before the worlds were made. The coming of Christ was the fulfilment of all that the Scriptures had promised, and He came that He might blot out our past. It is most distressing to be in debt, and to be unable to overtake it, to be hounded by creditors, to be always under obligation, never to shake off the burden, never to be free. What matters it if a man is given a good meal, a comfortable fire, a luxurious house, for a day or two, if he cannot get away from his past?

I should not be surprised if there were someone here this morning whose circumstances have been difficult, who has been, in some respects, unfortunate. Yesterday has brought its entails, and the obligations of years gone by have accumulated. The one thing of which some people dream, and for which they long, is just to be free from such obligations, to have a full discharge from such indebtedness. Would it not be good tidings for one who was facing bankruptcy to receive through the mail a communication assuring him the last farthing of his indebtedness was paid, that the past was blotted out, and that he may this morning begin with a new sheet, and face the future without fear? That, my dear friends, is as much the message of Bethlehem as of Calvary. It was for this purpose the Lord Jesus came into the world. Therefore I bring you this simple truth this morning: that we may, if we will, leave our past beneath the blood, and face the future from this moment assured that we are acquitted, that our obligations are discharged, and

that we have absolutely nothing to fear. Is not that "good tidings"? Ought it not to bring us great joy?

It is useless for me to speak of the present, or the future, without a recognition of the significance of the past. I know very well that that is a commonplace, for every man and every woman must know that it is impossible to separate life into fragments of time, and live for one day in forgetfulness of days that are past. Life is a strange unity, and the past and the present and the future are one. A man is to-day what he is because of his yesterday, and he will be to-morrow that which he is in the making to-day; and unless we have a salvation that goes back to the beginning of things, that touches eternity, we have no "good tidings", we cannot have a message of "great joy". But I invite you this morning to receive this Christmas gift in the presence of God, and from the hand of God: the cancellation, the absolute cancellation, of every legal obligation, the blotting out in God's book of everything written against you, by virtue, not alone of the birth of Christ, of course, but by virtue of His death and resurrection as well.

## II.

Then there is another thing. Here is A PRESENT JOY, FOR THE HEAVENS ARE OPENED AND IT IS OUR HUMAN PRIVILEGE TO HOLD COMMERCE WITH THE SKIES. How often I have met with parents who have told me of the passing out of their life of some of their children! They have crossed the sea, they have gone to another country, an unknown country, and no message has come back. The weary years drag on, and father or mother does not know whether the lost son is living or dead. No message has come back, there has been a complete interruption of all communication, and the lost one is as truly dead as if he were actually buried. What do we know about heaven? What do we know about the future life? What assurance have we that it is possible for men to communicate with God?

I remember how the world was thrilled twenty-five years ago or more when the first electric signals were transmitted without wires across the Atlantic. Marconi had his theory, he had experimented long; at last he established his station and operated his instruments, and without wires, through boundless space, these electric flashes were projected, and were recorded on the other side of the globe. It was considered a very wonderful thing. The telephone in its beginning was looked upon as somewhat of a toy. Even wise men laughed at it, mocked at the idea that it ever would become a useful instrument. The idea of its being a part of every business concern, and of almost every household, was utterly undreamed of. And then what wonders we have witnessed in more recent days when not only electric signals, but actually the human voice, has been transmitted over thousands of miles without any but natural media of communication. But oh, what a day that was when communication was established, not between continents, not from continent to continent, or from home to home, but when communication was definitely established between earth and heaven!

That was a great dream which Jacob had when he went away from home, and in his loneliness under a sense of his brother's displeasure—and I doubt not with a guilty conscience beside—he lay down to sleep.

How marvellous it was that in his dreams he saw a ladder set up upon earth, whose top reached to heaven. That was not the first time men had dreamed of such communication, for long before the Babel builders said, "Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven." That had been man's dream, the building of something upon earth that would lift men up to heaven. But it had always resulted in Babylon, always had it come to failure and confusion. There was no real communication established between earth and heaven from the earthward side until the angel said, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy." Heaven and earth are married, a means of communication with the skies has been opened, and now it is possible for man to hold commerce with Heaven.

## III.

The children have been looking for Santa Claus. Some people seem to be afraid that we may do the children harm by nursing that little fiction. Yet, my dear friends, it is perfectly natural. It is only the outward view of the great principle that Someone did come down from heaven, and bring all the wealth of heaven with Him—and He is with us still. Good tidings of great joy! How would you like to have a real Santa Claus? I confess, and I am not ashamed to confess it either, that that was a wonderful hour to me of an early Christmas morning when those wonderful things were put at the foot of my bed. I did not know how, there was magic about it somewhere. I went to sleep and there was nothing there; I awakened up and it was there. There was no doubt about it, it was there. And I was all the richer because it had come. It would have been useless to have given me money enough to buy ten times as much as there was put in that stocking—money could not buy it! It all came in a different way, there was magic about it, a touch of mystery about it that made it very wonderful. I would not like to tell you how old I was when I ceased to hang up my stocking! I believe I would do it to-day if there was anyone to put anything in it. But alas! alas! my Santa Claus has gone to heaven himself! Those happy days of childhood, after all, were full of good cheer; and there is something wrong with the man who does not enter into it, something out of joint somewhere. I used to think that the day after Christmas was the dullest and dearest day of all the year. No—it was not because I had had too much dinner Christmas Day! It was because the next Christmas day with all its gladness and joy was so far away. Just three hundred and sixty-four days we had to wait for another one!

But how would you like to have Santa Claus—we used to call him in the land from which I came, Father Christmas, you English people know that; but no matter what you call him, he came somehow—but how would you like to have him come every morning? How would you like to have Santa Claus come and live with you? Oh, I wonder if you will understand me when I say that the Christmas message is this, that you may hang up your stocking every night? That is what it means. It means that there is Someone Who comes into this impoverished life of ours and we open our eyes upon a new day. His mercies are new every morning, and He never fails. Why is



it that we go mourning? Why is it we are so often poor when we ought to be rich? Why is it that we go hungry when we ought to be living at the King's banqueting table? "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy." He did not come merely to be born in a manger, and then by and by pass out of our lives: He came to abide with us.

What of the angels? "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Hang your stocking up again, my friends. Hang it up in faith, and close your eyes every nightfall in the confidence that God's angel will watch you while you sleep, and will meet you in the morning. He Who is infinitely wealthy will see to it that we shall not lack any good thing, but will daily load us with benefits.

A man came to me in the vestry a few years ago and said, "May I speak to you quietly?" I said, "Yes". He shut the door, and drew his chair up very close to mine. Putting his hand to his head he said, "You see, sir, that my hair is short. Do you see this suit of clothes? I came out of Kingston Penitentiary on Friday, and they gave me this, and a ticket for Toronto." I forget, perhaps he had a very little money too, but he said, "I have nothing now, I have no work, and nobody will have me. Can you get me work anywhere? I should like to tell you my story." And he told me his story, a sad and sordid story it was too. He had been behind the bars, and had just got out. His yesterday was covered, he had paid the penalty of his crime; but to-day he was without hope, because, while legally he was acquitted, he knew very well that people would shrug their shoulders and pass him by.

I went to a man—it is years ago now—I went to a man who was an employer of labour. I said, "Will you do me a favour?" He replied, "I will if I can." "Will you give employment to a man I send to you, give him a job, and never ask him a question?" "That is a big contract", he said. "Yes it is", I answered, "but some day you will understand. Will you do it?" "Yes, I will do it." Thus I got the poor fellow a job.

But, my friends, that is not how the Lord treats us when we get out of jail. The past is cancelled, and He does give us a new suit of clothes; but oh, it is a good one, it is a robe of righteousness. It will never wear out. And not only that: He establishes communication with Heaven, and sends all His angels to be our servants; He promises to supply all our needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. I am only pleading for a recognition of the privilege of holding Christmas every day. "Good tidings of great joy"; yesterday cared for; all the needs of to-day supplied, with absolutely no fear for to-morrow!

#### IV.

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." I am glad He came as a child. Did you ever wish you could be a child again? How old are you? I will not ask you to tell me aloud! But have you ever wished that you could begin life all over again? You would avoid a thousand mistakes, would you not? No, you would probably do the same things over again if you had the same disposition. "Make me a child again just for to-night" is the cry of the world, my friends.

There is not a man or woman here who has had an extended experience of life, who has not wished a thousand times that he or she could go back to childhood's days, and begin life over again.

That is the message of Christmas, that that is possible. The birth of the Lord Jesus was the birth of a new race. It promised the possibility of being born again for every one of us, the same Christ being formed in us the hope of glory; it promised success and victory where erstwhile we had been utterly, overwhelmingly, defeated. "Good tidings of great joy"; "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

I must no longer detain you this morning, but in the midst of all our gladness let us not forget Him. At this Christmas season, let our hearts receive Him for what He is, the Saviour Who is Christ the Lord. I quoted a saying the other day in a certain place about somebody who said that it might well be doubted whether it was not misleading to call Jesus the Christ. I had said to the people that they might ask any questions they liked, and somebody rose in the audience and said quite savagely, "Why do you quote that out of its context?" "Well", I said, "can you suggest any context that would justify that?" I really had not thought of it in the way that it came to me at the moment, for just then a flood of scriptures came into my mind, and I discovered that there was not a page of the Bible that you could believe if Jesus was not the Christ—not one, from beginning to end. "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Who is He? The Christ, the Anointed One, in Whom the entire Old Testament revelation finds its fulfilment: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" "Elias." "Jeremiah." "One of the prophets." "But whom say ye that I am?" "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." "Blessed art thou, Simon, Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee"—you cannot learn that in any school on earth, you cannot learn that from any book that was ever written—"but my Father which is in heaven." "I bring you good tidings of great joy." It always comes down from above; you cannot learn it anywhere else. "Unto you is born this day . . . a Saviour." Who is He? "Christ the Lord." And so you see the Old and the New Testaments are bound up together, and we have a Saviour Who is none other than God Himself. Let us be happy. How many of you do really rejoice in Christ? Let us say so. (Great volume of hallelujahs).

Let us sing,—

"While shepherds watched their flocks by night  
All seated on the ground,  
The Angel of the Lord came down,  
And glory shone around.

"'Fear not' said he: for mighty dread  
Had seized their troubled mind;  
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
To you and all mankind.

"To you in David's town this day  
Is born of David's line,  
A Saviour, Who is Christ the Lord!  
And this shall be the sign:

"The heavenly Babe you there shall find  
To human view display'd,  
All meanly wrapped in swathing bands,  
And in a manger laid."

"Thus spoke the seraph; and forthwith  
Appeared a shining throng  
Of angels praising God, who thus  
Addressed their joyful song:

"All glory be to God on high,  
And on the earth be peace;  
Good will henceforth from heav'n to men  
Begin and never cease."

### "THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR HIM IN THE INN".

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, December 25th, 1927.

(Stenographically Reported.)

"And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."—Luke 2:7.

"There was no room for them in the inn." I shall not labour this evening to find some new thing, but content myself with calling your attention to some things which are perfectly simple and obvious, as suggested by this text.

#### I.

The first is this, THAT STILL THE HEAVENLY VISITOR WAITS ON HUMAN HOSPITALITY. I believe there is not a single word in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation that is obsolete. There is a sense in which the earliest chapters of the Book are prophetic, and await a complete fulfilment. We are told that God's works were finished from the foundation of the world. He has never had to change His plans; He has never had to deviate the slightest degree from His original purpose. The story of His dealings with men is in the Book completely unfolded. Someone has said, "History is simply His story." We are not asked merely to yield an intellectual assent to a written record—though that is vitally important—for salvation means vastly more than subscription to a creed. The wise men came enquiring, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." And it is written, "When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." He assembled the chief priests and the scribes of the people together, and demanded of them where Christ should be born. These experts turned to the written word, and they found the story of His birth prophetically recorded; they learned that He was to be born in Bethlehem of Judaea, because it was so written by the prophets.

But although they believed the word, and yielded assent to the record, neither the chief priests nor the scribes found the young Child; and though Herod was orthodox enough to apply for a scriptural statement, and apparently offered no objection to that which was written, he never found his way to the young Child. And it is possible for us to be intellectually orthodox, and never know Christ; it is possible to subscribe to the statement of Scripture, to be versed in the letter of the Word, and never actually receive Jesus Christ. But the great truth of the gospel is that the presence of the Lord of glory is always with us, and it is still our high privilege to afford Him hos-

pitality, to receive and welcome Him. God's whole programme is summed up in this, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them. He has not willed to dwell apart from His creatures. The Word must yet again be tabernacled in flesh; we must receive not merely the truth about Jesus, but we must receive Jesus Christ Himself. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." Still He awaits the reception of such as have not opened their hearts to Him. The Lord of glory condescends to our human estate, and offers to come in and abide with us.

My question to you this evening is, Have you certainly received Christ? Do you know Him personally? Is He a character in a book? Is he merely an historic figure belonging to a remote period of history? Do you think of Him as you think of others who have lived and died, but who have lived worthily? Or do you think of Him as Someone entirely apart, Who is as truly alive to-day as He ever was, and Who comes to abide in the hearts of His people? Have you any consciousness of His presence? Have you come to present your gifts, and bow in adoring wonder at His shrine? Have you been numbered among the worshippers whom the Father seeks to worship Him, who worship in spirit and in truth? Dr. Stockley led us in thanksgiving this evening for the reality of Christ. He is not a figment of the imagination; He is not a figure of antiquity: He is present with us still; He comes to abide,—

"Closer is He than breathing, nearer than hands and feet."

Is that the kind of religion you have? or does it consist only in church membership, in religious profession, in intellectual acceptance of a truth? Have you received the Person of the Son of God?

#### II.

I would remind you, however, that on this occasion OUR LORD WAS EXCLUDED BECAUSE THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR HIM; He was not deliberately and positively excluded because He was the Christ; it was not for that reason that He was born in a manger: it was simply because the inn was preoccupied, someone else had arrived beforehand.



It is true of many lives that Christ is excluded therefrom, not because they have deliberately and definitely set themselves against religion, and against the Person of Christ, not because they are wilfully and of set purpose antagonistic toward the Holy Child. That is not why, primarily, our Lord has no place in the lives of many; nevertheless He is excluded just as surely as though this were so; for He has no place whatever. There are multitudes of professing Christians in whose hearts and lives the Lord of glory is not a factor—He is a kind of Sunday remembrance; but He is not a daily, present, Saviour and Lord; He is shut out because the life is preoccupied with other matters.

I need not for the moment stop to explain, or to attempt to define, the reason for that preoccupation, but rather to concern ourselves just now with the statement of the fact. In how many lives here this evening is Jesus Christ first? To how many of us is He more than father or mother, or wife or child, or worldly possessions? To how many of us is He the most precious gift and possession we have? In all too few lives is Jesus Christ given the pre-eminence.

We hear a great deal nowadays about an "inclusive policy", but that kind of thing always issues at last in the exclusion of Jesus Christ. I want to find the heart and conscience of every man and woman here this evening who is an avowed Christian. I do not know your name. I do not know where you live, I am ignorant of your record; but if it be so that there is one present here this evening who is not a Christian in the sense that you have never received Christ, that you have never surrendered all the interests of life to His dominance, to His control, I want you to examine that this evening, and to enquire why. You are not deliberately antagonistic as I have suggested—your very presence here this evening proves that. You are not irreligious. If you were, you would not be in this house of prayer. But you are not a vital Christian; you have not received the fulness of God into your own heart; He has been excluded. Why? Oh, it is the old, old story, because someone else, or something else, has taken His place. He has been shut out because that which is legitimately His has not been yielded to Him.

That is the great need of the hour nowadays, that God's people give Him first place. If men touch upon divine standards at all, the emphasis is laid upon the second table of the law to the exclusion of the first; our duty to our neighbour is exalted above our obligation to God, and religion is reduced to a merely humanitarian plane. There are many who are admirable fathers, good citizens, righteous men as employers or employees; with their outward conduct and character no fault can reasonably be found so far as human judgment is concerned; they walk circumspectly, and are to the last degree upright in all their relationships. But there is no God there, there is no place for God.

I wonder if you ever contrasted, for your instruction, the two characters, Jacob and Esau? Jacob, so mean, so sordid in many ways, so utterly selfish and unworthy; and yet in spite of it all, everywhere in Jacob's life you will find there is a remembrance of God; unworthy as he is, there is a place for God.

Somehow he has opened his heart to God, and through the progress of the years God comes in and takes possession of him until at last the supplanter becomes a prince, and as the evening shadows fall about him, as the sun of life is westering, as he views his strangely complicated life in retrospect, he crosses his hands upon the heads of his grandsons, and in worship and adoration of the God Who has been with him, he says, "The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads". God had got in somehow; and as God came in everything else was driven out, he was perfected at last, and made ready for the presence of God. And it came to pass that at evening time it was light.

But Esau was a "profane" man. He was generous in many ways, a man who was of amiable disposition; I suppose around the home he was rather a dutiful son, for when his father wanted savoury meat such as he loved, it was Esau he expected to render him that service. But what was the outstanding characteristic of the life of Esau? Notwithstanding the somewhat attractive exterior, his disposition was just this; he was "profane". That word means not enclosed; the word was used to describe the land about the temple, that was outside the pale, it was not sacred, it was not reserved for God, it was an open thoroughfare through which any vagrant spirits might pass. Thus, there was no sacred enclosure in Esau's life reserved for God. He was so occupied with other things that he had no room for God; he never bowed the knee in prayer, he never built an altar, he never turned his eyes heavenward, he was of the earth earthy, he lived on the lower plane, and had no place for God.

Oh, how many there are like that to-day, essentially profane. I recall just now that one evening as I was coming along Gerrard Street I passed a certain professor who used to worship with us, a man of God, and I laid my hand on his shoulder and said, "Good evening, Doctor, delighted you are going to be with us to-night". "Oh", he said, "I thought I would just like to come down and hear a little bit about the divine side of things". I said, "Are you sure of that, Doctor?" "Yes", he said, "I am always sure of that anyway". I replied, "Thank you for the compliment, I hope we shall never cease to deserve it". That is what we ought to hear about here, the divine side of things,—the life that is perpendicularly related, that is not lived wholly on the horizontal plane, the life lived in right relationship to God, in which there is room for God.

### III.

Have you any room for Him? Supposing we pause a minute or two in AN ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN AND DEFINE THIS PREOCCUPATION. Why was it there was no room for them in the inn? Why is it so often there is no room for God in human lives to-day? What are these things that usurp the place of God? I think I could gather them all together in a two-fold classification: some of them are legitimate, and some of them are illegitimate. Some of them—let me reverse the order—are essentially evil. "Thou are of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity"; "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord

will not hear me". We may so fill our hearts with evil, and afford a generous and willing hospitality to that which is contrary to the Divine holiness, as to exclude God from the life.

I need not enumerate the evil things which make fellowship with God impossible. Never let it be said that it was written, Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people *in* their sins! Never! "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people *from* their sins": "God, having raised up His Son Jesus Christ, sent Him to bless you by turning away every one of you from his iniquities"; and when Jesus Christ comes in, other things have to go out, they cannot live together, they cannot dwell in peace together. Christ has no concord with Belial; the temple of God has no agreement with idols; and we are the temples of the Holy Ghost. If we receive Him, certain other things must be excluded: on the other hand, the presence of these evil things bars the door against Jesus Christ.

Or let me put it in another way: If I were to ask you what it means to receive Christ, I dare say you would reply, "It means to believe on Him". Yes, but what does it mean to believe? We hear a great deal about believing to-day, but very little about repentance. The truth is, you cannot believe without repentance. Repentance and faith are really two aspects of the same thing. Let me give you an example. You remember the story of Ahab and his four hundred prophets? When Ahab had set his heart upon Ramoth in Gilead, he said, "Know ye that Ramoth in Gilead is our's, and we be still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria? And he said unto Jehoshaphat, Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-gilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses—but we had better ask the Lord about it". You remember how the four hundred prophets were summoned, and with one voice they approved Ahab's course. When Ahab asked his four hundred salaried preachers if he should go to Ramoth in Gilead and prosper, they said, "Certainly, Certainly"! When a man needs four hundred preachers to keep him straight, he is naturally rather crooked. When a man needs a unanimous vote of four hundred before he can take a certain course, it is likely to be a questionable course that he is contemplating. Ahab was set upon that evil thing, and he had the four hundred men who said, "Let the king do according to the desire of his own heart, and he shall prosper. Go to Ramoth and you shall possess it". Then you remember the other prophet came of whom Ahab said that he never prophesied good but evil. This prophet said in effect, "Ahab, if you go to Ramoth you will never come back. I had a vision, and I saw all Israel scattered upon the mountains as sheep without a shepherd, and the Lord said, Let them return every man to his house in peace". Ahab, therefore, was faced with these two courses: He had the testimony of four hundred minds all in absolute agreement, and over against the four hundred he had the warning voice of one faithful prophet. What was involved in Ahab's attitude toward these two prophecies? What must he do to believe the four hundred? Nothing at all, but continue in his own way. No repentance was necessary

to receive the testimony of the four hundred; but it was impossible for him to believe Micaiah without effecting a revolution in his life; he had to turn right about face and say "No" to everything to which he had said, "Yes". He could not believe the counsel of Micaiah without first repenting.

Do you see therefore, what sin is? Faith in God is impossible without repentance. In other words, there can be no room for Christ in the heart that is full of sin, no room until the man is willing to part company with evil. I do not know what excludes Christ from your heart: an unholy ambition, a determination at all costs to win in the affairs of the world, or it may be grosser evils than these. But whatever it is, will you tell me to-night, "Sir, I cannot believe and receive Jesus Christ into my heart"? My answer to you is this, you cannot believe until you repent; but when you are willing to throw wide the door for the expulsion of evil, that moment the Lord of glory will find entrance. Do not wait to cleanse your heart from sin, but receive Jesus Christ. Not only are our hearts purified through faith, but in the measure in which we repent of evil, faith becomes possible to us. So I say that pre-occupation of the heart and life is sometimes to be explained on the ground of a man's addiction or devotion to that which is in itself intrinsically, essentially, evil.

On the other hand, sometimes the Lord is excluded by that which is in itself legitimate. Pleasure, for example. I think it is quite legitimate for us to have a good time. As I said to you this morning, we ought to be the happiest people in the world if we are Christians. Pleasure is not forbidden, but we are to find our joys in legitimate channels; but if the thing that is, in itself, not evil, is permitted to monopolize our thought, our time, and our energy, to the neglect and exclusion of the higher interests of life, then in the measure in which the one thing comes in the other goes out. I give you an example. I suppose I expose myself to criticism when I say this, but consider the case of the modern Y.M.C.A. The Young Men's Christian Association, which was organized by Sir George Williams as an evangelistic force, was for the winning of men to Christ, the preaching of the gospel; in its beginning the spiritual was uppermost. It is legitimate to have a gymnasium. While the Lord; "taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man", I think He wills that we should have sound bodies: therefore, there is a legitimate place for recreation and exercise. But in the modern Y.M.C.A., as in most institutional churches, the physical is permitted to almost entirely exclude the spiritual and in the day that that legitimate thing monopolizes one's thought to the exclusion of things that are higher, whether in an individual or an institution, it becomes a sin, and a stumbling block. Many a man thus excludes Christ, not because he has with devotion and passion given himself to evil consciously, but because he has laid an undue and disproportionate emphasis upon things that ought to be secondary, or even less than that. The requirement of the Christian gospel is that Jesus Christ should be first, and anything that relegates Him is a secondary place, legitimate though it may be in itself, becomes in itself an evil.

So my friends, you often find Christ excluded from a life because the man is engaged in business. I have known a man who was not, in the ordinary acceptance of that term, a business man, but rather a working man. We ought all to be working men, or be ashamed of ourselves. But you know what I mean by the common use of that term: I mean a man who was dependent for his support upon his day's labour, and upon the wages he earned. He made up his mind he would build a house; he did not decide to build a big house, he wanted only a small house, just a place for himself and his wife. It was legitimate that he should have it, perfectly legitimate, but he allowed that house to crowd out everything else, until, although he never was rich, he became one of the worst of misers. He dried up his soul, and gave his whole life to the acquisition of that little cottage, so that there was no room in his life for God at all.

Do you see what I mean when I say that legitimate employments, occupations, and even ambitions, may be allowed so to take possession of a life that they become illegitimate by the fact that they relegate the higher interest of life to a secondary place? It is possible—you mothers, let me warn you—it is possible to allow the necessary duties of life to exclude Christ. The care of the children, the household duties of the day, the burdens from which we can none of us escape, and which must be attended to: I say, it is possible to allow these things to come between ourselves and God until there is no room left in the life for Him.

I do not know who they were in the inn, princes or paupers, except that most of them were probably there by royal decree. They had come up to Jerusalem for the taxing; they had no choice about it, they had to be there. Somewhere they had to find shelter, and they got in before Mary and Joseph; so the Babe was born in a manger because there was no room for Him in the inn. Are you not glad he was born in a manger? Are you not glad that He did not go back to glory and say, "If this world has no room for Me, I will go back to My Father"? He might have returned by a miracle to the Father even as it was by a miracle He came. But as there was no other place, he was born in a manger.

Somebody here to-night says, "Sir, I would gladly receive Jesus Christ into my heart, but the King of glory would not come." Why not? "Because the imagination of the thoughts of the heart are only evil continually." Never mind, if you are but willing that He should come in, He will come and cleanse it, and make your heart a temple of the Holy Spirit. I am sure that as soon as the Holy Child was laid in the manger the stable was made clean. I suppose that when the wise men came at last into the stable, and they had been gazing toward heaven for a long time, fixing their eyes upon the star,—I suppose they came into that dark stable with light in their eyes; and yet when they came in, I fancy it was not dark,—

"The Lamb is all the glory  
Of Immanuel's land."

When they saw the Babe wrapped in swaddling bands and laid in a manger, I do not know why, I do not know how, but they knew that He was not like

other babes. There was a light of glory about Him; because they had been given a spiritual insight, they discerned something different. A light from heaven had guided them, and they bowed at that manger-shrine, and, opening unto Him their treasures, "they presented unto Him gifts; gold and frankincense, and myrrh."

There is a sweet story in the Old Testament of a very humble home in Shunem where there lived together a man and his wife. A stranger passed that way and he turned in. When he left them, he left something behind. There was somehow a different fragrance about his life, and the woman said to her husband, "I perceive that this is a holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither. We will say to the prophet, Whenever you pass by, this is your home; there is a place reserved for you; no one else will ever occupy it. It will always be waiting; and when you come the door will always be open; just walk in and be at home." And oh, how often he came! Could she afford it? You remember what he brought with him? You remember how at last there came a new life into that home, and with it a new joy, and a new meaning to life to the woman of Shunem.

Thus, my dear friends, we may be hospitable to the truth; thus we may open our hearts to the Word of God, and to the God of the Word. Thus ought we to have a little chamber on the wall; there ought to be in every life a sacred enclosure, reserved for God alone. And if you let Him occupy it, you will find that His presence will soon manifest itself in all the other rooms in the house; you will discover in a blessed experience of His abounding grace the meaning of that which is writteth, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

Have you room for Him to-night? When I have called your attention to this verse, I have done. No room for Christ! In the end of the Book there is a different story. It tells of a great white throne, and of One Who sat upon it; and when He took His place upon that great white throne, from the presence of His dreadful majesty "the earth and the heavens fled away, and there was found no place for them." No room at last for anything or anyone but God, for God must be all-in-all. He will make room for Himself some day! If He comes not in grace and infinitely tender mercy, as the Royal Guest to bring to us Heaven's benediction, then at last He must come to take His place as God; and the things that have excluded Him, shall flee from before Him, and God will be glorified in all. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father." May He help us to receive Him.

Let us pray: O Lord, we bless Thee for Thine infinite stoop, that out of the ivory palaces Thou didst come, and that Thou hast come into our hearts

which were no better than the manger. We thank Thee that when Thou dost come, Thou dost convert even an evil heart of unbelief into a temple of the Holy Ghost. Forbid that anyone should leave this place to-night without taking Christ with him. Grant us Thy Spirit, O God of grace, that we all may find room for Jesus. We thank Thee, O Saviour of sinners, for coming to dwell with some of us. Thou hast led us into the banqueting house, and Thy banner over us has been love. Thou hast given to us a perpetual Christmas; Thou hast made us to eat of heavenly dainties; Thou hast put upon us the garments of the heavenly court; Thou hast made us to rejoice, to sing Thy praises in harmony with the heavenly hosts who cry: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." So bless us to-night. Make this Christmas evening, O Lord, an occasion of salvation. May Christ be formed in us, in someone here who hitherto has been a stranger, the hope of glory. May some human heart be the manger in which Christ shall be born, in which a new life shall be implanted, a life that is immortal, and which all the powers of darkness cannot extinguish. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

### THE CHILD JESUS.

(Continued from page 2.)

of His life, in His perfectly amazing self control. He must have been incomparable in the interest which He awakened, in His devotion to Mary, His mother, in His respect for Joseph, Mary's husband; in His kindness and faithfulness to all the members of the family. He was incomparable in the simplicity of His life, in His love for prayer, and in the naturalness of His fellowship with His Father.

Further He was a lovely Child. I think He must have been lovely in feature; begotten of the Holy Spirit, with not a taint of sin. There must have been a beautiful freshness about His person, with an expression that had no shade of wrong, with the most captivating smile, a voice full of richest music, and a manner which told of a heart full of grace. His life in childhood had its deeply serious seasons, as the story of His first visit to the temple indicates, but it must have been a life full of song, and of everything that was lovely. Our children are sometimes songless and dull, even depressing. But there was never anything unlovely about the Child Jesus. He was the fairest among ten thousand, the altogether lovely Child, beautiful in every respect beyond language to describe.

Finally He was the Divine Child. He was Divine in quite a unique sense; He was the Son of God, and always so. From His birth He was God manifest in the flesh. He was the Word Who was with God, and Who was God, by whom all things were created, Who became flesh and tabernacled among us, the Everlasting Word, Who from the beginning was the medium of the Divine revelation, Who was now enshrined in the material body of Jesus of Bethlehem. Dr. MacLaren says that John, chapter one, verse fourteen, sets before us that one transcendent, wonderful all-blessed thought that this poor human nature is capable of, and has really once in the history of the world received

unto itself the real actual presence of the whole fulness of the Godhead. What must be the kindred and likeness between Godhead and manhood when into the frail vehicle of our humanity that wondrous treasure was poured, when the fire of the Godhead can burn in the bush of our human nature and that nature not be consumed?"

And so "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily". How great is the mystery, and the wonder in that holy life of the Child Jesus, "the glory of the Lord was revealed that all flesh might see it." And as the divinest thing in God is His love, that central beauty of the Divine radiated from Him until it blazed forth in an almost intolerable lustre in the cross of Calvary.

And so we have the Child Jesus, perhaps a cave-born Child, certainly a Holy Child, and an incomparable Child, a lovely Child and a Divine Child. Let us bring to Him our best, and worship Him.

### LAST SUNDAY IN JARVIS STREET—AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Dr. W. L. Pettingill concluded his all too brief ministry of six services in Jarvis Street with a fine message on "The Fruits of Justification" Sunday morning. Dr. Pettingill is a great favourite with Jarvis Street people, a veritable beam of sunshine. We count it a great privilege to have him in our pulpit.

The attendance at the School Sunday morning was 1,416. Notwithstanding many very special attractions, the house was full at both morning and evening services. The Pastor baptized in the evening, and preached on "The Dead in Christ—Where are They?" This sermon will appear in due time.

This week is a busy week for our Sunday School workers. The Primary Department supper and entertainment was held this (Wednesday) evening, and with the parents of the children numbered about four hundred. At the same time Mrs. McConaghy's afternoon class held their Christmas evening. Thursday, from four to seven o'clock, the Beginners' and Cradle Roll will have their supper and entertainment; and Friday evening, the Intermediate Department. Next week the regular services will be held as usual: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday evenings; and, in addition, at eleven o'clock Wednesday morning there will be the usual Christmas morning service, when the Pastor will preach.

We give this advance notice of a great service New Year's night, when the choir, assisted by several choirs from our great School, will give an evening of praise. On these occasions the church is always crowded far beyond capacity, with large numbers turned away. We suggest to our people that they keep New Year's night free. Of course there will be the usual Watchnight Service Tuesday evening, December 31st; with the service of all services New Year's morning at ten o'clock.

### SPLENDID INVESTMENT

Wanted—Two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00). First mortgage on a parsonage valued at Four thousand dollars (\$4,000.00). Interest at the rate of 6½% payable semi-annually, five year period. Church is free of encumbrance.

This is a splendid opportunity for some Christian man or woman to assist a Church in financing its work. For further particulars please communicate with Rev. W. E. Atkinson, 337 Jarvis St., Toronto 2, Ont.

**MR. GIDEON GRANT'S VAIN THREATS.**

(Continued from page 4.)

"The court has no jurisdiction in this case to enter upon the belief of any man except as the inquiry may be necessary to determine property rights of some kind," Mr. Justice Riddell declares in his written judgment. "Suppose that the requisite to being a cestui trust was a belief in the Thirty-Nine Articles or in the Westminster Confession of Faith; and that a congregation of the Church of England or of the Presbyterian Church should find some of its members taking up the belief in 'Anglo-Israel,' while the other did not; suppose either section to attempt to exclude the other from the benefit of the trust—could it be argued that either would or should succeed?" his lordship asks—implying a negative answer.

After detailing in full the religious tenets which the plaintiffs said the other members of the church had abandoned, Mr. Justice Riddell concludes that the previous judgment of the court must remain unaltered.

In view of the foregoing we hope that any pastor or church who has had an uncomfortable moment as a result of one of Mr. Grant's threatening letters, will now rest more comfortably. We tried in our two articles on the subject previously published to encourage our brethren, and to tell them they need not be afraid of Mr. Grant's threats.

If the reports of Mr. Grant's pleading before the Court, which appeared in the papers of Monday, were correct, we congratulate Mr. Grant on having pleaded our case so successfully. It would appear that counsel for the Hughson Street Church had very little to say. He must have rightly concluded that the more Mr. Grant talked, the better it would be for us.

When we read the report of the hearing in Monday's papers, by the operation of some strange law,—was it a law of association?—there was recalled to our mind a story we had read of one of Ontario's very eminent judges, one, if we are not mistaken, who is still on the bench. He is a very distinguished man, and very versatile, a man of broad

and numerous interests. Report has it that he occasionally, for his own amusement, writes poetry, or, at least, rhyme. This particular judge, according to the story, was with other judges hearing an appeal case. One of the parties to the dispute was represented by a very voluble counsel who seemed to assume that the judges knew very little, and were depending upon him entirely for information. As they listened to the argument of the very talkative counsel, the judge to whom we have referred seemed to be taking notes; but, as it transpired when the case was over, he was really writing poetry, a parody on one of Kipling's rhymes. He passed a sheet of paper to another judge, who read it; and a suggestion of a smile crossed his countenance. The parody, in the account we read, was published in full, but unfortunately most of it has slipped our mind. It was written in the measure of one of Kipling's pieces referring to the Colour Sergeant, and much of it was in the form of question and answer. Two lines of the parody were something like this, after one had asked what all the noise was about;

" 'Tis counsel's opening argument  
The Colour Sergeant said."

There were other things apropos of the case in hand, but the last three lines of the judge's parody read like this:

"And he's pretty sure to get it  
Where the chicken got the axe,  
When the court delivers judgment in the morning."

Why that particular story should have occurred to us in this connection we shall have to leave the experts in psychology to determine.

By the way, we omitted to call attention to the fact that the judgment referred to in the extracts from the evening papers printed above was written by Mr. Justice Riddell.

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# The Union Baptist Witness

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

W. GORDON BROWN, Editor.

## HOUSEHOLD RELIGION.

The fire of revival still burns at St. Thomas. Sunday, December 8th, added three more converts to the list. Two sisters walked the aisle for Christ; a third sister took the same step the previous Sunday. This is the second time within two months that three sisters have come to Christ in our church. The third convert was a man whose wife and family were present at the service. And still more prayer!—D. F.

\* \* \*

## A BUSY ENEMY.

"An enemy hath done this," said the farmer in the parable, when he found the field, in which he had sown good seed, bringing forth tares. "An enemy hath done this," said the Regular Baptist Missionaries in North Bay, when the report was spread about town, two or three weeks ago, that they were Communists, working under false colours, and when, as we hear, these reports made it necessary to cancel the theatre service the next Sunday night. The following Sunday, however, a young woman received Christ at the regular service. The pastor took this as an evidence of God's favour, whatever others might think and say.

\* \* \*

## PROGRESS IN GUELPH.

Pastor R. D. Campbell writes from Guelph to correct an error which these pages unwittingly recorded. He says that their Mission Sunday School "may be the largest mission school in the city, and it may even be the largest Baptist School in the city", but it is not the largest school in Guelph. Nevertheless, the work is progressing, and we trust that some day this will be the largest Sunday School in the community.

In addition to the work carried on at 17 Suffolk St., in the East End a building, formerly used as a mission, has been procured, and a Sunday School there opened in the afternoon. The Lord is so prospering this effort that the workers expected last Sunday to begin also an evening service. Mr. W. Frid is in charge of this branch of the church work.

At the main church progress is being made. "A number have been received into fellowship with us, some have been baptized, and more are ready".

At Moffat, where Pastor Campbell preaches Sunday afternoons, a few have definitely decided for Christ, and one young man was recently baptized and received into church fellowship.

\* \* \*

## IN HAMILTON.

The well-known Dr. Pettingill preached in Stanley Ave. Baptist Church last Sunday evening.

## HAND-PICKED FRUIT.

Hand-picked fruit is the best, they say; spiritually speaking, that is the kind which Rev. P. B. Loney is gathering in at the Runnymede Road Church Toronto. A week ago last Sunday night one young man professed conversion; the following Wednesday two young men applied for baptism. Of these one was converted some time ago in Runnymede Road, and the other was brought to Christ, while in Gravenhurst with friends who are members of this church also.

\* \* \*

## SEMINARY QUARTETTE.

Pastors and others desiring the assistance of our Toronto Baptist Seminary Quartette to sing, or preach,—or both,—should write to the Dean, Dr. T. I. Stockley, 337 Jarvis St., Toronto 2, Ont.

\* \* \*

## LIFE IN LIBERIA.

We give below some sketchy notes from letters which have been received from Mrs. H. L. Davey, one of our three missionaries now in Liberia. Their freshness greatly increases their interest.

"Again I am writing to the sound of the trickling rain drops. We actually had two days without a drop! and we began to have high hopes of getting a little work done,—the men folk especially,—on the buildings, but now it is coming down with a determination to stay indefinitely."

## Dance, Drums and Dogs.

"We shall be so glad when our new house is ready, but you cannot rush things here. If the rain isn't coming down in torrents, the work boys don't turn up. Yesterday, Horace was away up on the hill before seven in the morning, the sun was shining, and he had high hopes of a good day's work; but not a boy came, and late in the afternoon the head boy sent in word to say that he was celebrating because a baby girl had been born. The others were evidently celebrating with him with some poisonous trade gin. By the way, gin, tobacco and salt are the chief articles of trade here. These celebrations make village life anything but tranquil. A couple of nights ago a few women began a little argument, and in about five minutes you would have thought nothing short of a war was going on. The din was dreadful. Then the rest of the folk celebrated with a dance and what with the drums, and the fight just outside, all the babies screeching together, and a few dogs scrapping as a side line,—well life is not peaceful; but then we are glad to be here, and the little mud house is cheerful enough within, and we hope soon to be able to get more to the villages round about with the Gospel. Many of them I have

not even seen, for the floods have taken away the flimsy bridges, and this cuts off communication entirely, and, as far as we are concerned, they might as well be at the North Pole."

## Lepers on the Verandah!

"The leper work continues to grow! we have five coming now for regular treatment; and when we are able to have little huts built and proper dispensary, the work will grow more. At present, we have to have the lepers on our verandah, and it is not pleasant to have them so near one's own living place. However, we cannot turn them away, and before long we shall have a proper place."

## Nursing and Punishing.

Our small native boy, Gya Ba, is still very much alive, but he has suffered a change of fortune. His father was chief over all this district, but he has been put out of office; so our small boy reverts to the ranks. He is a funny little chap and has to be corrected occasionally. Yesterday, he woke up coughing and complaining of a pain in his chest. Native children have very little stamina, and what would be an ordinary cold in a white child, develops rapidly into serious illness in a black one; so I put a mustard plaster on his chest, gave him a hot bath, then hot milk, and rolled him in a blanket, after which he slept and, on waking, evidently felt so well that he went into the kitchen and stole and ate some meat I had there. "The way of transgressors is hard", and young Gya Ba went supperless to bed. However, we are fond of him, and we do pray that he will grow up to be a real man of God, a bright witness in this dark land."

"This is a lovely bright day; the sun is shinging; hot, of course, and more so, because I have just had a couple of hours in the kitchen, making bread, some biscuits and a pudding, incidentally taking the cook boy down a peg or two. He was so disgusted with me because I wouldn't let him make any more of the horrible concoction he calls 'bread' pass for it. He said, 'Missus, I've made bread for years'. I thought it was about time then that he knew how, but we shall see if my lesson results in a better product."

## The Driver's War.

"Horace is away up on the hill, hard at work on the building. The new mission site is a lovely spot, you can see for miles. We shall be glad to move into our new house and get away from the racket of the village. Then, we have had almost nightly visits from 'driver ants', and we hope we shall leave them behind. Everyone who comes to Africa, at some time or other, has an experience with army, or driver, ants. The



other night I woke with a creepy feeling that all was not well. I reached under my pillow for my handy little flashlight, and found the room one living black mass of these vicious little insects. To get one on you is bad enough, for they dig their way into your flesh and hang on. They have been known to kill a dog or chicken in a few minutes, and there is really only one thing to do, and that is, run! We spent the time until daylight outside in chairs, and then, as soon as we could see, began a counter attack, spraying the house with coal oil, and after about three hours' work, the invaders left."

Lady Dorothy Mills, in her book *Through Liberia*, calls the driver ants "those queer determined travellers that nothing can turn aside, who will cut their way through anything, through shoes, or leather portmantaux, or anything that obstructs their trail. Secure in the thickness of my boots and leggings I would fain have lingered to study their process, as they raced across the path between two soldier-like lines of sentries, but Meyer hustled me away as I progressed at them with my umbrella. . . . Little is known of the history or habits of 'drivers', common everywhere in the damper parts of West Africa, possibly because the study of them would be so painful. They appear to be nomads, for their runs seem to be used no more than two or three times, and their strongholds are said to be pits in the ground among the roots of large trees. One can, if one wishes, follow one of their armies either way along an inch-wide run for several miles, without ever coming to its head or tail. It is divided into workers and soldiers. The latter line the causeways, and sometimes form bridges or archways under which the workers may cross in safety over open or dangerous country, and in case of attack or disturbance will spread themselves over the surrounding ground looking for the enemy, so that they can attack him. Nothing can stop them, neither man or beast. Behind them they leave a devastated area where they have eaten and destroyed everything, including—and it is the one point in their favour—rats, crickets and cockroaches. Any small bird or animal they will devour, or any large animal that is wounded or tied down. I have heard of a man with legs broken from a fall and unable to crawl, lying on a bush path, waiting for the morning and passers-by to come to his assistance, being attacked by 'drivers' so that nothing was found of him in the morning but his skull and larger bones. In the old days it was a form of punishment or revenge to tie down men and women in the path of the 'drivers' and leave them to a death too horrible to imagine".

#### PROPHET MOVEMENTS.

Doubtless, our readers have heard of the tremendous outpouring of grace which came to the French Ivory Coast through one who was known as Prophet Harris, a movement in which thousands

upon thousands were converted from heathenism. Recent reports from that district say that these people, so lately turned from heathenism, although still waiting for the teachers of the Gospel, who seem never to come, have resolutely refused, even in spite of some persecution, to return to their old fetish worship. And now the same reports tells of another "Prophet" named Opon. Though he be illiterate, in a way which is truly apostolic, the Lord is using him to the conversion of thousands more in another nearby district. Oh that the same power might fall upon Gospel workers in nearby Liberia!

#### REGULARS IN WINNIPEG.

Organized some six months ago, the Bethany Regular Baptist Church of Winnipeg has enjoyed real Gospel fellowship. Meeting in Normal Hall, they have as their pastor, Mr. J. F. Dempster, a student secured for them through the good offices of our Union Secretary. Although he came for the summer months, the pastor has now decided to remain, for the present at least. He "has started a School Bag Scripture League under the auspices of the Church, to carry the Gospel to Winnipeg school children". Three new members have been received, and there are two or three candidates for baptism. The Sunday School Superintendent, Mr. Liddell, conducts a Gospel lantern service expectant of divine blessing.

#### TRY SLEEP!

Speaking of "News and Views", Rev. Chester E. Tulga, of North Platte, Nebraska, says: "Attendance down some Sunday. Cold weather made a good excuse for neglecting the worship in the house of the Lord. Some slept too late. Try going to bed on Saturday night. They say it is a good remedy".

Our readers will be interested to learn that Dr. Gillon, of Shawnee, Oklahoma, begins two weeks of meetings with the North Platte Church on January 5th.

#### IN JAMAICA.

A letter from Rev. G. W. Smith, working in Jamaica, shows him to be very active in the Lord's service there. Recently three believers confessed Christ in baptism by him. Brother Smith is taking part in some missionary conferences, held in various places. He remarks: "The Advent Testimony and Preparation Movement seems to be the rallying ground for Evangelicals here. I am of the opinion that there is less Modernism here among other denominations than in Canada, at least among the pastors. As in Canada, it is the leaders in the denominations who are, in many cases, off the track. Modernism is essentially a college movement".

#### OHIO NOTES.

The Independent Baptists of Ohio held their Young People's Rally at McDonald, on November 29th. In spite of wintry weather, there were about ninety registrations, and all did not register.

Apparently, it was a time of rich, spiritual fellowship.

Seventeen pastors presented the Word of God during a unique campaign to large audiences, in the First Baptist Church, Wellington, where Rev. H. K. Finley is pastor.

Eight followed the Lord in baptism, on November 22nd, in Sandusky.

Dr. Harris Gregg, of St. Louis, Mo., held a week's Bible Conference, December 1st to 8th, in Elyria, where Rev. R. T. Ketcham is pastor.

Rev. Harry Collins "has been forced out of the Wauseon Church by those who 'love the darkness rather than light'", so we read in *The Ohio Independent Baptist* for December.

#### MICHIGAN NOTES

By C. R. Peterson.

#### GRAND RAPIDS.

The Wealthy Street Church established a mission at the corner of East Leonard and Fuller Streets several months ago, under the superintendency of John DeVries. Pastor Gerard Knol, of the Lakeside Drive Church, East Grand Rapids, recently conducted a three weeks' revival service at this mission. Bro. Knol combines Bible teaching with evangelism, thus laying the foundations for a permanent work. The meetings awakened good interest, and seven conversions were reported. Among those converted was a woman who was delivered from the snares of Christian Science, so called. This mission is located in a populous section of the city, and is a promising field.

#### KENT CITY.

This church and community have been enjoying the ministry and Bible teaching of Roy L. Brown, layman Bible teacher of Detroit. After a few meetings, the church building could not hold the crowds that came, and it became necessary to secure the High School auditorium for the services. Even this was not large enough to hold the congregations and many were turned away from the services. Bro. Brown, who was formerly a successful business man of Detroit, is now giving his entire time to holding Bible conferences, and is booked up for more than a year in advance. His charts are unique and instructive. Pastor Ford and his people were greatly strengthened by these services.

#### PETOSKEY.

Bro. John Ross, formerly missionary for the Orthodox Association, has been called to supply this church for a period of six months. We pray for him a fruitful ministry here.

#### CHARLOTTE.

Pastor D. L. Stotz, formerly pastor of the Carey Centennial Church at Fowlerville has accepted the call to the Gospel Tabernacle at this place. This is a Regular Baptist Church. He is already happily situated on the field, and the work is moving forward.

## Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

Vol. V No. 1

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR.

Lesson 1 January 5th, 1930  
First Quarter.

### ESSENTIALS OF THE BELIEVER'S WALK.

Lesson Text: II John.

Golden Text: "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward." vs. 8.

#### I. THE SALUTATION, (vs. 1-3).

1. The writer of this epistle was John the apostle of Jesus Christ. The persons to whom he wrote were the "elect lady and her children," (v. 1). There are those who believe this to be the designation of a church, (I Peter 5:13), while others take it to refer to a certain lady and her children. The time at which the epistle was written was probably late in the life of the apostle. 2. In the salutation there is first an expression of love in the truth, followed by the statement concerning the truth that it "dwelleth in us and shall be with us for ever," (v. 2). There is implied in this the fellowship of those who are in the truth. Such fellowship is sweet and pure when the Holy Spirit possesses the heart and the affections are centred on our Lord who is the Truth, (John 14:6). The eternal nature of the truth is also implied in the words, it "shall be with us for ever". The word of God abideth for ever, (1 Peter 1:23), while error shall fail. Emphasis may be placed upon the necessity of knowing and being possessed by the truth in these days of false teaching, and ways of knowing the truth may be pointed out. A benediction rich in spiritual blessing concludes the salutation, (v. 3).

#### II. WALKING IN TRUTH, (vs. 4-6)

1. The apostle in these verses gives expression to his joy at the spiritual condition of the elect lady's family. They were "walking in truth" according to the commandment of God, the Father (v. 4). In the midst of error they were true to God. And such a condition brings joy to the heart of every real servant of God. False teaching has a contaminating influence, and many believers are thereby defiled; so the greater is the joy concerning those who withstand such influence, and remain pure in the midst of corruption. It is further implied that they were correct in life as well as in belief. If there is anything as bad, if not worse than a Modernist, it is a Fundamentalist whose life contradicts his profession. Such an one does great harm to the cause of truth. Emphasis here may be laid upon the necessity for correct living as well as correct belief; and note also may be made of the nature of the truthful walk, the aids to this walk, and the blessedness subjective and objective of such a walk. 2. Following this statement a request is noted wherein the apostle expresses the desire "that we love one another" (v. 5). In his first epistle emphasis is laid upon the adop-

tion of the same attitude, (I John 3:14) giving proof of the necessity for the manifestation of such a spirit among the Lord's people. The troubles and trials of this life in the atmosphere of love are easier to bear and surely if any people should love each other, it ought to be the saints of God. We expect to dwell together in Heaven; we should therefore learn to live with each other here. 3. The practical aspect of love is then made clear. It is "that we walk after his commandments", and "this is love" we are informed, (v. 6). Love and disobedience do not dwell together, and the reason for the lack of love in so many Christian assemblies is due to the presence of the disobedient spirit. We can neither love God nor His people if we are out of touch with Him. There must be no known sin or doubtful thing harboured in the life, if we are desirous of loving God or His people. Sin hinders spiritual fellowship, and kills love. Emphasis should therefore be placed upon the necessity for implicit obedience to the known will of God; upon that which will stimulate love; such as the contemplation of our blessed Lord, and the full surrender of the self to Him; upon ways of manifesting that love to others; in the giving of spiritual and physical help; and upon the blessings which come through such a devoted life.

#### III. ABIDING IN THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, (vs. 7-13).

##### (A) Deceivers in the World, (v. 7).

"For many deceivers are entered into the world". If such a statement could be made at that early date, how much more can it be made in these days when deceivers have so greatly multiplied. Unfortunately it has been true throughout all ages, that in reference to the truth of God, there have always been deceivers. Our first parents were deceived by Satan, and back of all human deceivers is this great deceiver, (Rev. 20: 3, 10). We are also informed that we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against the rulers of the present world darkness, etc., (Eph. 6:12). We ought therefore to be continually on our guard against the work of the Wicked One. Emphasis requires to be laid upon the fact of the deceivers being abroad. There are so many capable of believing almost anything they hear, especially if Scripture is quoted in support of it. The Bereans offer us an example of the manner in which we ought to treat all teaching, (Acts 17:11). The particular error of the deceivers here referred to was that they confessed not "that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh" thus denying His incarnation, and by implication His redemptive work on Calvary, a most serious error truly characterized as antichristian. It should be noted that all false teaching in one way or another directly affects our Lord, and therefore should never be treated lightly.

##### (B) Abiding in the Doctrine, (vs. 8, 9).

In these verses there is first a warning to the saints enjoying carefulness in the midst of error lest they also should be affected. The very best are not above temptation, and we should exercise all due caution lest we fall

(I Cor. 10:12). We cannot trifle with sin of any kind and escape the consequences. We are also reminded of the reward, and it is well this should be kept in mind, for a time is coming when the saints shall appear before the judgment seat of Christ, (Rom. 14:10), there to be judged on account of their works, and to receive reward or suffer loss on the basis of their faithfulness, (I Cor 3:11-15). We are then informed of the most serious loss of those who follow false teaching, and abide not in the doctrine of Christ. They have not God. They are therefore without God and without hope in the world, (Eph. 2:12). The opposite of this is true of those who abide in the doctrine. They have both the Father and the Son. God cannot countenance evil in His presence, therefore to depart from truth means loss of His fellowship. Explain and emphasize the meaning for abiding in the doctrine of Christ and the blessedness of such a state.

##### (C) Attitude Toward Deceivers, (vs. 10, 11).

Some discussion has taken place as to the attitude which should be adopted toward false teachers, and a plea has been put forth for leniency to be shown them. That such an attitude is contrary to Scripture is made clear from the statement of these verses wherein we are enjoined not to receive such a one into the house or bid him godspeed. The world and many of the professed people of God look lightly upon false teaching, but God never does so. To teach falsely means to commit a most heinous sin in His sight, and it would be well if the Lord's people would wake up to its seriousness. Such teaching implies the changing of God's message, misrepresenting Him before the people; leading to serious spiritual loss, if not to eternal destruction on the part of those who accept the teaching, and is the devil's method of leading people from God. We are not surprised then at the command given in this section even though it should seem severe, especially when we note, as John further states, that "he that biddeth him godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds," meaning that if we offer encouragement to such an one we are helping him in his wicked ways. And it should be noted further that to offer encouragement is detrimental to the one receiving it, for it but confirms him in his sin. The attitude of God is the one to be followed; never encourage, condone, or give countenance to sin of any kind, but rather reprove it. Explain the real nature of false teaching, God's attitude toward it, and the grave danger of tampering with it.

##### (D) The Closing Greeting, (vs. 12, 13).

There were many things on the heart of the apostle which he wished to communicate to his friends, but he refrained from writing them in anticipation of a forthcoming visit, when speaking face to face their joy would be full. One can well understand this result occurring from such a visit for he has written in such a warm manner of the love which existed between them.