

# The Gospel Witness

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

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## "BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW"

Why do men cling to old things? Why, being offered new wine, does the epicurean exclaim, "The old is better"? Why is the average man so innately conservative that, having once possessed a thing, he is reluctant to let it go?

Sometimes people cling to old things for sentimental reasons,—a piece of old-fashioned furniture, a piece of plate, a ring, a pair of baby's shoes, yellow with age; sometimes an old garment; still oftener, an old letter! Such things are sometimes treasured as though their price were above rubies. Very often they have little intrinsic value. If sold for what they are worth in the market, the return would be very small. Why, then, are they kept? Why does the rather ugly piece of furniture cumber the room, and refuse to give place to a modern production of more artistic design? The piece of plate is never put upon the table at meal times: it would be out of harmony with the general equipment of the house. Why is it preserved within glass as a prize? Or the ring? No one wears rings of that sort nowadays; and yet no money could buy it.

As for the baby-shoes: they are moth-eaten, yet they are preserved in a house which is only occasionally visited by children—and then they are either grand-children, or great-grand-children. As for the letter: it cannot compare for neatness with the modern typewritten epistle.

Ah, but these old things have associations which are more precious than gold. They speak of "a vanished hand, and the sound of a voice that is still". The baby, had he lived—yes, had he lived!—might by this time have been a father or a grand-father. But to the one who handles those baby-slippers he is still a babe in the cradle,—and the memory of his rippling laughter and of the music made along the hallway by his toddling feet, ever and anon comes back with wondrous freshness as those little wool slippers are brought to view.

It is the limitation of human life, then, the passage of time, the agony of love's bereavement, death itself,—all these give an artificial value to some of the old things.

But where personality persists, and life is long continued, and growth and development are uninterrupted, no one objects to new things. Indeed, they are preferred before the old. The saints are not preserved in divine remembrance by their bones. It were a libel on Infinity to believe that God needs some ancient relic to call forth His healing power. The hand of Providence was not outstretched to preserve the seamless robe as a memorial of the Crucified. Such a garment might be a useful reminder of a dead friend; but old things are not necessary to remind God of the glorified Christ Who sits on the right hand of the Majesty on high. He can afford to make "all things new".

In the great cathedrals of London, and of England generally, there are marble and granite memorials of great men and great deeds, by whom and by which the foundations were laid, and the boundaries extended, of the greatest of all empires. And even in the new world, where men are more disposed to welcome new things, because there are few things that are really old,—even here historic memorials of the Lincolns and the Washingtons, the Cartiers and the Champlains, and others of the departed great, are preserved. Alas! In this world where life is subject to human limitations, sentiment forbids that "all things" should be made new. But the tattered flags of glorious victories achieved in the past can be dispensed with by Him Who is the Lord of life.

Sometimes men are reluctant to yield their old things for reasons of economy. We have never heard of anyone's wearing shoes down at heel for the sake of sentiment; nor of anyone's wearing a faded coat because he entertained a special affection for it! But many wear old shoes because they cannot afford new ones, and old clothes for the same reason. Although it has always been a hazardous business, the habit of sewing new patches on old garments has been a common practice. But whether it be an old coat, or an old house, or anything else that is old, it has been common to retain as much of the old as possible, only because one could not afford "all things new".

In other cases, economy of strength underlies what seems to be an undesirable conservatism. Why not

tear down the old building? Why plough around the tree-stumps instead of rooting out the old things? Only because there was not strength for the task. Conservatism is but another name for finiteness and limitation.

In still other instances, men preserve the old because they have no skill to produce a new thing that is better. There are old pictures that bring fabulous prices. There are old buildings of superb architecture, which are nursed like an ailing child, because the present generation has no skill to reproduce them. Who would not part company with the old had he power to make new things which would be better?

Thus in whatever direction we look, it appears that men cling to the old on the principle that they prefer to bear the ills they have rather than fly to others that they know not of. The temporal character of human life, the meagreness of human wisdom, of human skill, of human wealth, and strength, and power—all these combine to reconcile men to an acceptance of something less than "all things new".

Only God speaks after this fashion: "Behold, I make all things new." Those words bear the hallmark of divine inspiration. Were you to find that sentence buried among the ruins now being uncovered on the site of Ur of the Chaldees, anyone of spiritual discernment would know that they were the words of God. Who but God can make "all things new"?

What should we do with our old things? How often we have wondered what becomes of all the old motor-cars and all the old railway-cars, and all the old ships that do not go to Davey Jones' Locker, and all the old clothes, and the old shoes! How difficult it is to dispose of outworn things! How they try to turn the old things to account in the great cities, filling up the ravines with rubbish, converting a swamp into building lots by the refuse of the streets. But with all these devices, the task is still a difficult one. The new cemeteries must be far outside the city. It becomes difficult for men to find room even to bury their dead.

But God is well able to dispose of the old. He said to Sennacherib, and to proud Nineveh, the greatest world-power of its time, "I will make thy grave, for thou art vile." And he buried Nineveh so deep that it required many centuries to discover its grave. Still farther back He Himself conducted the funeral of an empire when He buried Pharaoh and his hosts in the depth of the sea. And in a day still more remote He buried the whole world beneath a watery grave, and cities have since lain in complete obscurity in the graves which the hand of God had dugged for them.

But the greatest of all divine achievements was the opening of a cavern deep enough and capacious enough to receive and hide from view the sins of a ruined world. "He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death." Never has there been another grave like that. As John Bunyan said:—

"Now I saw in my dream, that the highway up which Christian was to go, was fenced on either side with a wall, and that wall was called Salvation. Up this way, therefore, did burdened Christian run, but not without great difficulty, because of the load on his back.

"He ran thus till he came at a place somewhat ascending; and upon that place stood a cross, and a little below, in the bottom, a sepulchre. So I saw in my dream, that just as Christian came up with the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back, and began to tumble, and so continued to do till it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in, and I saw it no more.

"Then was Christian glad and lightsome, and said with a merry heart, He hath given me rest by His sorrow, and life by His death. Then he stood still awhile to look and wonder; for it was very surprising to him that the sight of the cross should thus ease his burden. He looked therefore, and looked again, even till the springs that were in his head sent the waters down his cheeks. Now as he stood looking and weeping, behold three Shining Ones came to him, and saluted him with Peace be to Thee. So the first said to him, Thy sins be forgiven thee; the second stripped him of his rags, and clothed him with change of raiment; the third also set a mark in his forehead; and gave him a roll with a seal upon it, which he bid him look on as he ran, and that he should give it in at the celestial gate: so they went their way. Then Christian gave three leaps for joy, and went on singing,—

"Thus far I did come laden with my sin;  
Nor could aught ease the grief that I was in,  
Till I came hither: what a place is this!  
Must here be the beginning of my bliss?  
Must here the burden fall from off my back?  
Must here the strings that bound it to me crack?  
Blessed cross! blessed sepulchre! blessed rather be  
The Man that there was put to shame for me!"

Yes, the wonder is that God can make, not only things, but men, new. "If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation."

But that is not all of the divine programme—"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." God gives a new heart, and makes a new man for the new heart, and new heavens and a new earth for the new man, so that by and by our circumstances will be new, and old things shall pass away, until at last the vision of the seer shall be realized in human experience: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done.

(Continued on page 7.)

# THE ANTI-RELIGIOUS FRONT

By William L. Sullivan.

(The following article is a reprint from "The Atlantic Monthly" for this month. We commend it to the very careful perusal of all our readers.—Ed. "G.W.")

Can it not be laid to heart by the clever gentlemen who are making it their life's vocation to cure us of God, that religion, however much they dislike it, is at all events profound? Will they not remember that it has been professed and served by great minds, indeed by the very greatest; and that of all the deeper experiences of the race it is the oldest and the noblest? And will they not in consequence regard it as requiring, in one who treats of its foundations, a laboriously exercised mind and also something of a soul?

These are simple questions which there should be no need of asking, but as things are there is urgent need of asking them. Our advocates of the great negation force us to ask them. For a good many of them deal with religion as though any kind of thought would suffice for it, however loose; any kind of culture, however provincial; any kind of dismissal, however summary and crude. In fact, some of them employ in the treatment of it methods so hasty, and logical processes so leaky, that if they studied any other subject in like manner they would lose their intellectual reputation. And this is too bad, first because an ill-educated nation is being led to believe such nonsense as that a trained modern intelligence cannot accept God any longer, and so pitches forward into the spiritual anarchy which the men who are creating it are utterly powerless to cure, and secondly because religious principles need the constant purification of criticism. In this field, as in every other, criticism is the conscience of truth. But the criticism, to be useful, must be fit for the thing criticized. In America, to our misfortune, religious criticism sheds but little light on its subject and none at all on our fame.

It is strange indeed that the dilettante should select religion as the region of his casual holiday, and stranger still that a rapt audience should attend upon his tale. The very nature of religion should impose upon one who examines it the most careful thought and the most delicate perception, to say nothing of the responsibility that should weigh upon one's words in a matter so grave with consequences. Religion is the first beautiful companionship that man encountered in his wilderness. It is the pathway between life and death that is worn deepest by the feet of the perpetually seeking generations. It is never far away when man knows exaltation and rapture. It is always present when he transcends himself in unearthly consecrations. It opens the door of vision when his genius hungers and thirsts for the substance behind all symbols, and other hand that can open it there is none. It is by his side when he walks the high and lonely places where he makes the discovery of himself. In life it is with him, illuminating him at his noblest, scourging him at his basest—the latter presence even more wistfully loved than the former. Neither in death does it leave him; but when all other voices moan of irreparable defeat, it alone lifts the cry of

defiance and stands on the ruins of mortality announcing mysterious and splendid victory for the fallen.

Man cannot escape religion if he would. Return to it he must after however long a denial, unless he changes his nature and becomes something else. For it is the form and figure, the throbbing pulse and the living flame, of the dream which is his one and only enduring reality, the perfection that drives him through yearning and tears and beyond the stars in search of a fulfilment not to be found in all the fabric of the world.

This is something of what religion has been—a religion, I mean, that includes the divine. A religion with its head cut off, which rises no higher than the resolutions of a philanthropic committee, we may for the present leave out of account. Destiny is dealing with that in its own thorough way. If, then, religion has been and is all this, if it is so deeply rooted in mind and soul, if it does for humanity what nothing else can do and yet must be done, then it is no subject for frivolous haughtiness and superficial learning. It is too deep, too close, too sacred. Hence if someone tells us that it is invalid throughout, and that man's most tragic delusion is ever to have looked upward, we shall thoughtfully listen to him, but shall ask that he have spent long labor in understanding what great light he extinguishes in history and in souls. But if he "barges" in on us with crippled argument that he has not toiled over, with catch phrases, with slogans, and with disdain, we have a right to send him back to his own place; he has nothing to say to mature men.

Now this is the kind of thing that we are getting on the anti-religious front in America, if we may borrow a phrase from Moscow. Whatever the cause is—whether it is due to the spiritual exhaustion which has brought on our famine in philosophic minds; whether it is the disparagement of intellect and the exalting of the infantile which are the current fashion in psychology; whether it is the lurch to immoralism which now is receiving a benediction from erudition; or whether it is the disposition to go where bedlam is loudest which is observable in obsequious academies and pulpits alike—we cannot but notice the incoherence and even the intolerance of the great warfare against the divine.

## II.

Consider, for example, the severest pedagogical injunction which the leaders of that warfare lay upon us—namely, that we are to submit our opinions to test and proof. We are, they tell us, to look things straight in the eye. We are to be tough-minded. We are to abhor hasty statement, easy assent, and gross credulity. We are to have the cold impartiality of science and the austere parsimony of truth. And when, so we are assured, we are cleansed by this catharsis we shall find our religious beliefs, even the most funda-

mental of them, vanishing away. Should we, however, shrink from the penitential discipline, should we catch at romantic ideas and facile solutions, we shall be outlawed from the great society, and cannot be so much as doorkeepers in the mansion of the civilized minority.

From this I suppose the inference is both justified by logic and required by courtesy that our guides are themselves exemplars of this ascetic habit. Are they? Consider in answer the case of Professor Millikan. This gentleman bears perhaps the most distinguished name in American science. He is known everywhere to be a believer in God. He is consequently a stumbling block to those who want it believed that as scientific method comes in, religious principles go out. He stands in the way of that belief and although secure of his fame in all other respects, must be discredited in this. So a writer in a learned periodical declares that Professor Millikan's spiritual convictions are probably due to atavistic emotionalism. And the chivalrous charge is repeated with every indication of approval by one of our philosophers in a published book directed at the abolition of Deity.

We shall hold back our indignation, although it is impossible not to feel it. What pertains to our purpose is that the kind of intelligencè which is capable of this descent sets itself before us as so stern a supervisor of its integrity, and so vigilant a guardian of its pure enclosure, that it cannot let in the proposition that God exists. A little rowdy intolerance, however, may walk in, and welcome! Our great physicist, we may be sure, has not exempted his most important conviction from the scrutiny to which he habitually submits all his other convictions. He sees the universe to be interpretable rationally. If it were not, neither his own science nor any other would be possible. And he makes rationality the foundation of interpretability. What other foundation can there possibly be? Hence follows his conclusion that it is reason that makes the discourse of existence reasonable. These steps to a sovereign reason from the existence of our own are plain enough. But it is easier to invite contempt to deal with them than for a hostile mind to try its teeth upon them. And so our chaste pioneers are not above publishing a charge that is irrational and coarse, and setting down a man superior in every element of power to themselves, not as a thinker who reflects, but as a child who only feels. Such minds, I fear, we shall have to call not spotless, but as unchaste as Ashtoreth. It is to be dreaded also that they are in danger of a spreading form of seizure which we may designate theophobia, an obsession quite beyond the healing power of reason and reluctant to any exorcism known.

We have made a bad start and it will not get better as we go on. It will be remembered that we are speaking of men who are jealous with a fierce jealousy of admitting into their heads opinions which are shaky, and who would rather, if we may say so, have their throats cut than admit anything positively absurd. They carry this monastic renunciation of the presumably unproved so far that some of them are now maintaining that to believe in God is immoral. This novelty in ethics defies comment. Let it stand unencumbered with words as a memorial to a terrible purity. Yet they puzzle me, these knights of the vanguard.

For, although they reach for the whip, if I say that I believe in God, I am favored with their approval if I say that when an infant sucks its thumb it is unconsciously pursuing a sexual adventure. Freud says this, so it is all right. Again it is all right if, observing the same infant falling asleep after feeding at its mother's breast, I declare that the child sinks into the slumber of sexual satiety. No censure for that! No offense in it for the most antiseptic minds!

Once more, when a little boy declares his intention of becoming a locomotive engineer when he grows up, you may say, again with Freud's support, that the lad is expressing a subtly disguised desire for sexual gratification. Furthermore you may interpret shell shock as meaning that a vast flood of libido or sex energy has flowed over into the inner self and produced an immensely augmented narcissism or selflove; that the narcissism, doubled or quadrupled by the turbulent libido, has to be suppressed in battle; and that the repression causes the disorganization known as shell shock. All this passes the test of acceptable opinion. For holding it you are not blamed; rather you are praised as sailing down the full current of the contemporary renaissance. And if we inquire what then in heaven's name shall be kept out of the mind if these preposterous things are let in, we seem to be answered: Practically nothing except God!

### III.

The thing becomes diverting. We are making discoveries in the cathartic mind. Perhaps, then, we may go on. There are some students of colour as a factor in evolution who hold that the flamingo got the pink tints of its plumage in this manner: The crocodiles which lived in the vicinity of flamingoes long ago, being shortsighted, fancied that the tinted birds standing in the shallow water were the rising or the setting sun and so let them alone. The hues which served so well became perpetuated; such flamingoes as were less fortunately coloured were eaten; and we have the flamingo of to-day a living testimony to the value of resembling crepuscular dawn and afternoon. Is it all right to believe this? Certainly; it is eminently respectable. Still further let us take man's beard and woman's beardlessness—a curious phenomenon, since both man and woman came from apes, and the female ape is quite as hairy as the male. It came to pass, sages say, because some of the earliest women were born with less hairy or possibly quite hairless faces. Instead of being crushed with shame as unaccountable freaks, these ancient dames discovered something amazing happening to them. The males round about fell violently in love with them. But this was not all. There was more of marvel and surprise. The males, once smitten by the smooth-faced ladies, refused to fall in love with the other kind. The bearded damsels, old as their lineage was, were ousted by the parvenues, could get no husbands, and died forlorn and childless. What began as a freak extirpated the original stock. On the other hand, such males as may have been beardless were shunned by the females and could get no wives. The women coveted whiskered, as earnestly as the men set their hearts on unwhiskered, spouses. And as a result of it, here, with such physiognomies as we have, we are!

May a man believe this? With the utmost distinction of modernity, yes. But a man may not believe in God? Ah, no! That is too insecure an hypothesis! And we turn away feeling that it would be too rude to ask whether the billy goat got his beard by the same discriminate selection of aesthetic love.

Perhaps we can tolerate one example more. Although we are informed that the argument on the existence of Deity is closed for intelligent people and closed with a loud negative, persons worthy of that description may still carry on the debate over the cursorial or arboreal origin of wings. It runs thus: Birds evolved from reptiles; and the ancestral reptile, one of the lizards probably, had to get wings or a bird it could not be. How did it get them? The cursorial school maintains that for ages this family of lizards ran rapidly over the ground on their hind legs, flapping their forelegs as they went. After ages of this apparently insane procedure the forelegs changed their outer form and inner skeletal and muscular structure and became wings. No, say the arborealists, it was not so. What happened was that this lizard was not a runner but a tree climber, and got into the habit of incessantly jumping from trees to the ground. As it jumped it spread out its forelegs, which acquired, after countless years, first possibly a parachute form and later the wing form.

We may indeed marvel at the perseverance of this tree jumper in letting go his hold for a thousand centuries before he had acquired any device for easing his fall. The breakages must have been enormous and the casualties appalling. We may also wonder how it is that monkeys which have been jumping from trees for ages on end have developed thus far not a sign or rudiment of wings. But these solicitations of curiosity are beside the point. The point is that wise and solemn heads may dignify the cursorial-arboreal debate while hushed academies look on; whereas if one should mention the divine as worth our study, we should hear from the anti-religious front that it is a subject to which the scrupulous mind can no longer descend.

Since, then, we see it permissible to cover creation with a fog of theory, fashionable to entertain conjectures which can never reach to even the lowest grade of knowledge, and praiseworthy to erect learned, memorials to absurdity, but censurable to hold a conviction which the greatest minds have held and unnumbered generations have lived by, we cannot be blamed if we regard this whole business as confusing and incoherent. May we not even be pardoned for thinking that the claim to intellectual austerity is humbug? The men who make it seem to have a credulity and to show an intolerance as capacious as may be found in any of the less advanced souls who tremble before them. And so in the general method and intellectual climate of our monitors we end with disillusion and the sense of having been pompously fooled.

#### IV.

Shall we be similarly afflicted when we pass from general method to particular argument? In order to answer this, suppose we look into the argument most frequently used at present for the destruction of spiritual foundations—the Copernican argument, as it is

beginning to be called. Three men, we are reminded, have reduced us to our proper insignificance and put an end to our primitive dream that we are godlike or that there is any God for us to resemble. They are Copernicus, Darwin, and Freud. Copernicus began the revelation of the vastness of the universe and the consequent triviality of our poor molecule of a planet. Darwin showed man's ancestry reaching not up to the stars and their glory, but down to the mud and its fermentation. And Freud has pushed our humiliation into the last pit by the knowledge that what we thought was the light of spirit is only the sickly gleam of fungus growing rank in the cellars of physiology. Our masters in the luminous life have the habit of saluting with a strange joy every sign of our degradation. They perceive, and correctly, that man if he has a God will be majestic, and if majestic will have a God. But the nearer we are lowered to the things that crawl, and the more pitiable our place is in an ultimately senseless universe, the more likely it will be that over us is no eternal splendor and awaiting us no transcendence of Truth and Beauty everlasting. Our nothingness is a price they gladly pay if only Deity is made nothingness also. And just now it is the Copernican plea that rules the favorite to this end.

It runs as follows: There are from three to thirty billion suns. Our sun is of third-rate size among them. Our earth is a pathetic cinder spinning round it. Ourselves are ephemera clinging to the cinder with our ridiculous little heads thrust out into empty and prodigious space. With our whole solar system making up, let us say, one five-billionth part of the universe, how can we suppose that the mighty power behind it all is concerned with us? How can we pretend that this power is our Father? The notion of a Father-God arose because men thought that they and their planet formed the centre of existence. How can it survive when we are reduced in the grand scheme to all but zero? And how can we homunculi presume to know anything of the Originator of the stupendous cosmos if an Originator there is?

The argument contains three propositions: first, that physical size is the determining factor in attracting God's attention, if there is a God, since the smaller a thing is the less likely it is to interest Him; secondly, that men came to believe in God through a miscalculation in measurement—they imagined a Father-God because they fancied it was a kitchen universe; and thirdly, that physical magnitude is a barrier to thought—the vast universe now known forbids us to form any conception of its ultimate source if it has one. On all this let us briefly comment.

To the first proposition: if God's lack of interest in us is because we are so little, then it must follow that He would take interest in us if we were enlarged. How large should we have to be before His interest began? If we were a hundred miles tall should we attract His attention? The answer, I gather, is: No, that is not enough. Ten thousand miles tall? We may probably expect another negative. But if we towered up to a stature equivalent to the orbit of Neptune we might possibly enter upon significance for Deity. And if we stood so high that our hair was singed by Betelgeuse we might be admitted to the honour of audience with the Demiurge.

Roaring nonsense? It is indeed, but it is the roaring nonsense of very solemn and learned men who seem to shrink from thinking things out. They join together two incommensurable things—bulk, which has all the physical measurements, and meaning or value, which hasn't a single one. A divorce of the two, I fear, must be pronounced on the ground of incompatibility for union and the miscegenation of diverse species. But not only does the argument go thus far; it goes farther. It makes the higher of the two depend upon and be a function of the lower. It puts meaning or value as a secondary appendage to bulk. And this is such an inversion of the proprieties of taste and reason that, in addition to the sentence of nullity just given, we should impose a penalty of some kind upon the man who has committed it. And the worst penalty will consist in fetching him into the Arctic winter which reason inhabits, there to shiver till he is acclimated. Fortunately, however, nonsense has this quality—that it cannot be followed through to the end. And so our learned friends do not themselves adopt the valuation scheme which they attribute to God. If they did they would judge a small child to be worthless, a man of normal size barely acceptable, and a mountain of fatness a paragon of his day.

The second proposition was that men made a mistake in measurement, and thought that there was a God because they thought the universe was a cabin. First of all we may remind the logicians whom we are concerned with, that they have forgotten one detail in making this statement. They have forgotten to prove it. I do not know a single one of them that even attempts to prove it. But it needs a great deal of proof, and we cannot let it slide in on the slippery surface of cool assumption. Not only, however, is it negatively inadequate because unproved; it is positively worthless, I venture to say, because it is false. Belief in God no more arose from measuring the universe than from smelling it. What it arose from is the essential structure of reason, whose first and irrepressible question in the presence of anything is: What accounts for it? That is how belief in God arose, and not from any computation in yards, miles, or light-years. And this question—What accounts for it?—presses upon us with its full force, whether the universe is the size of a parish or has a diameter that staggers mathematics. Size has absolutely nothing to do with the search for the rationale of a thing; indeed, it is itself included within the compass of that search.

And the source—that is, the intellectual source—from which the conviction of a God who is a Father arose is this: the reason in us that looks for the reason in things seeking for its kindred. Knowledge means hunting for the rationality immanent in things and rethinking it. And when reason finds rationality it has discovered its kindred. And since this immanent rationality is the original and our own rationality its derivative, what is more inevitable and right than that by analogy we call it Father? The whole process comes from the indestructible fact that reason communes only with its like and cannot possibly commune with anything else. Physical bulk has no more to do with it than colour or sound or the combustion of stellar gas. The notion, therefore, that the commun-

ion of kindred natures is made impossible by bigness, although bigness has absolutely nothing in common with the tie that constitutes the kinship, seems to be very weird indeed. And in its weirdness let us leave it.

The third proposition, that we can form no idea of the ultimate power because its works are stupendous, need not delay us long. There is only one condition that would prevent us from forming an idea of the principle of the whole, and that would be if the whole were a chaos. Then indeed any idea of it would be impossible, for it would contradict the power in us which forms an idea of anything. For an idea is a form of reason, and if there were chaos—that is, irrationality—there would be nothing to which a form of reason could apply. Science would be impossible, and we, like everything else, should be mad. But since the universe is not a chaos but a cosmos, then not only may we say, but we must say, that its organizing principle, its constituent ground, is of the nature of rationality; for when we say cosmos we say objectified rationality. The affirmation proceeds again from the nature of reason and the responsive nature of things. Once more size as mere bulk has nothing to do with it. What we are concerned with all through is no huge aggregate of sense qualities that turns our lower imagination tipsy, but the constituent life of a system that makes our higher reason coherent. Every page and paragraph of science postulates a rational universe. Therefore the principle of the universe is rational. Not only is it not presumptuous to say this, but we should wreck the whole order of the world if we did not. And that would be an achievement which really would be presumptuous.

Finally, there is another queer feature to the Copernican argument. It is so preoccupied with irrelevant physical hugeness that it ignores the only thing which it is vital not to ignore—namely, spiritual majesty. It fixes our attention on billions of suns. But we ask: Can any one of these globes of gas on fire, or can all of them put together, perform a single act of heroism, or live in self-sacrificing loyalty, or suffer for justice, or die for truth? No. Yet this atom called man whom these men wish to make paltry can do that, has magnificently done it, and will magnificently do it again provided they do not corrupt him with the sophistry of worthless bigness. Before this capacity to live and die for what is august, all the fires of incandescent stars fall away to ashes and leave the human soul confronting eternal Holiness as its ultimate explanation, and its only kindred and companion within all the horizons of the world.

Instead of man's being extinguished by the stars it is the stars that are extinguished by man. He alone, with whatever other spiritual being substantially like him that the universe may contain, speaks the language of the Infinite; alone transcends the spatial; alone answers when heavenly voices speak to him; alone has a hunger and a thirst which neither the earth nor all those conflagrant spheres can assuage, but only the central Spirit can allay, only the eternal Truth and Right whose likeness he is, whose child through unimaginable ascents to fulfilment he shall ever be.

#### V.

The conclusion, then, seems forced upon us that neither in method nor in detail have our captains in

the assault on high Heaven given us any illustrious performance. Nor should we, I believe, find this conclusion greatly modified if, in addition to the Copernican argument, we had time to examine the negation based upon the work of Darwin and Freud. The whole anti-religious effort, especially as we observe it in America, is abrupt and slipshod. It does not go to the heart of things. Like most of the rest of our philosophy it does not descend to first principles; and like a good part of our philosophy it is declamatory, and more suggestive of the proceedings of a caucus than of the reticent sobriety of a search for truth. If the thing is to be done at all it could be better done. But it will not be better done until there is an abatement of the grosser symptoms of theophobia.

When, further, we consider how flat and common, how destitute of insight and emaciated in power, the proffered substitutes for God are, we are obliged to say that the whole design slithers away to very dreary stuff at the end. So impotent in imagination are these substitutes, and so much more marked by sentimentality than by coherence, that nothing is left us but to call the endeavour to discover something just as good as God the worst bankruptcy in history. If the destructive effort was not too brilliant, the constructive is hardly less than shabby. And if we look into the latest development of it the shabbiness is seen to be moral as well as intellectual. We are now having morality defined as conduct that best serves the human physiological organism. We hear from an eminent philosopher in England that infidelity in marriage is not a thing to take offense at, but to expect and condone. From another student of social *mores* we learn that the revered mother-image and wife-image are coming to be regarded as suffocating to man's erotic life, and that they are on the way to being replaced by the mistress-image and the courtesan-image, which will be so little revered and so subject to casual change that they will relieve eroticism of danger from suffocation forevermore. Another scholar tells us that libidinousness, whoever commits it, need give us no concern if only it is attended with "artistry." Still others admit frankly that in sex habits we are reverting to the level of savages and that it is right we should. And so civilization arrives at its final splendid term.

All this, with its complete lack of an historical sense, with its impressionism instead of thought, with its powerlessness to reason out what animality is or to give it its ordered place in an ascending scale of values, and with its essential levity in taking account of consequences, is but the last step in a crooked course. Mutilate the human spirit in the manner now so fiercely pursued; make man a trivial biped, his reason a comic incident accessory to his belly, his conscience an echo of the stupidities of the jungle, his aspiration a byproduct of sexuality, his life an animal episode in the midst of chaos and the lightless bosom of death, and his universe a brazen solicitation to delusion—and you will one day see unfolded the ruin that is implicit in these germs of desperation and collapse. We do not see them unfolded yet, for we are still living on the spiritual nourishment stored for us by those who aspired and adored. Mighty souls have led forth our migration from the sty, and the shining remembrance of them lingers with us still.

It will remain with us, we hope, forever. And perhaps one of the reasons why we shall not cast the memory away is the plain sight of the results of deserting it.

These results are now laid before us in the outspoken words of the men who are counseling us to extinguish the light of spirit. They imply that there is a new firmament—the abdomen; a new end for philosophy—to prove that man is ridiculous; a new purpose for culture—to bestow on animalism the touch of the aesthete; a new conception of morals—to show that conscience is barbarous; and a new ideal for the home—to be an interval in the pursuit of promiscuity. High lords of thought are saying aloud what twenty years ago the brothel would not have said above a whisper. By such means felicity and dignity are promised our children, kept happily ignorant that once a luminous spirit spoke in Galilee, and fortunately delivered from the peril of fidelity to a holy and glorious God!

Perhaps, however, the learned men who propose all this do not expect us to adopt it. It may be that in their inmost hearts they hope, and for all we know pray, that we shall continue to believe in God and in our stumbling way try to do His will. Possibly even they might confess to us in secret that, after all, God is the only refuge of sanity from the lunatic asylum which certain of the erudite are so busy in building.

#### "BEHOLD, I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW."

(Continued from page 2.)

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. . . . And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it: and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever."

#### LAST SUNDAY IN JARVIS STREET.

Sunday morning the Pastor preached on the church motto for the year; the sermon is published elsewhere in this issue. It was a great sight at the close of the sermon to see hundreds of the Lord's people leaving their pews and coming forward, crowding the aisles and every available bit of space at the front of the church, signifying their determination to seek the fulness of the power of the Holy Ghost, and to depend upon Him for power to live and serve aright.

In the evening there was a great gathering at the Communion Service. It was the sort of gathering that was estimated by some to be twelve or thirteen hundred, but by actual count of the Communion cups used the number present was a little less than one thousand. But that in itself was a great company for a Communion Service, and we think, without question, it was the largest Communion Service ever held in a Baptist church in Canada. The Pastor gave the hand of fellowship to thirty.

## LED IN TRIUMPH

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

Not many weeks since we wrote of the mighty triumph won by the Lord Jesus on His cross, (Col. 2: 15). It is our purpose to speak of another triumph to-day, and so we will recall our brief description of a Roman triumph. A great Roman general has won unusual victories in warfare. He has brought new glory to the name of Rome. There is accorded to him a triumph. The gates of Rome are thrown open, the houses are decorated everywhere, and the people are out in holiday attire. The whole city is aflame with colour, and filled with excitement and gladness. The people watch and wait. Now the legions begin to pour in; banners are waving, trumpets are sounding, and incense smokes from every altar. The stern old warriors march along the streets. But now comes the centre of attraction, the one for whom eyes have been looking eagerly. There is a noble chariot drawn by milk-white horses, and the conqueror, crowned with a laurel wreath, is standing erect in his chariot. But look at his chariot wheels! Chained to these wheels are kings and princes and mighty men taken captive from the regions he has conquered. How the crowds rend the air with their plaudits when they see the nobles in chains at the chariot wheels of their hero! In second Corinthians, chapter two, verse fourteen, (R.V.) Paul exultantly writes, "But thanks be to God, who always leadeth us in triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest through us the savour of his knowledge in every place." Paul sees our glorious Conqueror leading His captives in His triumphal train, and he says that those who are the servants of our Lord rejoice to be His captives. Once they were His foes, but by the wonder of His grace He conquered them, and now they rejoice to swell the triumph of His train, and to be the trophies of the Saviour's conquering love and power. "But when our Lord wins a victory over men, and leads His captives in triumph, the captives, too, have an interest in all that happens. It is the beginning of all triumphs in any true sense for them." Paul himself had fought against the Lord Jesus; had made havoc of the church, till on the Damascus road the battle ended in a decisive victory for God. "There the mighty man fell, and the weapons of his warfare perished." Paul was henceforth the captive of the Conqueror, and he gloried in the completeness of His triumph over him. In first Corinthians, Paul exclaims, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." It is the triumph of Christ for us there. But in second Corinthians he says, "Thanks be unto God, who always leadeth us in triumph in Christ." It is the triumph of Christ over us here, and both victories call for loud thanksgiving.

The triumph in second Corinthians is especially the *preacher's* joy. There may be much to fill him with distress, many causes for anxiety, frequent disappointment and discouragement, but it is gloriously possible to mount above all these depressing things into the cloudless sky, and to see that whatever the experiences in his ministry may be, he is the willing captive of his conquering Lord. And he is well content so to live as to make known everywhere the Saviour's con-

quering power and grace. What a tone of victory would mark the servants of God if they rose to the apostle's standpoint, and looked at their ministry as Paul does here. The difficulties and trials of the ministry would cease to depress. The fact that they are swelling the triumph of their Lord would lift them above the clouds, and enable them to rejoice. But Paul goes on to say that God "maketh manifest through us the savour of His knowledge in every place." In the triumphal procession of the Roman general the smoke of incense with its pungent perfume rose all along the way. Dr. Maclaren says, "both the emblem of the apostle as marching in the triumphal procession, and the emblem of the apostle as yielding from his burning heart the fragrant visible odor of the ascending incense, convey the same idea, namely, that the one great purpose which Jesus Christ has in conquering men for Himself, and binding them to His chariot wheels is that from them may go forth the witness of His power, and the knowledge of His name."

It is a beautiful conception of the ministry of God's servants that wherever they go the knowledge of God in Christ is diffused by them like sweet incense. The fact is that the preacher should be so filled with Christ that he will exhale Christ wherever he goes. "The mighty Victory should manifest through him not only His might, but His charm, not only His greatness, but His grace." So the great concern with God's servants should not be, "Does our ministry gratify the wishes of men," but "Does it manifest the conquering power of Jesus Christ?" If their ministry does so manifest the knowledge of Christ they need not be concerned about the smiles or the frowns of men, for they are a sweet savour of Christ unto God in them that are being saved, and in them that are perishing. That should calm and uplift and greatly encourage those who are doing their Master's will. There is unspeakable joy in knowing that some are being saved through the message they bring. But their joy cannot but be mixed with sadness when they know that those who reject the message are being hardened by it. However, if God is glorified, whatever the results may be, the servants of Christ may know a deep and holy calm.

We are eager that the students of our Seminary should be men and women who can use Paul's great word of triumph, yea, the bondslaves of our redeeming and conquering Lord. We sometimes wonder whither our great Captain will lead them. Some will stay in Ontario. Others will go to the distant West. Many, we trust, will find their life work in Africa, in China, and in India. United States will open doors for some, while others will go to Britain, and ring out the grand old gospel message there. But wherever the sphere of ministry may be, their high calling is to spread abroad the savour of the knowledge of their conquering Redeemer in every place, and in proportion as their ministry is truthful, all other things being equal, God will bless us. The Holy Spirit cannot set His seal upon that which is false, nor that which dis-



honours our Lord. There is a story told of a little girl whose father was a minister. One day he told her a story, and when it was finished, she said, "Daddy, is that real, or is it preaching?" It is indeed pitiful when preaching is suspected of unreality, when it is regarded as pious opinion, instead of a matter of solemn and essential fact. We earnestly crave the prayers of the readers of *The Gospel Witness* that our students may ever be kept true to the Word of God, and the great fundamentals of the Christian faith. Who can tell what mighty works may be wrought through their ministry if our readers pray much for them? The times may be dark. Modernism may be rampant, a vast amount of "religion" dead, and the moral standards may be deplorably low, but nothing is impossible with God. In years past, times of great apostasy in doctrine and in morals have been succeeded by times of mighty revival, which have brought wonderful transformations. God can do such miracles again! He only needs fit instruments, men and women through whom He can sound forth His perfectly wonderful gospel of grace and saving power. He is longing to find such instruments, men and women utterly abandoned to Christ and to His Word, so that through them He can accomplish, in our days, the purpose of His heart. It is because we have pledged ourselves to do all that we can to train such servants of God as these, that we crave the prayerful sympathy of all who read these lines.

"The preaching of Jesus Christ our Lord is the burning of sweet odours before the throne of God, and to our Lord it is evermore an acceptable oblation. The sacrifice of Christ is that which makes the world bearable to a Holy God, and the preaching of that sacrifice is a savour of rest to Him." "Thanks be unto God!"

#### A NEW PROPOSAL.

The Editor of *The Gospel Witness* receives a great many letters from ministers and others asking many questions relating to the problems of Christian life and service. We do not profess to be expert in all the matter about which people write us; but since so many seem to think our opinion would be of value to them, it has occurred to us that we might open a new department of *The Gospel Witness*, to be known as "The Editor's Question Box". This might not appear every week, but perhaps only occasionally. That would depend largely on the number of enquiries sent in. We therefore suggest to our readers that if they have any problem which they think we might help to solve, if they will write us in the fewest possible words, sending the letter to: *The Gospel Witness*, 130 Gerrard St. East, Toronto, Canada, marking their letters on the outside, "The Editor's Question Box", we will endeavour from time to time to answer such enquiries.

Of course, it should be understood that the very name of this paper limits the scope of its undertakings. We cannot therefore undertake to discuss any and every question; but we should be glad to hear from our readers respecting the problems of the individual believer's life. Let your question have as practical a bearing as possible. Please do not ask us to give an exposition of some abstruse text, which perhaps would

require a page for an adequate answer. Let the questions relate, in a practical way, to the difficulties and trials, and privileges and opportunities, of the Christian life, as they may affect the individual.

There may be questions of church government,—how to deal with difficult situations. There will be questions also relating to the Sunday School, in all the phases of its ministry. Other questions will relate particularly to the pastor in the exercise of his pastoral ministry, his reading, his pulpit preparation, his pastoral work, his management of the church. Some questions may especially have to do with the relation of the pastor's wife to the church, and to her husband's work. Then there will be further questions touching the relation of the church to the denomination or to other churches, the minister's relation to other ministers, etc., etc.; and, of course, problems of finance, of missionary undertakings, and so on.

We offer this suggestion to our readers, and their response will determine whether it has any value. We want *The Gospel Witness* to be of real assistance to the people of God in their individual lives, and in their collective testimony.

The first column or page will appear as soon as sufficient questions have been received. We need hardly add that all correspondence will be treated with the strictest confidence, and no names will be mentioned, nor any word written, that could identify the enquirer.

#### SEMINARY NEWS.

The Toronto Baptist Seminary is rapidly making new friends. We frequently hear from people scattered abroad of their interest in the work of the Seminary. We are most grateful for their continuous intercession, and for their financial help.

They will be glad to know that Rev. W. Gordon Brown, B.A., our splendid teacher of Greek, has fully recovered from the attack of scarlet fever which confined him to the house for six weeks; and is going full speed at the Seminary again. During his illness his work was ably taken by Rev. W. S. Whitcombe, B.A., who thus did double duty.

All the other tutors are well, and as active as ever.

Miss Olive Clark, M.A., by her cheery disposition, brings June weather in December; but when she sets the pace for her students we are not sure that they know in what month they are living, or what time of day it is! They usually have a vivid consciousness of the near approach of examinations, and are kept rather active in preparation for them, no matter what the weather may be.

Rev. Alex Thomson, B.D., in his lectures on Biblical Introduction, manages to make his subject so crystal-clear that his students receive and remember what he gives them in rather a wonderful way. The tutors in the Toronto Baptist Seminary have the art of compelling their students to think, and to learn by thinking, which is really the only way to learn at all.

We overheard Rev. W. S. Whitcombe to-day teaching English, and we almost shouted, Hallelujah, in the hallway, especially because it was so evident that he was making his students work! We confess it is one of the greatest delights of life to see people work.

Rev. J. F. Holliday, B.A., teaches the most wonderful language of all. We understand that his students are so falling in love with Hebrew that there is some danger of their attempting it for current use instead of English!

Rev. Sydney Lawance, M.A., is the man with a telescope. No; we do not mean that he teaches astronomy, but history. He teaches his students to look backward in order to know how to walk forward. A proper historic perspective is indis-

(Continued on page 14.)

# The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE JARVIS ST. CHURCH MOTTO FOR 1930.

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Sunday Morning, January 5th, 1930.

(Stenographically Reported.)

"And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep.

"And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof:

"And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.

"So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord?

"Then the angel that talked with me answered and said unto me, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No my lord.

"Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.

"Who are thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it.

"Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

"The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you."—Zech. 4:1-9.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." It has been for many years, as you know, the practice in Jarvis Street for the Pastor, at the New Year's Service on New Year's morning, to suggest a motto for the year. On Wednesday morning I felt led to suggest the verse which I have now read as a text. I spoke a few words on it then, and I shall more particularly expound its principle, for our instruction and inspiration, I trust, this morning.

The history immediately surrounding the text is a record of one of the greatest revivals of history. The people of Judah had been seventy years in Babylon, and at the expiration of that time, by the decree of Cyrus, they were permitted to return to their own land. Zerubbabel was the leader of the first caravan of returning captives, and the work of rebuilding the house which had been destroyed was almost immediately begun. But it had not progressed far before the enemy intervened, and work on the building was caused to cease. About sixteen years later, through the prophecies of Zechariah and Haggai, under whose ministry the people were greatly prospered, the people were moved to renew their endeavours to reconstruct the house. Again the enemy intervened, and complained to king Darius. Investigation was made respecting their report that the restoration of the house had been commanded by the decree issued by Cyrus; and when the matter was examined, the report they had made was found to be true to fact; but instead of hindering the work, it had the effect of leading Darius to issue a decree by which those who had conspired to prevent the building of the house were commanded to use the resources of the king to execute the original decree of Cyrus. Thus God made the wrath of man to praise Him, and the rebuilding of the house went forward.

In this chapter we have a picture of a seven-branched lamp, with a central bowl or reservoir, from which, by pipes, the oil was conveyed to the seven branches of the lamp. On either side the candlestick were

growing two olive trees, and, apparently, without human intervention, the olive trees supplied oil to the reservoir, and from the reservoir to the lamps. The angel who showed this picture to the prophet asked him if he knew what it meant, and he said he did not. The answer given was, "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

It is impossible to dissociate this representation of the seven-branched candlesticks from the picture of the church given to us in the first chapter of Revelation where John saw seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks One like unto the Son of God. While beyond doubt, primarily, this vision had application to Zerubbabel's own case, and was a promise that by the power of the Spirit, through him, the temple should be rebuilt; it is equally certain that the prophecy relates to the mission of the church of Christ.

The promise abides for us, because all that was typified in the tabernacle and in the temple finds its fulfilment in the ministry of our Lord and in the ministry of the church of which He Himself is the Head. Our Lord said of Himself, "I am the light of the world"; and He said to us, His disciples, "Ye are the light of the world." What He is, we are; and His light is to shine through us. We are to hold forth the Word of life in the midst of "a crooked and perverse nation"; among whom we are to "shine as lights in the world." Our ministry, then, as individual believers, and collectively as a church, is to give to this dark world the light of God, the light of the gospel, the light of truth.

How are we to do it? How is the church to do it? How is each individual believer to exercise his ministry? The answer is given in the principle of the text, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

I.

WE ARE NOT TO ENDEAVOUR TO DO OUR WORK MERELY BY ORGANIZED HUMAN EFFORT. It is true that when men

are united in an enterprise the power of each is greatly augmented, and the principle finds illustration that while one may chase a thousand, two may put ten thousand to flight. It is possible to bring great things to pass by pooling our human resources of intellect, of wealth, of human energy of every sort. We see that in the world about us, in the world of industry, in the world of commerce. A man with a thousand dollars cannot do very much, but if a few thousands of people can be brought together who will each take a thousand dollars' worth of stock in some great company, you will have a colossal financial combination before whose power it is difficult for any individual competitor to stand.

The same principle is illustrated in every walk of life. In political life, for example, what great things can be accomplished when men are brought together in a piece of co-operative endeavour, where each one augments the energy of the other. In such case it is difficult for anyone to withstand their onslaught.

It is not surprising therefore that men should expect to accomplish in the religious realm, by the same methods, that which is accomplished in other departments of life. It is not surprising that men should organize religiously. Such organized effort is made *in the individual church*. No one who has any connection with this place will charge us with underestimating the value of proper organization. I believe in it with all my heart. We could not have or operate our great Sunday School without organization. In its place, organization is legitimate, and effective. You cannot have a family of a couple of thousand and accomplish anything without organization. I read only yesterday of a certain man in the United States who is the proud father of eighteen children, of whom sixteen are still living. He said, "My family is an institution, and it is thoroughly organized. Every member of the family has his or her own particular piece of work to do—and does it." I think he is wise. I should think a family of that sort needed some organization! I should think father and mother needed some co-operation, too, to make ends meet properly!

Even smaller households need organization. It is wise to effect a system by which things can be effectively done. Do not understand me to say that organization is in itself an evil. I know some men who take that position. I know a certain important preacher, I mean a man of prominence, who is a very dominating, self-willed, man. He cannot work very happily for any length of time with anybody. He has never had a committee or a board which he has not reduced to splinters in a little while. He has therefore reached the conclusion that organization is wrong. He is like a certain politician who was recently interviewed in Toronto, a member of the House at Ottawa. He was asked, "Who is the leader of your party?" He said, "I am." And so he is. Apparently he is the whole party himself.

The minister to whom I refer preaches ably, but because he cannot order his work, or delegate a task to anybody else, he decries organization.

That is wrong. It is right that we should organize, but we must remember that no sort of human machinery can ever effect the work that is the sovereign prerogative of the Spirit of God. We cannot by an army do that which only God can accomplish. It is

useless in a church to expect to do a definite spiritual work by mere, human, organization. It is beyond human power to achieve it.

Of course it is possible in a Sunday School, and in various auxiliary organizations, to get a great company of people together, and to make a show of success; and yet utterly to fail in real spiritual accomplishment. It is possible for a church to erect a great building, and so to organize its forces as to pay for it; and then to gather great companies of people together in a religious service, and to carry on year after year; and judged by worldly or carnal standards, to be eminently successful; and yet to fail to shed a ray of spiritual light upon "this world's darkness." I fear that is true of some churches: Is it true of us?

You have another illustration of the principle in Ezekiel's vision, when he saw the valley full of bones. They came together, bone to his bone, flesh came up upon them, and they were organized; for, after all, the most complicated and perfect organization in the world is the human body. It is more than an organization, however: it is an organism, and it can function only as it is vitalized, as it has life within it. When Ezekiel saw this organization, this coming together of bone to his bone, and sinew to sinew, and flesh came up upon them, he observed "there was no breath in them."

It is possible to have a great Sunday School class, composed of hundreds of people, yet to have no light, nor life, spiritually. It is possible for us, in this School, to have great classes, a great aggregate attendance, and accomplish nothing of permanent value; for if the Spirit of God be not with us, no darkened mind can be spiritually illuminated, no soul dead in trespasses and sins can be quickened. It is not by organization, by any system you can devise, that men and women are to be brought into vital contact and fellowship with the Lord Jesus. Let us remember therefore that the church that gives itself to doing—doing—doing, all the time building up new organizations, devising plans by which human efforts may be brought together—the church that gives itself to that exclusively is outside of God's plan; it is not by an army that God's work is to be done.

*That is true also of the larger groups of churches sometimes called denominations.* I do not want to say anything that would be offensive, but I do not believe the world has ever seen a more barren movement, I mean a movement more barren of spiritual results, a movement issuing in less spiritual light and life, than the great Church Union movement in Canada. I attended the meetings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church whenever I had opportunity. I attended also some meetings of the Methodist Conferences, and listened to the debates. I listened to the debate in London, Ontario, more than twenty years ago in the First Presbyterian Church, when the General Assembly was held there, a debate that lasted, I believe, for two or three days. In my judgment it was as far removed from the scriptural conception of things as anything could possibly be. It was a plea chiefly to effect a great organization, a great institution that would have great wealth, great learning, and great social influence; and that would effect financial economies, especially in the great plains of the West. But the idea of the presence and power of the Holy

Ghost in the midst of God's people being absolutely indispensable to effective Christian service was scarcely ever recognized. In the United Church you have to-day a mammoth organization in which no single minister can make himself heard in behalf of the truth, or in protest against error, a huge hierarchy that is the very antithesis of everything that the New Testament teaches respecting the church of Christ. Of course, I know there are individual churches and ministers who "testify the gospel of the grace of God". I say only that the mammoth organization as a whole is the antithesis of the New Testament churches.

Carry that principle forward, and what have you? I do not know how many of you read the papers from the Old Land. I do want you Jarvis Street people to think outside of Jarvis Street more often. Do not imagine that this is the kingdom of God. Do not imagine that God has no interest in anything outside of Toronto or Ontario. If we are Christians, we are to relate ourselves to the Lord's work even to the uttermost parts of the earth. We are to study to see how God is moving among His people; and how organizations called Christian are, in many instances, arraying themselves against the truth of Scripture.

There is a movement in England toward what is called Re-Union, the bringing together of the free churches, and the Anglican establishment, when we are all to accept holy orders at the touch of the bishop! I am just as much a bishop as the Archbishop of Canterbury this very minute. I would not accept a "commission" from him, although he is a very excellent man, I have no doubt. But the idea of "tactical succession" has been prominent in the English discussions over Church Union. There is also the high Anglican party, or the Anglo-Catholic party; it is a movement in the English church toward Rome. Some there are, too, who suggest the inclusion in the "reunion" of the Eastern or Greek Orthodox Church. Thus, they seem to think, that if they can get the Established Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Greek Church all into one big organization, something will be done!—Especially if the Free Churches are thrown in!

How dark are the understandings of men who talk that nonsense! How utterly foreign to Scripture the whole programme is! And yet you have men of great learning who are leading in this movement toward the so-called Union of Christendom, which is nothing more than an effort to organize an army to do, by sheer human might, that which can be done only by the Spirit of God.

Let us be careful, then, that we hold these principles in moderation; and that we recognize that our organizations are useful in their place only as they are under the dominance of, and inspired by, the Spirit of God. Ezekiel saw some wheels, great wheels; they were so high that they were dreadful. But he observed that as they revolved they went everyone straight forward. Along the shining track he looked, and saw at the end the appearance of a throne, and the appearance of a man above upon it. But the distinguishing characteristic of those dreadful wheels was that the Spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. It was an organization, it was a machine; but it was driven by a superhuman power, it was moved by the Spirit of God—not by an army, not by organized human effort, not by power, nor by any sort of human effort.

## II.

"NOR BY POWER"—by force or might of any sort.

*Much can be done where there is great wealth.* It is easy to erect buildings. It is easy to command a certain kind of service if you have the money to pay. Wealth beyond doubt is power. If you meet a man of great wealth, if you have discernment at all, you will not need to look at his bank account to know that he is a man of wealth. You will not need to be told, nor to judge him by the clothes he wears; there is something about the man, there is a power, there is a commanding attitude, that tells you that man is accustomed as he goes through life to get what he wants; not because he is better than other people, but because he can pay for it. The man who has behind him great resources of wealth becomes a man of power.

I read, I think only last week, of the Geneva Conference which is to be held shortly, and the question was asked as to what influence Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan would exercise in the Conference. He is not an official of the state: he is purely a private citizen. Why should a man without official position, without official rank, have any particular influence in an official conference? Simply because he is largely at the head of the American banking system, and because behind his word are uncounted millions and billions of money. It is the man of wealth, very often, who is the man of power.

A man of wealth in a church, if his money is consecrated to holy uses, may be a mighty power for good. Sometimes a rich man can make it very uncomfortable for a pastor of a church. He may be tempted, because he commands in the business world, to assume that he has a right to command in the church. I do not mean to suggest that such an one deliberately lords it over people, but the exercise of authority becomes second nature to him. If he goes into a store everyone makes way for him. The shopkeeper says, "What can I do for you, Mr. So-and-So?" They do not bring anything cheap to show him, but the most expensive things in the store. He walks about as though he were monarch of all he surveyed. When he comes into church, unless he is a Christian with much grace, he expects every one to make way for him.

But, my friends, you may build great buildings, and, for a while at least, you may get people to go where there is great wealth; but you cannot thus invoke the Spirit of the Lord. There will be a great church opened in New York in a little while. They built a church on Park Avenue, New York, a very few years ago, which was the finest ecclesiastical mausoleum I ever saw! It is a place where orthodoxy is interred, and it is a costly burial place. When Dr. Fosdick became the minister, he insisted they must have another building, and they are spending millions in its erection. But money cannot change human hearts, except for the worse; it cannot effect "a new creation." Gold has its limitations. Some day it will find its proper place when it paves the streets for the feet of the redeemed to walk upon.

Meanwhile, wealth has tremendous power. It were folly to discount it; or to say you are wholly indifferent to the rich man. Most people are subject to his influence every day. It requires grace from on high to live independently.

But there is one place where money cannot buy anything. That trickster of Samaria, Simon the sorcerer, had made a great deal of money with his tricks, and when he saw that by the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he came to the apostles and offered them money, saying, "Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. . . . I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." Ah, you cannot buy the ministry of the Holy Ghost. "Not by might, nor by power"—not by the power of wealth.

What is wealth but a concrete representation of human life and energy? All the thinking of a man's mind, the energy of his body, all that he has, he transmutes into gold; and he says, "This is my strength, and I am going to do something with it." And so he may. But in the spiritual realm he is as impotent as a babe. His wealth counts for nothing at all. You can build a temple and line it with gold itself, but no matter how elaborately it is furnished, wealth cannot command the power of God.

*Nor by your learning.* What an example we have had of that! Schools have sprung up everywhere in the last hundred years. (We have one of our own. May God always keep us like little children at His feet.) But of late years it has been assumed that by the power of human learning the work of God may be accomplished in the world, and from our universities and seminaries we have turned out men by the hundred, and by the thousand, with all their academic degrees, doubtless men of great learning, not simpletons by any means. But some of the most learned men in America preach to empty pews, and accomplish nothing for God by all their learning.

A friend of mine told me that he went to hear the great Canon Driver lecture in Oxford. He had heard of his fame throughout the world, and he expected that great things would be apparent. He found the great scholar lecturing to his class—and his class consisted of just one student!

There are theological seminaries in the United States to-day that have about as many professors as students. There are theological seminaries with large endowments that would give much for the student body of the Toronto Baptist Seminary. Why? For the simple reason that it is being demonstrated—it has been demonstrated—that human learning, of itself cannot bring a single soul to Christ, nor cause the work of the Lord to prosper.

And so I might go on and enumerate other elements of human power, but whatever they are, learning, eloquence, social position, all these things are utterly futile in this great work to which we, as Christians, are committed. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

Let me speak to you teachers. I have said it before, but I must say it again and again—and say it to my own heart: You will each come next Sunday morning to teach your class. Unless your teaching is energized by the power of the Holy Spirit you might just as well

stay at home. It is important to understand the text of the lesson and to know exactly what to say; but it is far more important that you should go before God with the prayer that every word of yours may be set on fire by the Holy Ghost. Only thus will your words burn their way into heart and conscience and effect a new creation, a transformation of life.

### III.

THE WORK IN WHICH WE ARE ENGAGED AS A CHURCH IS A WORK WHICH ONLY GOD CAN ACCOMPLISH. *There is no substitute for the power of the Holy Spirit.* My brothers and sisters, may I ask you very earnestly and very solemnly, with what thought did you rise this morning, as you contemplated coming to church? Did you stop to ask, "I wonder what the pastor will have to say to-day? I hope we shall have an interesting message." Did you think of me? Well, if you think rightly of God's messenger, that is all to the good; but if you would rise and say, "My pastor to-day has to go before men in behalf of God, and speak of things which men cannot see, which 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man'. He is sent upon a task which angels might covet, but which neither man nor angel can accomplish unless God be with him." If you meet the morning of the Lord's day with that simple thought, and then rise to say, "The great question for me is, Will God be in Jarvis Street to-day? I will not think of the pulpit, I will not think so much about the pew; but the one great question in my heart is, Are we sure that this morning the Holy Ghost will be present: and that He will exercise His ministry, breaking the rocky heart, consuming the dross, speaking the word of life to souls that are dead?" If thus we were to meditate, it would bring us all to our knees. How we should pour out our hearts before God not so much for the preacher as a man, nor for each other merely as brothers and sisters beloved, but for the presence and power of God the Spirit, so that in the singing of our hymns, in the reading of Scripture, in the offering of prayer, and in the hearing of God's word, in everything, there should be a spiritual accompaniment which will compel people to recognize that God is in this place.

*How can we have that, my friends?* How can we have it? How will the Holy Spirit come? Dr. Stockley read it to you this morning: "If I depart, I will send him"—Is that what Jesus said? No! He said, "If I depart, I will send him unto you." "Unto you"! "And when he, the Spirit of truth is come"—Come where? "Unto you"! When the Spirit of truth possesses God's people, then He will reprove the world, through them, of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

You will remember how that promise was fulfilled at Pentecost. "Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Where did the Spirit come? It is true He became the very Atmosphere of the place where God's people were assembled; but He came unto them; He possessed the church once and for all; on that occasion the promise that He

would baptize with the Holy Ghost and, with fire was fulfilled. Never again is there a solitary word in Scripture to indicate that believers should seek the "baptism" of the Holy Ghost. I believe it to be an error to teach that we should be "baptized" with the Holy Ghost. The church was once and for all baptized with the Holy Ghost at Pentecost "in one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" when we believe; and if you and I open our hearts to the Holy Ghost He will come in, as surely as if you open these windows the air will come in from outside. The Holy Ghost is here. We can receive Him in His fulness this morning. You do not need to wait until after dinner. He is here. We are commanded to be "filled with the Holy Ghost", not to "grieve" the Holy Ghost; not to "quench" the Holy Spirit. But never, anywhere in Scripture, is there a word to indicate as our Pentecostalist friends say, that we are to seek the "baptism" of the Holy Ghost. The ascended Lord poured out His Spirit, He immersed the church, overwhelmed her with the Holy Ghost; and from then until now He has been here as the very air about us is here. We are to open our hearts and receive Him in His fulness, and abide in His power.

But He will come to the world, and to those about us, only as He first comes to us. When He is come to you, He will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, of judgment. Let our prayer be, then, not so much that the Holy Ghost may come, but that our hearts may be opened to Him, and that we may be yielded to Him, that our lives may be flooded by His light and power. As thus we do, as that becomes our experience, we shall every one of us be fruitful branches of the Vine; and we shall be as a branch of the candlestick, fed with oil from the reservoir giving a true light. There will be a savour of Christ about us, and men will believe that the tabernacle of God is with men, and that He does actually dwell with them.

As for you who are unconverted, salvation does not consist merely in a retrospective look, in a look back to the historic Jesus. It is true that He died on the cross, that He was buried, that He rose again, and is in the glory, and that some day He will come again. But He is our living Saviour at this very moment, and He has sent the Holy Spirit as the Executive of the Godhead to abide with His church forever. As we receive Christ as our Saviour, we should receive the Spirit as our Sanctifier. It is for us to yield to His dominance, and we shall grow up into Christ in all things. May He bless His word to His own people, and to the salvation of such as are not saved, for His name's sake!

Let us pray. O Lord, help us to-day that without reserve we may yield our all to Thee once again. If any have wandered away, and have taken back that which they have dedicated to the Lord, we pray Thee to recall such to fellowship with Thyself, and to Thy service to-day. Bless us now as we sing our closing hymn. Fill the heart of every believer here with a desire to see others confessing Christ; and wilt Thou lead those who do not know Thee, or who have confessed Thee, in this hour publicly to avow their allegiance to Thee. For Thy name's sake, Amen.

*In response to the invitation some came seeking salvation, and then hundreds came forward, filling the space at the front of the church, and all the aisles, and others who*

*could find no room to move, in the gallery and elsewhere, raised their hands, together indicating their solemn determination to depend wholly upon the power of the Holy Ghost.*

SEMINARY NEWS.

(Continued from page 9.)

pensible to a clear appraisal of life's values. If the Pharaoh who "knew not Joseph", had added to "all the wisdom of the Egyptians, in which Moses was learned, a thorough course in the history of his own land, he would have saved himself much trouble.

Dean Stockley, whose iron hand is gloved in velvet, is always on the bridge; and the Seminary ship moves by sun-time every day. If all the clocks in Toronto were to stop at once, Dr. Stockley would be on time to the minute from force of habit! An early riser and a prodigious worker, in addition to the direct and thorough instruction imparted through his lectures, he sets before his students an example of ministerial industry, punctuality, scholarship, and spirituality, the combined dynamic of which will spur them on to the end of life.

The Toronto Baptist Seminary, whether a thing of beauty or not, is a joy for ever. The students without exception appear to be out-and-out for the Lord. Many of them have already displayed real ability, and we believe large numbers of them are destined to conspicuous positions of leadership in the years to come. A new student, we understand, registered this term, which will bring the number up to eighty-three; and we believe one or two others are on the way.

During the last Convention year, October, 1928, to October, 1929, the contributions to the Seminary from the treasury of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches, was something over \$1,800.00. For the balance of its support the Seminary had to depend upon Jarvis Street Church and the direct gifts of interested friends through the Seminary treasury. Within the last month we have received two contributions of \$100.00 each; several of \$25.00; some of \$20.00, and a number of smaller amounts.

The expense of the Seminary amounts to about \$1,000.00 a month. We wish our contributors could hear the songs of praise and thanksgiving that rise when contributions come in, and how earnestly Jarvis Street people pray that God's blessing may rest upon all the donors. We do not plead for money. We feel justified in acquainting our friends with the facts and then leaving it to God to move His stewards to give as He directs.

Just as the Seminary was beginning, or about three years ago, we approached one friend of large means for help, but he did not feel disposed to respond. Since that time we have never asked anyone personally for money for the Seminary. Once last year we sent a letter to our *Witness* readers; with that exception, the only appeals that have been made for the Seminary have been the items of information published in these pages. We look to God for help, in the confidence that He will supply all our needs "according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus".

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# The Union Baptist Witness

This page (15) is the Official organ of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches in Ontario and Quebec.  
337 Jarvis St., Toronto, Canada.

W. GORDON BROWN, Editor.

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

## FORTY YEARS OF SERVICE.

Stanley Avenue Baptist Church, Hamilton, where Rev. C. J. Loney has been pastor for fifteen years, recently celebrated its fortieth anniversary. That Sunday morning, December 15th, the honoured pastor preached, while Dr. Pettigill gave the message in the evening. On the invitation, many came forward for a consecration of themselves to the Lord, and some desiring church membership.

The following Tuesday, which was the exact date of the founding of this noble church forty years ago, the annual meeting was held. An informal programme followed a bountiful supper. Pastor A. J. Milligan, of Immanuel Church of the same city, himself "one of our old boys," gave an uplifting address.

The reports from various departments showed good work in all. During the year fourteen followed the Lord in baptism. Financially, the year was also a good one, with a total income of \$12,740.92, of which, exclusive of auxiliary societies, the church gave \$1,129.60 to missions. These rejoicing reports inspire the people to yet greater things.

## ANOTHER NEHEMIAH

The revivals under Ezra and Nehemiah are finding, in lesser way, a counterpart in the work going on under Pastor W. F. Mesley, at East Zorra. Previous to this church's stand for the faith, it was one of three which altogether supported a pastor; now it is self-supporting. With a zeal for the Lord's house, the people decided to undertake the construction of a basement and the installation of a furnace and baptistry. While others said, "It can't be done," "we made our prayer unto our God," and — well, the basement walls are now finished, since the men "had a mind to work," the furnace is installed, and the baptistry is under construction. During alterations to the church building, the church has worshipped in the 12th Line school-house. It is interesting to note that it was in the local school-house which first occupied this site, that this church was born.

## A HAPPY FELLOWSHIP

Rev. R. K. Gonder is finding a large territory in his new field of work. Under the Old Convention there were three churches on this field, Mountsburg, Westover and Flamboro Centre. "By methods notorious, rather than famous, Westover was held by the old Convention. There was a minority of stalwarts who refused to bow the knee, and who

are now worshipping with the Mountsburg Church." During the ministry of Rev. R. D. Campbell, Moffatt was added to this field, but now it has been transferred to work with Guelph, and it thereby has both an afternoon service and a Sunday School. Now Flamboro Centre is eight miles from Hamilton, and Mountsburg is eighteen, both churches being situated in a good market-gardening and farming section. "The parsonage is in the pleasant village of Freelon on the Hamilton-Guelph highway, four-teen miles from each."

It is a good thing for one church to help another, and especially for the stronger to aid the weaker. Shenstone Memorial, Brantford, believes this and practises it. To the large attendance at the Harvest Home festival in the Flamboro Centre, and at the eighty-fifth anniversary in Mountsburg, singers from Shenstone provided special music.

## NEWS FROM JAMAICA.

We present herewith a brief and illuminating account of the work in which Rev. J. W. Knight and his bride have gone to engage in Jamaica. "We have come to share the labours of one of the veteran missionaries of Jamaica, the Rev. A. W. Meredith. The field is comprised of three organized churches, Clarksonville, Tweedside and Mount Moriah, with memberships respectively of 414, 148 and 114. Besides these, there are seven class-houses or out-stations, with another one under consideration. One of these has a regular Sunday service, preceded by Sunday School. Others have a regular Sunday School, while the rest have occasional services, which are worked in now and again. The churches have services every Sunday. There are a number of local men who take their turn at conducting services each week, and for these we have to thank God. It is next to impossible to conduct services in more than one church each Sunday, per man, on account of the distance that lies between the different spheres and also on account of the roads. For instance, to go to Tweedside is a distance of thirteen miles over an extremely hilly country, so hilly that the last mile has to be negotiated on horseback. (We heard just lately that the government is shortly to improve this road). When a horse travels this distance in the heat, it scarcely can go farther the same day; so we always come home Monday morning. Thus far the practice has been to stay the day and get in, if possible, an open-air service, somewhere not too far away, along with the regular services of the church we are ministering to that Sunday.

"The great majority of the people live on rocky, slippery and narrow footpaths, which lead off the main road, away back, probably for miles, with branch paths

leading off these, and houses all the way. As you can see, these poor people could not use a car to come to church, if they had one; they must walk to church, and that over these dangerous roads.

"When one remembers that it is a little less than one hundred years since these people were slaves, who had been brought over from Africa, it is a little easier to understand the terrible immorality of the land at present, and also the extreme poverty of the ordinary family. Yet there are many humble-minded, spiritual Christians in this district, as well as over the whole of the island, that have been lifted from a life of sin beyond description, to a life of purity through the power of the Gospel. But I am sorry to say that, on the whole, the tone of spiritual life in all the churches is very low. They need more teaching of the Word with power; they need prayer."

## THE FRENCH BIBLE MISSION

M. Emile Guedj has recently made a tour of parts of England and Ireland, representing the worthy work of the French Bible Mission, of which he is one of the pastors. This Association of Fundamental Churches in France is doing a thorough and aggressive work in a land darkened by Catholicism and atheism. During his trip abroad some eight thousand were touched by his testimony and message in song. M. Guedj is himself a testimony to the power of the Gospel. Through a British missionary (Brethren) in Algiers, this child of a Hebrew home was brought to Christ. During the war he went to France as a soldier, leaving his business in Algiers. After the Armistice he was successful in business in Paris, but he esteemed the "reproach of Christ greater riches than treasures," in Paris; and so he became a French Baptist pastor. These Frenchmen are brethren in Christ and brethren in the faith. Pray for them.

## INDIANA, PENNSYLVANIA

The trial of the church of which Rev. Arthur B. Fowler is pastor, in Indiana, Pennsylvania, when the State officials did their best to take away the rightful property, lasted for six days; but, on last report, the court had not made decision. Many of our American brethren believe that "there is much more at stake than the property of the church in Indiana."

## PRAYER LEAGUE

We learn with interest that Rev. Ernest M. Wadsworth, of Buffalo, New York, has succeeded the late Thomas E. Stephens, of blessed memory, as director of the Great Commission Prayer League of Chicago. This league is doing a great work, always seeking to foster prayer for world-wide revival.

## Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

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REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR.

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### INTRODUCTION TO THE REVELATION.

Lesson Text: Revelation 1:1-8.

Golden Text: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand."—1:3.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION.

We come now to a study of one of the most remarkable books of the Bible. It is unlike any other book of the New Testament, and resembles most the book of Daniel, in conjunction with which it may be studied. It is sometimes termed the Revelation of John, but this is not its proper designation. It is the "Revelation of Jesus Christ," and all the scenes in it are related to Him. He is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, (13:8), reaping the fruits of His sacrificial death; and the Prince of the kings of the earth, (1:5), for whom the kingdom is cleansed of all that which offends. To this end judgment is seen coming upon the wicked; our Lord's glorious return is portrayed, and the whole, beginning with the vision of our Lord in His glory, ends with the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Much discussion has taken place relative to the author of the book, but there can be no real doubt that the apostle John was the honoured individual. In reference to the interpretation many and diverse are the views which have been put forth, but in the main they may be divided into two schools; the historical and the prophetic, or those who believe that throughout the ages since the vision was recorded fulfilment has been and is still taking place, and those who hold that with the exception of the first three chapters the book yet awaits fulfilment. Let much prayer prevail as the study proceeds that the Holy Spirit may give enlightenment concerning the truth, and that patience and courtesy may be exercised with those who may differ in interpretation.

#### II. THE SUBJECT OF THE REVELATION, (vs. 1-3).

In the first verse the content of the book is stated. It is the "Revelation of Jesus Christ." A revelation in an unveiling and the subject of this unveiling is our Lord; "which God gave unto him," God the Father working through the Son, "to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass"; denoting the purpose of the revelation. God desires His servants to know something of the great events of the future; "and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John". And John "bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ,

and of all things that he saw." A blessing is promised to the one who reads this prophecy, (v. 3), referring at first probably to the public reader, but not confined thereto, for God's blessing is received by all who read the book, even though there are parts which are not fully understood. A blessing is also promised to those who hear the words of the prophecy and keep those things which are written therein. This is surely real encouragement to read the book. There are many who, esteeming it to be impossible of understanding, leave it severely alone. This is not the proper attitude. If God has seen fit to give it to us, there is a distinct purpose in His action, and out of respect for Him, as well as in order to receive the promised blessing we should read and give heed to the teaching of this wonderful book.

#### III. THE SALUTATION, (vs. 4-6).

##### The Persons Addressed.

The persons addressed in the book are the "seven churches which are in Asia," or as we now designate it, Asia Minor. There were more than seven churches in that neighborhood, but the number seven in Scripture is significant of perfection, and probably implies totality here. Note the further use of the number seven in this book. In addition to seven churches, (II and III) there are seven seals, (4-8:1), seven trumpets, (8:2-XI:19), seven personages, (12:1-14:20), seven vials, (15:1-16:21), seven dooms, (17:1-20:15), and seven new things, (21 and 22), making a series of seven sevens.

##### The Greeting.

"Grace unto you and peace," two very necessary and blessed aids in the Christian life. God's grace is sufficient for us on all occasions, (2 Cor. 12:9), and with His peace garrisoning our hearts, (Phil. 4:7) we are kept tranquil under all circumstances. These blessings are invoked in the name of the Trinity, the Father, Jehovah, the Great Self-Existing One, "which is and which was, and which is to come"; the Holy Spirit, "the seven spirits which are before his throne," denoting the Spirit in His complete diversified activity, (Is. 11:2-5), and the Son, Jesus Christ, One God manifest in three Persons.

##### The Character of our Lord.

Several things are stated here significant of our Lord's character, and of His relation to men in salvation. He is termed the "faithful Witness." Men have been most unfaithful in this respect, so our Lord is unique in His faithfulness. As a witness He bore testimony to the truth, testifying to it by word and deed, and sealing that testimony with His blood. He is also termed the "first begotten of the dead," the first to rise from the dead never again to die. Some have been raised from the dead, but they have again had to undergo the experience of death. Our Lord is termed the first fruits, (1 Cor. 15:23), implying that the harvest would follow; and so His people shall be raised from the dead never again to die, (1 Cor. 15:51-57). Note the significant importance of our Lord's resurrection. The third thing designated of Him is that He is the "Prince of the kings of the

earth." He is King of kings and Lord of lords, (1 Tim. 6:15), and some day He shall be acknowledged as such by all, (Phil. 2:9-11).

##### An Ascription of Praise.

Having referred to our Lord's exalted position John offers unto Him praise for His great work on man's behalf, first describing His attitude toward us. "Unto him that loved us" or loveth us, denoting His attitude past and present. Evidence of this may be gained from Old and New Testament, and from our own experience. The practical proof is found in the experience of His wondrous salvation. He has "washed us from our sins in his own blood." The term "washed" is sometimes translated "loosed." Both have a similar implication, referring to freedom from the bondage and stain of sin. The priest before he entered upon his service washed himself. So must we be clean before we enter our Lord's service. The means by which this cleansing is effected is by the shed blood of Christ. There is no cleansing apart from this, and therefore no salvation. Note the prominence and significance of shed blood in Old and New Testaments, (Ex. 12:13; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19). The third statement denotes the position of the saints before God. He "hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father," or a kingdom of priests, a royal priesthood, (1 Pet. 2:9). This denotes the universal priesthood of believers, not simply the wrongfully appropriated privilege of the few. All saints have the privilege of access into and of service in, the presence of God the Father. And all are sons of the King of kings. Note the character of the life which corresponds with such an exalted position, the duty of living it, and the various privileges and duties accompanying the same. With grateful hearts we echo the praise of John, "to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen."

#### IV. A PROPHETIC OUTLOOK, (vs. 7, 8).

Our Lord's return, the great event of the future is here predicted, attention being called to it in the first word, "Behold." The importance of the event cannot be overestimated. It will affect the Jew, Gentile, and Church, and heaven, earth and hell with its reaction. Several things are stated in reference to it. First in relation to the manner of our Lord's return. He is coming "with clouds." As He ascended so He is coming again, (Acts 1:11; Zech. 14:4). Second, in reference to the persons who will see Him, "every eye shall see him", etc. This implies a visible return, not invisible as some unmistakably teach. There will be no need then to study chronology to find out if the Lord has returned; each person will be quite sure of it. In the third place the effect upon the unregenerate world is described, "all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." The coming of the Lord will mean blessing unto His own, but judgment unto the unrepentant. The last verse of the section describes God in Christ, the first and the last, the Great Eternal Almighty God. Emphasize the necessity for readiness to meet Him.