

The Gospel Witness

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

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

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THE LAW OF INCREASE

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

There is naturally in the heart of every true Christian a longing for increase of the life of God in the soul and of power to bless others. There is also in every true Christian church a collective longing to see the church increase with the increase of God. Such longings sometimes find expression in conference and in prayer. These longings are often entirely sincere, and when the desired increase is not seen there is often great disappointment and depression and perplexity. It is well, therefore, that we should turn to the ever-illuminating pages of Divine Truth and seek to discover "the pattern in the Mount" by which such increase may be experienced. John the beloved tells us in the twelfth chapter of his gospel that one day certain Greeks, who had come up to Jerusalem to worship, went to one of the disciples of Jesus and said, "Sir, we would see Jesus". To our Lord the desire of these men was a witness to the world's need, and of its unconscious craving for a Divine Saviour. Jesus answers the desire by saying that all such longings can be met in one way only, namely, by His own sacrifice and death. And when He is "uplifted" on the cross He will draw all men unto Himself.

In saying this our Lord gives utterance to a sublime truth in the words, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me." In this great saying we have the divine law of increase. In the realm of nature to which our Lord directs us, we discover that law. A grain of wheat must fall into the earth and die or it will remain alone. There can be no fruitful life without previous death. One seed dies, and then by means of dissolution and death thirty or sixty or a hundred-fold are brought forth.

The first and most perfect manifestation of this law is seen in the life and death of our infinitely glorious Lord Who gave Himself a willing Sacrifice for men. If our Lord with His perfect life had not gone to the cross to die for sinful men, He must have passed from earth into the glory alone, and the door would have been closed

behind Him. Christ's death on the cross was not only His own entrance into the power of the resurrection life and glory, but by giving up His unspeakably precious life in death for others. He opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Now a great multitude, which no man can number, can pass into the presence of the King, and be forever with the Lord. So the law of increase, which Jesus describes in the words quoted above, He makes manifest in His own wondrous sacrifice for men.

The same law applies to His people. By its falling into the earth and dying, a seed produces other seeds, each of which, formed in the image of that from which it springs, must needs also die, in order to a still more abundant increase. The increase in every case depends absolutely upon its falling into the earth and dying there. Only by its death can fruit spring forth. And the people of God must follow their Lord if they, too, will be fruitful. The same great law of progress applies equally to them. Some good people are mistaken here. They think that because our Saviour died for them they have not to die. Of course there is a tremendous truth in that statement from the standpoint of the Saviour's finished atonement. In taking our place on Calvary's cross, Jesus stood alone, and His atoning sacrifice is complete. There is no outstanding debt. "Jesus paid it all". "In the one commanding sacrifice for human guilt, Calvary leaves nothing for anyone else to do".

But the Apostle Peter shows us that there is a very real sense in which we are to follow Christ in the path of sacrifice. Listen to what he says: "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." Our Lord Himself also constantly calls us to tread the same path. And so the servants of Christ are to be partakers of His sufferings; they are to bear His cross. Christian baptism illustrates the same truth when it says that we are "buried with Christ by baptism into death", and we have been "planted together in the likeness of His death". That death means the placing of ourselves, all we are, and all we have, in unreserved surrender at the feet of our Redeeming Lord,—a dying to self as well as to sin.

It has been well said that, "He who will not die cannot live". But the seed that dies brings forth abundant fruit. Let Genesis, chapter twenty-two, speak to us. When Abraham had made the supreme surrender and had laid upon the altar the one who was dearer to him than life itself, the angel of the Lord said to him, "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." What magnificent fruit that one yielded life brought forth! It is ever so: out of death to sin and self we rise with power to love and to bless.

Sometimes this dying involves much prayer and many tears. It cost our Lord unspeakable agony and "bloody sweat" in Gethsemane, to say, with a ring of full triumph, "Not my will but Thine be done". It should be no surprise, therefore, if we should find ourselves obliged to cry, "O Lord, make me willing to be made willing" before we gladly choose His will alone, and not our own any more. But this is the pathway to the most wonderful life of power and of blessing. Loving life and refusing to give it up to Christ for others' good means remaining alone in selfishness. But losing our life in order to bring forth fruit in others, means keeping it to life eternal, and brings us into truest fellowship with Him Who gave Himself for us.

We may well rejoice that the Holy Spirit is given to us to work such a life as this in us, and to enable us to die to all selfish purposes so that our life may be given to build up the body of Christ, and to seek to save a poor lost world. If the seed corn of our life thus dies, we shall be startled one day when the Master permits us to see the majestic fruit. Some people may think that our Lord in these verses in John, chapter twelve, refers chiefly to those who literally lay down their lives in death for His dear sake. And certainly wonderful blessing has come to the world through the "noble army of martyrs", those who in various ways have poured out their life's blood "for the sake of the Name". It is now quite a proverb that "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church". "Fear not, Master Ridley", said Latimer to his somewhat faint-hearted brother as they were both on their way to the stake, "we shall this day light such a candle in England as shall never be put out." And so it has been, the more the people of God have been afflicted the more they have grown. The promised increase is, however, not for such martyrs alone. Every Christian soul, who does not hoard up his life for selfish ends, but who pours it out in prayer and gracious ministry for others, shall reap a most bountiful harvest. The life may be lived in quietness and meekness, unseen by the world outside, but the Master will cause the increase to abound. Jesus for full thirty years lived such a life as this. All through those quiet years His was a life of love, a life of sacrifice and suffering for others' good. Later the form of sacrifice varied, but the life was one, and the harvest is so vast that it can never be told. We may never be called to be burned at the stake or to linger and die in some lonely, horrible, cell; but in following the footsteps of Jesus in His path of sacrifice, and bearing our testimony for Him in the presence of those who hate His name, there will be wonderful fruit. All earnest Christian

people, and all really living Christian churches long for "more fruit", for "much fruit", a "fruit that abides".

Then let the divine pathway to this be accepted and taken. Let there be actual death to the life of self-seeking and self-pleasing, and a pouring out of life's energies for the salvation of the lost, and fruit will abound. The increase may not appear immediately, but the divine word is sure. "If it", that is, the seed corn, "die, it bringeth forth much fruit". As the grain of corn through dissolution is made the root of many seeds, so the Christian, and the church by dying to sin and self, must certainly yield a golden harvest. The increase must follow the self-surrender, and fruit shall be borne which will enrich countless lives and yield a wealth of glory to our Master's name.

PROFESSOR L. H. MARSHALL IS LEAVING McMASTER.

It was reported by cable in one of the Toronto papers, January 13th, that Professor L. H. Marshall, of McMaster University, Toronto, has accepted a call to Victoria Road Baptist Church, Leicester, England.

In our issue of January 2nd we discussed at some length the probability of Professor Marshall's leaving McMaster University. Now we are definitely informed that he will return to England. This is a bit of news of major importance. We intended writing on the subject for this issue, but as Professor Marshall will not be leaving McMaster, we presume, until the end of the present term, we need not be in great haste to express our views.

We desire to treat Professor Marshall's decision properly, and to review his record in McMaster, and the whole situation occasioned by his presence, with some degree of thoroughness. It may therefore interest our readers to know that the next issue will deal principally with the Marshall matter. Of necessity *The Gospel Witness* has to deal with passing events somewhat hurriedly, but Professor Marshall's leaving is such a startling disclosure of what the general attitude toward these matters in the old Convention must be, that we feel we should be justified in taking a few days instead of an hour or so to put all the facts in order before our readers, and to find the right words in which to express them.

We think we may safely promise our readers that the next issue will be the most interesting number of *The Gospel Witness* ever published. We shall endeavour to arrange the material in such a way as to provide a textbook on the whole subject. *We wish every church in the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec would order sufficient copies to put one in every home represented in the churches so that all may thoroughly understand the situation.* Many other readers will be equally interested, and we shall welcome their cooperation in giving the next issue of *The Witness* the widest possible circulation.

Please send in your orders by mail or by wire to reach us not later than Wednesday, that we may know how many thousand extra to print. Our readers will remember that *The Gospel Witness* is always poor, and they will assist us greatly if they will send for these extra copies at the rate of 5 cents a copy. We are sure that everyone who reads next week's issue of *The Witness* will want at least a dozen copies to pass on to their friends. There will be enough in it to provide material for several evenings of instruction, which will include elements that are both entertaining and amusing.

CHURCH MANAGEMENT

In some quarters a monthly or at least a quarterly business meeting of the church, at which all its temporal affairs are discussed, and its expenditures, even to the smallest item, authorized, is supposed to be indispensable to the proper functioning of a Baptist church.

In every church, large or small, the life of the church is largely made up of little things. A church is like any other household in this respect, that it occasionally needs new brooms, new lights, new carpets, new chairs, new pianos, and other things. The popular view is that all these things should be purchased, and the details of the temporal affairs of the church, managed, on the authority of a family council, where the vote of the youngest member is equal to the vote of a father in Israel.

In an experience extending over some years, and having to do with the largest Baptist church in Canada, and with some of the smallest, our observation has taught us that many, if not most, of the difficulties arising in church life originate in business meetings. Nor is it surprising that this should be so. If one will take a walk along a new street made up of houses built by those who occupy them, he will probably find that there are no two houses on the street alike. Why? Because every family has a taste peculiar to itself. If the houses be entered, and their interiors examined, an even greater variety of tastes will be exemplified. Some people like green carpet, and some like red; some people like one sort of wall-paper, and some like another. The advantage of having one's own home, and being master of it, is that he is able to furnish and order his home to his own peculiar liking.

If representatives of every family on that street should come together at a church business meeting, and vote on a church carpet, what colour is it likely to be? What if they should be required to cast their votes as to the particular kind of vacuum-cleaner the church should own? It is probable every house would own a different kind, and every housewife would be disposed to think her particular vacuum-cleaner the best—or the worst, as the case might be. How, then, can we fuse these minds, and get the best for the church?

Nor is this all. There will probably be as many different temperatures as houses on the street. Some people are Eskimos, and some salamanders. Some people choose the Arctic, and some the Torrid zone. How are we to fix a mean temperature that will be so agreeable to all that nobody will call it "mean"?

But here we venture to enquire whether anybody knows of any successful business enterprise in the world conducted on the principle of the monthly Baptist church business meeting? Whether one considers the management of a railway system, a departmental store, a civic government, a school, or an individual family, it will be found that the principle breaks down if applied to any one of these things; for even in the household the superior judgment of the older members of the family—and very likely of one or two at most—will determine the household's management.

But we are told a Baptist church is a democracy. Very well, what of it? Did anybody ever hear of any

other kind of democracy acting so stupidly as to have a monthly election for the passing of all accounts, and the validating of every detail of management? A democratic country elects a government, and every department of the government has its executive officers. Large matters, of course, and matters of principle governing the very life of the country, are determined by parliamentary action. But the business affairs of the country are conducted by its executive.

Moreover, even Baptists are not consistent in their insistence on the monthly or quarterly business meeting principle. A collection of Baptists will appoint certain representatives to constitute a committee or a board, will clothe them with plenary powers, and entrust them with tens of thousands of dollars to expend at their discretion, requiring only that they give an annual report of their stewardship. Why, then, in the name of common sense, cannot a Baptist church appoint its deacons as an executive board, and leave to their management the temporal affairs of the church, according to apostolic practice and precedent?

In many churches there is a Deacons' Board, a Finance Committee, a Management Committee, and we know not what else. Any other institution in the world organized as the average Baptist church is organized would tear itself to pieces and plunge headlong into bankruptcy in six months.

We have seen a motor car with four wheels, and several spare tires. We have seen motor vehicles with six and eight wheels on the road. But we have never seen any sort of vehicle with more than one steering-wheel! We have seen great passenger trains loaded with living freight, having porters, and trainmen, and conductors, and stokers; but one man at the throttle at a time in the engineer's cab is always enough! We have seen, and have sailed on great ocean liners which required an organization of many hundreds to operate. Such ships have a captain, and first, second, and third, and other officers. But we have never seen a ship anywhere with more than one rudder or more than one control. There may be, of course, an auxiliary, but it is used only when the other control is out of commission.

Jarvis Street Church learned its lesson some years ago. It used to have a Finance Committee of more than thirty members, and a Deacons' Board of twenty. After our great upheaval of 1921, we were forced to substitute for Deacons and Finance Committee one central executive which, for a year and a half, was known as The Prudential and Finance Committee. When the life of the church had become stabilized, a new Deacons' Board was elected, and the two-thirds vote requisite to election shut us up to seven Deacons; and that worked so admirably that it later became the fixed principle that the Deacons of Jarvis Street Church should be seven. That Board, with the Pastor as Chairman, constitutes the executive of the church, and Jarvis Street is able now to accomplish in one evening what formerly it would take six months to do. We believe it is a sound scriptural principle, and sound business too.

Let the churches elect from among them, "seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost

and wisdom", and hand over the church's business to their management, requiring of them an annual report, or, on large matters which would involve the church in very large expenditures, of course, they should be required to seek special authority from the church. Surely there is not a church that cannot find in its membership men to whom its business affairs may be entrusted. The work will then be accomplished with wisdom and despatch; the life of the church will not be disturbed by discussions about little things that one wise man can settle in a moment, and the energy of the church can be directed to the exercise of a definitely spiritual ministry. Thus souls will be saved, and the Lord glorified.

We very heartily recommend this principle of church management to our churches, and we do it as the mature judgment of more than thirty years of pastoral experience.

THE LOST CHORD.

(From "Faith and Fellowship", Orson P. Jones, Editor, published in San Diego, California. Brother Jones never writes without saying something. We heartily recommend his paper to our readers,—published weekly, at \$1.00 per year.—Ed. G.W.)

A person would have to be a regular reader of *The Gospel Witness* to understand why T. T. Shields would give to the foregoing article the title, The Little Church On the Hill. Recently Dr. Shields has been giving a great deal of his time to a personal visitation of the Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario. He has learned what it costs to let the light shine in places far removed from the Jarvis Street Baptist Church of Toronto. He has seen a great light and has stated a great truth. Hereafter, those who honor the Bible as the inspired Word of God, must gather in churches that honour the Bible. Fellowships must match faith. Sad to relate, such churches will be little churches in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred. Dr. Shields seems to be the first fundamentalist leader to acknowledge publicly this simple elemental truth.

The consequences of such a truth are far-reaching. Fundamentalist leaders must cease to run around the country soliciting gifts for high-sounding enterprises. They are wasting their own time and the money of those who give. Think of Paul or Peter devoting himself to such business!

Our primary need is for Little Churches On Thousands Of Hills. Defenders and Fundamentalists have stormed across the country uttering great swelling words, but where are the churches they have planted? We know of a few Little Churches On The Hills but they were nursed into existence by "Nobodies." For some reason we are pained by the contrast between Big Bible Institutes and Little Churches On The Hills. The lopsided leadership that produced such a situation might well pause, consider, and be humble.

Evangelism has clung to crowds and offerings. Now the professional evangelist has gone the way of the buffalo and the Indian. God has rebuked the whole business. Perhaps there will be no old-fashioned revivalism in the future apart from the Little Church On The Hill.

Bible Conferences were popular a few years back. Now they have practically passed out. We believe it is because they were willing to be "hearers only."

"Doers of the Word" will plant Little Churches On The Hills.

Dr. Shields has struck the lost chord of fundamentalism,—The Little Church On the Hill. We hope for a symphony of grace to follow. Paul did not try to see how large a church he could build at Antioch or what enormous buildings he could erect. He left the strong to the care of others and went out to plant Little Churches On the Hill. It was good to come back to Antioch that they too might rejoice in the Little Churches Planted On Distant Hills. But Paul could not stay at Antioch and said to Barnabas, "Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do."

There was nothing easy about the business of "seeing how they do." Churches are trials; some Christians are too critical and impatient, to belong to them; some preachers are too Big to care for them; but Paul was willing to be a nurse maid. This apostle who turned from Big Church life to care for Little Churches On the Hill exclaims, "Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, **THE CARE OF ALL THE CHURCHES.** Who is not weak, and I am not weak? II Cor. 11:28. When fundamentalists begin to strike that lost chord **THE CARE OF ALL THE CHURCHES**, then we will admit that perhaps they believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures.

"GOSPEL WITNESS" NEWS.

We have received very encouraging letters from our subscribers of late, as well as a number of very interesting new subscriptions. We have been especially cheered by subscriptions coming to us from non-English-speaking countries. At an early date we intend to give a page or so of one issue of *The Witness* to the publication of some of these letters.

The Baptist, of Chicago, the organ of the Northern Baptist Convention, has ceased to be a denominationally owned paper, and is to be operated as an independent journal by a company of Baptist laymen. *The Baptist* was supposed to be the organ of the Northern Baptist Convention, and the mouthpiece of nearly two million Baptist church members. Notwithstanding, it could not pay its way. An annual deficit of approximately \$10,000.00, we understand, had to be met out of other funds. We were informed by a brother in the publication business, who professed to have inside knowledge of the facts, that when *The Baptist* was taken over by the Northern Baptist Convention in 1920 or thereabout, it had a circulation of about thirty-two thousand; and it was proposed immediately to increase the circulation to a hundred thousand. Instead of that, by the time of the Washington Convention in 1926, it had been reduced to fifteen thousand; while the issue of *The Gospel Witness*, carrying the report of the Northern Baptist Convention at Washington, in 1926, exceeded the combined circulation of *The Watchman-Examiner*, of New York, and *The Baptist*, of Chicago. Yet we have never earned a dollar by advertising, and the subscription price scarcely covers the cost of printing.

Of course we are always hard up, and were it not for the generosity of appreciative readers throughout the world, it would be impossible for us to continue publication. Some time ago we received a letter from a gentleman in Australia, containing a cheque for \$100.00, with nineteen names to whom he requested us to send *The Witness*, telling us to put the balance in *The Gospel Witness* Fund.

We received only to-day a letter from a very highly respected minister, one of the truest men of God we know, a man who has always stood absolutely true to the Book, and who has had to pay the price for his uncompromising position, which position has always been taken with grace and courtesy. The letter told us that he had removed to an-

other church: His expenses had been tremendously heavy, including, as they did, heavy family obligations; and he tells us that he does not know how he can do without *The Witness*, as it comes to him always with inspiration and suggestion, but that in his straitened circumstances it is impossible for him to renew his subscription. He said if we could continue to send *The Witness* he would hope to be able to send the price of the subscription some time later.

Of course, that copy of *The Gospel Witness* will continue to be sent. This brother is one of hundreds of ministers whom it is our great joy to visit weekly so long as we know we are able to be of even the slightest help. Ministers who must be always giving out; and who have no pastors, write us to say that the weekly visit of *The Witness* gives them a weekly meal, and helps them along the heavy road.

Some of God's people have given thousands of dollars to build gymnasias, and have poured out money like water for the construction of palatial educational buildings. We are praying that the day may come when some steward of the Lord to whom He has given large means, will have his eyes opened to see the tremendous possibilities in the printed page. We have just had a municipal election in Toronto, and the result was a victory for two newspapers. The press has a tremendous power for good or evil. And when so many hundreds of our dailies, great city journals, the popular magazines, the overwhelming majority of books issued by the religious press, are directly against Evangelical Christianity, surely papers which contend for the faith, and which aim to instruct and inspire and really to feed the people of God with the truth of the gospel, deserve the support of all Christian people who have money to give.

The greatest burden *The Gospel Witness* has ever attempted to carry was Des Moines University. We thought we were doing well, and we certainly did the best we could; and even now we are positive some good will come out of it. But *The Gospel Witness* emerged from the furnace with an expense of \$5,000.00 toward which the University could not contribute a penny. A few friends came to our help to the extent of several hundred dollars, but we still need \$5,000.00 over and above our regular income by the 31st of March.

Let those who do not like *The Gospel Witness* clearly understand that that obligation was incurred over a period of two years in the interest of Des Moines University. But even if we had run behind that amount in our regular work, from May, 1922, when we began publication, until now, nearly eight years, we should then have had an annual deficit of only \$625.00. Whereas *The Baptist*, of Chicago, ran behind at the rate of something like \$10,000.00 a year. And *The Canadian Baptist*, at the last Convention, reported a very considerable deficit, notwithstanding the assistance of the whole Convention organization, and the income from advertising.

The Gospel Witness will carry on, and the Lord will raise up new friends from somewhere. We ask all our readers to pray earnestly with us for the supply of this need. Recently one friend who sent us \$100.00 for the Seminary, sent us also \$100.00 for *The Witness*, part of which covered the renewal of a number of subscriptions for which this brother had made himself responsible. Another dear saint of God who sent us \$100.00 for the Seminary and who had, some months before, sent us \$1,000.00, included \$50.00 for *The Gospel Witness*. Many others have sent smaller amounts. We are most grateful to those who thus help to lighten this delightful burden, for the Editor confesses that of all the work he does, there is nothing he enjoys more than administering to *The Gospel Witness* family week by week. Pray for us.

A VISIT TO COURTLAND, ONTARIO.

It was the Editor's privilege to attend the Pastors' and People's Conference of the Hamilton-Brantford district, at Courtland, Ont., Tuesday, January 14th, and to preach at the evening session. As we were able to reach Courtland in time for the greater part of the afternoon session, we had opportunity to gauge the influence of these Conferences as we have not had before.

The weather was as bad as it well could be. Leaving our part of the city at half-past seven, it took us until about

quarter to nine to reach West Toronto. The streets were so slippery, it was about as difficult to start our car as to stop it. We mention this only because the attendance at such meetings is usually affected by the weather. Notwithstanding, there was a crowd. The church was full at the morning session. Extra chairs were used in the afternoon downstairs, but in the evening every inch of space was occupied upstairs and down—with chairs in the aisles, and wherever one could be placed.

The morning session must have been a rich one, for the fragrance of Rev. H. W. Bowers' address on Prayer pervaded the place, and grateful reference to it was made by many in prayer and testimony. Rev. F. C. McNulty, of Brantford, gave a stirring and able address on Lydia's conversion. And this was followed by a testimony meeting. It was delightfully refreshing to hear pastor after pastor tell how he was saved, and of his joy in the Lord's service. Too often ministers become professionalized, and when they meet give or hear addresses which amount to mere shop-talk. Of course, such meetings are necessary in their place, but what a joy it is, and what an inspiration to those who are not ministers, to hear pastors speak as though their official position were almost forgotten in the tremendous fact they are sinners saved by grace. And how important to the minister that he should never permit anything to dull his sense of wonder at the condescension and triumph of grace in his own conversion! Nothing will make an evangelistic preacher of a pastor like keeping his experience of conversion always green and fresh. We ought to have more ministerial testimony and fellowship meetings. We are confident they would greatly intensify our evangelistic zeal.

The church at Courtland seems to be in exuberant health and bubbling over with joy. It was our privilege to baptize the Rev. Robert Guthrie, the pastor, some years ago. He is one of our Jarvis St. boys for whom we cease not to give thanks. Mrs. Guthrie (nee Mabel Jennings) is one of our Jarvis St. girls whom we baptized also four or five years ago. We had the further joy of marrying them last September. Evidently they are both greatly beloved by their people, and are being much blessed of the Lord.

The Courtland people are evidently on fire for God. They are most hospitable, providing meals for one hundred and fifty at noon, and two hundred in the evening.

Books by Dr. Shields

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

CAN WE HAVE A RELIGION WITHOUT GOD?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, January 12th, 1930.

(Stenographically Reported.)

"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else."
—Isaiah 45: 22.

Prayer before the Sermon.

We confess, O Lord our God, in Thy presence, our inability to discover Thee, or by any way of searching to find Thee out. Thou art a God that hideth Thyself. No man hath seen God at any time. Yet many of us know that Thou art, and that Thou art the Rewarder of those who diligently seek Thee. Thou hast disclosed Thyself to us in the person of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and we have the promise that He will always be in the midst of the people who come together in His name. How wonderful is this fact that God Himself is with us to-night! We cannot see Thee, we cannot touch Thee; yet we can speak with Thee, and we can hear Thy voice speaking to us.

We do not know the circumstances of the members of this congregation. We do not know their attitude of mind. There may be some who have no consciousness of God with them this evening. There may be some to whom God is nothing more than a name, an idea; or, if a person, one Whose dwelling is remote from them, and with whom they have no commerce and no affinity.

O Lord, how shall we tell men about Thee? How can we make unseeing eyes to see? or deaf ears to hear? or spirits that are dead in sins to respond to the call of God? We cannot do it. We confess our impotence; we acknowledge that we are dependent wholly upon Thy sovereign grace. On this inclement evening, we pray that Thou wilt break in upon the darkness of some mind that has long been shut against Thee. Is it not written in Thy Word that the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them? Lift the blinds, O God, this evening, and let the light of Thy truth penetrate their darkened understandings, even those who live in the region of the shadow of death.

How we need Thee! We need Thee every hour. We cannot do without Thee. We do not deserve that Thou shouldst hear our petition this evening. We do not deserve that Thou shouldst have respect to our cry, for, in our folly, we have tried to do without Thee. We have all lived at some time as though there were no God. It may be that some are living so still. O Thou great Saviour, in the boundlessness of Thy grace, in the multitude of Thy mercies, come, we beseech Thee, and introduce Thyself. As Thou didst awaken Saul of Tarsus and speak to him out of the open heavens, saying, "I am Jesus", so, Thou ascended Christ, to Whom all authority is given in heaven and on earth, exercise Thy authority this evening, we beseech Thee, and compel the submission of men to Thy gracious sovereign sway, that souls may be saved, and Thy great name gloried. We ask it for the sake of Him Who loved us, and gave Himself for us, Amen.

Let me read the context: "Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the Lord? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else."

Religion is that human belief or sentiment which recognizes human dependence upon some superhuman being whom men call God. There are many religions, but every religion consists in a belief in a god of some sort. In fact, the instinctive belief in a god is the very foundation of all religions. I am not speaking of Christianity: I am using the broader term, "religion", as embracing that instinctive belief in the existence of a superhuman being, or beings, and in man's dependence upon him, or upon them, as the case may be. Whether you consider animism; or polytheism, the religion of many gods, in all its variations; or monotheism, the belief in one god, in all its aspects, religion consists in a belief in a person beyond ourselves, a superhuman person, whether god or devil—for there is a religion, many religions in fact, that consist in devil-worship. But there is a natural human belief in a spiritual realm, and in some dominating personality or personalities to whom this mundane sphere is subject.

Yet there is abroad to-day a tendency which consists really in a revolt against God. It is not merely anti-Christian, it is not only an anti-Christian, but an anti-theistic attitude. It is an expression of the enmity of the natural heart toward God; a determination, if possible, to get rid of God, to have no God.

Consider the evolutionary hypothesis, and its effect upon human thought in all realms—and what is its tendency? In the material realm it reduces the universe to a mere mechanism. It is what it is by virtue of forces resident within itself. It has made itself. I am aware that there is a sort of veiled, half-hearted, acknowledgment that in the remote past, incalculable ages ago, there may have been a god who released this something that has gone on, and on, and on, recreating and reforming and transforming itself. But evolution, properly understood, absolutely excludes God from the operation of natural law in the material realm. Such god as there is belongs to a remote past, and to-day we are shut up to the operations of a great machine that is merciless and inexorable. We ourselves are but infinitesimal cogs in one of the many wheels. God is far, far, away—so far that none can see Him or find Him.

The application of that principle to the religious realm has had precisely the same effect. That vain assumption of the truthfulness of the evolutionary principle, and the assumption that that principle is a universal law, universally operative in all realms, and that everything there is is to be accounted for on the ground of evolution—that does away with God as a factor in human life. The Bible is not a record of God's gracious search for lost sinners, but a record of man's evolutionary development and of his groping after God. The Bible is not correct in saying that man is the creature of

God's hand, and that he was made in the image and likeness of God. The Bible is rather to be understood as a record of man's natural development, and you have in it a religious history which is nothing more than a record of his natural quest for something that is better, and of such a god as is here discovered by man in his search after something higher. In other words, evolution absolutely reverses the Bible, and teaches us not that man was made in the image of God, but that God has been evolved out of the human consciousness, and made in the image of man.

Of course, that philosophy excludes God from providence. God is immanent. He is in everything—in this bit of wood, in the electric light, in the atmosphere, in the birds that sing, in the trees, in the flowers—in you, and in me. He is all-pervasive. He is everywhere. But *he* is not *He* at all, for there is no transcendent personality reigning and ruling over the works of His hands. The old doctrine of Providence, of God's presiding over and providing for His creatures, making all things work together for good, is not to be thought of at all, because we are what we are by some evolutionary process, and we cannot escape from the stage to which we are born. It is the darkest, blackest, kind of fatalism that was ever promulgated. There is no over-ruling God in that conception of life.

If that be true, I do not wonder there are churches without prayer-meetings, for if we must accept that philosophy, what is the use of prayer? There is no value in it at all. I said just now that, if that be so, we are subject to a machine whose operations are inexorable, literally something that one cannot pray against; but which grinds out its processes, and there is no power that can interfere with it. The idea that God intervenes, and listens to a little child when it prays, or cares for the sparrows and numbers them, and clothes are grass of the fields with a beauty surpassing the glory of a Solomon—all that must be dispensed with, for we are in the grip of this universal juggernaut, and there is no longer any value in prayer of any sort. God does not intervene, God does not do anything; but evolution goes on!

There never was since time began a greater delusion. There is not an infinitesimal atom of proof of that, what I will venture to call, "damnable heresy." There is not a man of science on earth who will dare to say that he ever saw the principle of evolution in operation. He dates his guesses uncounted millions of years before the history of the race was written, and even when he has torn asunder the rocks, and has spanned the heavens with his telescope, and has subjected everything to the most careful and microscopic examination, he cannot find one solitary piece of proof for that philosophy which has darkened the minds of men, and is driving uncounted millions away from God.

Yet that guess is the thing that is regnant in academic thought to-day. You cannot escape it. Poor, simple, men who strut around calling themselves scholars, proceeding on the assumption of its truth in nearly all their investigations! If your premises are wrong, your conclusions are bound to be wrong.

A certain Canadian has written a book,—I have not read it, but have read a review of it recently—in which he says that a religion with a purpose is to supplant a religion with a God. We are to have a religion without

God. That is a contradiction of terms. The thing is impossible.

But the Bible has anticipated all that for us. The Book is up to the minute, and the whole Bible was written—what for? What is the purpose of the Bible? Can you tell me in a word? The Bible was written in order that God might reveal Himself to men as God. That is the purpose of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Its message on every page, whether it be the record of creation, the history of the patriarchs, the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, the possession of Canaan, the period of the judgment, through the kings—whether it be in poetry or prophecy or wherever it is, the end of every word written in the Book is to teach men that Jehovah is God, and that "there is none else".

And He is going to do it. All the world's scholarship will not be permitted—I say, "scholarship", it is scholarship falsely so-called:—let me rather say, all the intellectual conceit of this generation, or of any other generation, will not be permitted to elbow God out of His universe ("Hallelujah!"). He is God, and He has sworn by Himself "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." No; we cannot do without religion; nor can we do with a religion without God.

I.

The fact is, THE ENDS OF THE EARTH NEED A RELIGION THAT CAN SAVE, A SAVING RELIGION. That is my proposition, the ends of the earth need a saving religion, a religion that has salvation at its heart. Religion as a hobby may be interesting for a little while, or as a subject of intellectual experimentation, but we need a religion that saves, a religion that does something for us. Everybody needs it—everybody here, and everybody elsewhere.

Not to take too wide a view of it, or to attempt to cover too much ground, let me put it thus: *you need a religion that can save you*. I wonder if there is any proud man here who says, "I do not need saving, sir; I do not recognize a need of any kind of salvation. I am my own saviour; I am the captain of my soul." Such an one is like a little girl with a new dress or a new ring, or a little boy when he is first dressed up like his father. These grown-up people strut around and say, "I do not need anybody." You do; and if you will stop to think a little while you will bear me witness that I tell the truth when I say that your greatest difficulty, I do not care who you are, what your occupation, what your education, what may be the measure of your wealth, what may be your social standing, or where you live, it makes no difference; your biggest problem is not in your home, it is not in the place where you work, it is not in your companions, it is not in your circumstances: *it is in yourself*.

You know, if you will be honest, even if you are an evolutionist, that there is something in that breast of yours that is always contending against the best and the highest. You are perfectly aware that there never has been one day in your history when at eveningtime you were able to look back upon the day and say, "I have been victorious every hour. I have this day realized my own expectations. I have achieved success." You

never had a really successful day in all your history. There never has been a day when that something within you has not defeated you, and made you to feel, when the day was done, that another day's record was stained and spoiled.

What is that something? The residue of the animal nature from which we have emerged? Is it the bit of tiger that is in us still—or is it the monkey? I confess there are many people who go far to justify the evolutionary theory,—thus far at least, that they demonstrate that there is a good deal of the animal in them, whatever sort of animal it may be. Let me not dispute with your holding to your theory, for the moment, if that be your theory, but tell me to-night what it is—and you will have on controversy with me for every man and every woman of you, if you will be honest, will admit that there is something which defeats you, which bars your progress, so that when you are climbing the steeps, pulls you back again, when you fain would take wings and fly, drags you down into the mire. I have not named it: I have called it "something". You name it!

You say it is something left from the lower state from which you have emerged. Very well. I ask you a question, Are you in your own person experiencing any evolution? Is the evolutionary law operating in you? Are you little by little sloughing off that baser thing? The man almost turns pale as I ask it. If he is honest he says, "Sometimes I have a horrible fear that that something will get the better of me yet, that that something will strangle my noblest aspirations, and bring me into something other than a man." There is not a man whose life ever did illustrate the evolutionary principle. There is the animal nature there, be it tiger, or monkey, or whatever it is; but there is no indication that men are emerging from it, but rather are going down deeper and deeper into it.

If you want an example of that principle, read the writings of the men who promulgate that theory. It is a wonder to me that some of them do not put on overalls while they write! They are wallowing in the sensual, going down into the very depths of animalism, justifying every kind of bestial life, on the ground that it is inevitable. My friends, every man needs a religion that saves, in order to save him from himself, in order to give him the victory over something that is quite apart from his circumstances, but which is inseparable from his own personality. *That something the Bible calls SIN.*

If you look outside, the same is true. You and I need a religion that will save us from our circumstances. There is enough of the devil roundabout us, is there not? There is sin enough in us, but there is sin about us—if now I may call it by its proper name. There is some student here from the university. Let me ask you a question: do your fellow-students and all the circumstances of your academic life help to make an angel of you? Come now, be honest! Will you tell me that all your circumstances contribute to your moral upbuilding? I have had scores of people come to me and say, "I cannot turn to the right hand or to the left, but I am beset with temptation. It seems to be harder and harder to be honest, to be straightforward, to be unselfish."

I do not mean that men are led away always into things that are not respectable, I do not mean that. But I mean that a man's circumstances do not help him to realize the best. He is forced to say, "I need a power that will do something for me, and that will make me superior to my

circumstances." This world is not a friend to grace to help us on to God. "Toronto the Good", I fear, is not very good after all. It could be a great deal better, like every other city. I think probably we have a little more hypocrisy and Pharisaism than in some places. We have nothing of which to be proud, in any case.

I will tell you another thing. There is a man here who is a Rationalist. He believes nothing he cannot prove. He is not superstitious; he does not know there is a spiritual world, or that there is a realm of spirits of any sort. He may flatter himself that he is an atheist; he does not know whether there is a God or not. Yet when he moves in a certain direction he says, "Sometimes I have a feeling that there is a spiritual power opposing me; that there is an invisible, intangible, something that bars my progress." Sometimes I feel as though roundabout me there were invisible powers that are the enemies of what is best in me, call that best a conscience, or whatever you will. And sometimes I wish I had power with which to stand up against these forces that seem to be superhuman. Some people call it fate. I do not know what it is, but I do know that when I go along life's pathway there are powers which seem more than human which drag me down and drag me back." Whether you believe in the existence of a malignant spirit which the Bible calls the devil or not, you know that there is a something, and you know that we need a religion that can save us from that alien power.

And then, by and by, *we shall reach the end of the road*, we shall go the way of all flesh, we shall set sail for that country from which no traveller has yet returned—and where are we going to live? How are we going to live? I have no doubt that I should be correct were I to say that there is not a man or woman here this evening who would desire to take everything he or she has into another life. There are tendencies here that have defeated you and troubled you, and you have said to yourself again and again, "When at last I leave this life, and go into another, I do hope that I may be delivered from these things. Had I to carry them with me, to go on as I have been going in this life, to be unprepared for the next life, there would be no heaven in prospect for me." If there be a God—let me put it that way—if there be a God, and you and I must go to meet Him, then we need a religion that will prepare us to stand in His presence. Thus it must appear, however the subject is viewed, that we need a religion that saves.

II.

Very well, then, WE ARE ADMONISHED TO LOOK UNTO GOD, BECAUSE HE IS THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN SAVE. I shall not make light of the church with its ordinances, and its varied ministries, nor of all the agencies that may be set in operation for human betterment. But I appeal once again to your own experience as I ask you, defeated man—if not completely, then partially—can you tell me of any human power that can touch that thing inside of you? If it be the evolutionary process in operation, who is going to intervene? If that is our only help, how shall I shed it and get rid of it? No one but God can give us the victory within. Have you ever thought what a terrible thing sin is? This moral evil, I care not what you call it—have you ever thought how far-reaching it is? We think of the jails and asylums, and of the kind of sin that manifests itself to be unprofitable and to be evil. Ah, these things may be the fruit of sins of many generations back. I do not know how to rectify the ills of the world apart from God.

There is to be a conference in London shortly, I forget the dates, when representatives of the nations of the world are going to get together to agree not to fight any more! They are going to try to agree what sort of ships they shall have. The statesmen of Europe, of the world indeed, have been at their wits' end now for more than a decade trying to recover the world from the last Great War; yet we find an utterly bankrupt statesmanship; after ten years we have made absolutely no progress. The wound is not healed.

That sort of thing is all right for those who believe in peace conferences, but who do not believe in the Prince of Peace or in the Book of God. Never in the world can you correct the objective evil, and blot out the effects of sin socially, nationally, or internationally, apart from a remedy that will change the hearts of men, and make them new creatures. And only God can do that. There is no help in a religion that has not God at the heart of it. Whether we consider ourselves as individuals, or in our relation to our immediate communities, or to the nations, or the wider obligations that are ours, everywhere we need God. A religion without God is no religion at all. To do battle with the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, to give us the victory over these superhuman powers that are as real as the things that are tangible, we shall never find relief anywhere but in God.

"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth"—why? why? Listen! This is the argument—"for I am God, and there is none else." You cannot do without God.

III.

BUT WHO IS HE? "Look unto me." How can I look on the invisible? How can I know God? "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Let me see God." To which the Lord replied, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" Jesus Christ is the only God we know. There never was another God. You say, "Was He the God of the Old Testament?" Yes; the God of the Old Testament is the God of the New. Jehovah of the Old Testament is Jesus of the New. "Jehovah-Tsidkenu", of Whom we were singing a few minutes ago, is Jesus our righteousness. He has revealed God. "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." We are to think of God in terms of the revelation of God by Jesus Christ. He is the only God we know.

Someone says, "I should like to know what God thinks of me. I wish I could find out what He thinks of me. I wish I could learn what His attitude toward me is. I wish I could know what He stands ready to do for me. God is a spirit, and I have never seen him"—no, but He has come to you in the person of His Son.

What is Christ's attitude toward sin? I can give it to you in a few sentences. Call to your mind the record of the Lord Jesus, and you will find that He never treated sin as the residue of a lower life. He never made an apology for sin. He never excused it, nor condoned it in any way. He always regarded it as an alien, as an enemy, that had no proper place in human life, a thing that was to be dealt with and got rid of somehow.

That is our Lord's attitude toward sin, *yet how merciful He always was to the sinner!* How He hated sin! "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her"—and He went on writing on the ground.

Presently He looked up and said, "Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." That was always His attitude toward sin, and toward the sinner. He gathered up the world's sin upon Himself; He Who knew no sin was made sin for us; and He, the sinless One, the infinite One, took into His infinitely capacious soul all the woes of the world, and carried them to the cross and, making His soul an offering for sin, atoned for them there. He was buried in the grave; then He ascended to the Father's right hand to be our great High Priest, to plead our cause. Now He bids us look to Him, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else."

"Surely, sir", someone says, "it cannot be as simple as that, just to look to Christ!" What does it mean? There is a poor woman down the street whose rent is due next week. She has no money, and her landlord threatens that if she does not pay her rent she will be put out on the street. One day a friend comes in and learns about it. She says to him, "I have no helper, I have no money. I do not know what to do." "Well", says the friend, "when your landlord comes, tell him to look to me for the rent." By and by the landlord comes. The poor woman has nothing at all. She says, "Mr. So-and-So left his card, and told me to tell you to look to him for the rent. He will pay it." He looked to the friend,—and he got his rent.

What does "looking" to Jesus mean? It means committing ourselves to Him. To the law of God that demands satisfaction for my delinquency, I must say, "Look to Jesus Christ for that." Do I need forgiveness for sin—I must say to God, "Please look to the blood of Christ for that." For power to overcome, I look to Him—and it is mine.

This is the text that was used of God to bring the great Spurgeon to Christ when he was but a boy. He went to church one Sunday morning when the weather was something like it is this evening; it was very slushy, very bad under foot, so bad that few people were there. It was in a little Primitive Methodist chapel, and the preacher to whom Spurgeon listened did not know very much. At least so Mr. Spurgeon used to say. But he knew his text! Spurgeon had one side of the church almost to himself; and he sat away over by the wall. The preacher noticed him, and thought he was looking very gloomy. He pointed to him directly and said, "Young man, look to Jesus. Look! Look! Look!" Spurgeon used to say, "It is very simple: Look! Look! Only four letters, and two of them alike."

Let us trust Him. Let us leave everything with Him, and receive salvation at His hand. What is our authority for doing so?—"for he is God, and there is none else." If you have the word of God for it, what more do you want? If your salvation is certified by God Himself, can you ask for anything more? Shall we come this evening, if we have not already come, just as we are, confessing our need?

Let us look to Him in prayer: O Lord, we pray that Thou wilt be pleased to exercise Thy power to-night. May the Spirit of God open blind eyes, and turn many to the Cross! It may be that some man has reached the crisis of his history to-night; it may be that his mind has been filled with things that are not of God. Help such an one to come in simple faith, and cast his burden upon Christ and receive eternal life. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

THE SUPREME ACHIEVEMENT OF GRACE.

A Sermon

by the Rev. Thomas Todhunter, M.A.

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

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."—Rom. 8:3, 4.

All the works and ways of God have something in them above the comprehension of a finite understanding. As this is the case with the works of creation and Providence, there is no reason to expect it should be otherwise in the astonishing works of redemption. They are all of them, when seriously and impartially enquired into, holy, just, and good; but at the same time, not beyond the cavils and objections of men of prejudiced, perverse and corrupt minds.

The apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, at great length establishes the fundamental doctrine of the gospel, that sinners are justified by the free grace of God through the imputed righteousness of a Redeemer. To this doctrine men do by nature make the strongest opposition, and are, with the utmost difficulty, brought to believe it. We may well say of it in particular, what the same Apostle says of the truths of God in general, that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God". It is therefore highly necessary to inculcate this doctrine, frequently to dwell upon it, and set it in as clear a light as possible. To do this the better, I have chosen a portion of Scripture as copious upon the subject as any in the whole Bible. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

In discoursing upon these words, I shall as the time will permit, shew *what is here meant by the Law; secondly, Its insufficiency to justify* "in that it was weak through the flesh;" *thirdly, God's love in sending His Son to fulfil the law in our stead.* And lastly, *The end of Christ's obedience unto death—viz., "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*

I.

The law mentioned by the Apostle here, and in most places throughout this epistle, signifies the moral law; or the ten commandments which God delivered to the Children of Israel at Mount Sinai. It is the same that James speaks of, when he says, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all", and which our Lord sums up in these two, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." This law is a renewal, or republication of that which is stamped upon the conscience. For what the revealed law forbids, that also the conscience condemns; and what the moral law commands or requires, the same also does the voice of God in the conscience approve. So it is written, "When

the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another"

The perfection, spirituality and extent of the law given by Moses is set before us in the gospel, especially in our Lord's sermon on the Mount. From whence we learn, that it extends both to the outward and inward man: it takes cognisance of the actions; it judges every word; all the operations and all the dispositions of the soul come under its sacred jurisdiction. It is indeed a discernor not only of the working thoughts, but also of the dawning intentions: and arraigns them both at his awful bar. It pierces "even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit". Not the inmost recesses of the breast are too deep for its penetration: nor all the artifices of the deceitful heart too subtle for its detection. *Outer* laws forbid the unclean act: *this* condemns the wanton eye and irregular desire. *Outer* laws punish the injurious deed: *this* passes sentence on the unguarded sallies of passion, and the most secret emotions of resentment. So eminently true is that remark of the Psalmist, "Thy commandment is exceeding broad".

Our Lord sums up this law in these words—"Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." These two commandments comprehend the whole law of eternal life and death, according to which the one Lawgiver saves and destroys, for "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets". He that fulfils these, keeps the whole: and he that offends in these, keeps no commandment of God. The reward of this obedience is eternal life, even as the curse is inseparable from the least transgression.

The constant language of this Law is, "Obey and live", "The man that doeth them shall live in them", and "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." But it is impossible for this law to give life to any sinner. Though Paul once thought to live by it, yet when it convinced him of sin, it killed him—when he saw the length and breadth of God's holy law, all his vain conceits were blasted; his presumptuous hopes expired; he could not but acknowledge himself justly liable to condemnation and death.

Now if we consider the law in this point of view; that its only power is to justify the righteous and condemn the transgressor; if there is not a perfect character upon earth, but all have broken its precepts; if this is the condition not of open sinners; not of publicans only, but of the most irreproachable persons; if none obey the divine

law uniformly, invariably, and completely, then "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified". But this leads me to SHEW THE INSUFFICIENCY OF THE LAW TO JUSTIFY US.

II.

The law, says the Apostle in our text, *is weak*; is incapable of justifying us, or of giving us a title to life. Not through any imperfection, or defect in its precepts, for it is in itself *holy, just, and good*, and as able to justify a sinless man as ever. But it is "weak through the flesh"; it is rendered incapable of justifying us, by reason of the depravity of our nature, and our inability to perform obedience to its commands. For the law can only justify the righteous and such as are without sin; and therefore, inasmuch as all have sinned, it may with great propriety be said to be "weak through the flesh". There is no weakness in the law, the deficiency lies in our helpless corrupted nature. Agreeably to this the Apostle says in another place, "if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law", *i.e.*, If there had been a law enacted, which could have entitled a sinner—a fallen creature, to eternal life, on condition of his performing the obedience which it required, God would certainly have spared His own Son, and righteousness for justification of life, would have consisted in a conformity to that law.

But admire the stupendous wisdom and love of God! What it was impossible for the law to do, in that it "was weak through the flesh", He hath effected by another method. He hath done that which must for ever have appeared impossible in the eyes of men. He "sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." This is the third thing I proposed to treat of, *viz.*, GOD'S LOVE IN SENDING HIS SON TO FULFIL THE LAW IN OUR STEAD.

III.

God's love in sending His Son is celebrated by the apostles in such language as this: "God is love". "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." God "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all". "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." With respect to this, Jesus Christ is called, *the Son of his love*. If the divine love was to be fully manifested to men by a gift equal to, or fully expressive of, that love, then surely no less than a person of infinite dignity, a divine person, was fit to be the proper and adequate product thereof. But if Jesus were not a divine person, He could not be the perfect product of the Father's love, and the gift would come infinitely short of the grace of the Giver. And therefore His being called the Son of God, on this account, supposes Him to be God. Thus the Father's love to us appears fully in a Gift answerable to the love that gave it.

But Jesus Christ is not only really and properly God, but also truly man. By being man, He stands in a connection both with the bodily and spiritual creation; both with the visible and invisible creatures. Hence the apostle: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh

and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil". How the *divinity* and *humanity* are united, we can no more comprehend than we can understand how our souls and bodies are united; but to an attentive reader of the history of Jesus Christ, there is something very striking in that part of His character, which displays the joint appearance of human weakness and divine majesty. We find Him subject to every human want and infirmity; yet claiming and manifesting every divine perfection, every attribute of that peerless One Who shares not His glory with another. We find Him, regardless of the charge of blasphemy, declaring "I and my Father are one", and receiving divine worship accordingly. We find Him weary and thirsty, sitting on a well, asking a drink of water, and at the same time shewing Himself to be *the Fountain of living waters*. Not to multiply instances, we find Him ready to expire on the cross, labouring under the most intense sufferings, and the most grievous pain; yet shewing Himself to be the Hearer of prayer, and the Sovereign of paradise, or the highest heaven.

Thus did God send His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, yet without sin.

The end and design of Christ's coming in the flesh, was that He might fulfil the law in our stead, and obtain eternal redemption for us. Now as it was necessary that sin should be expiated, or atonement made for it in that very nature which had transgressed, therefore our Lord was made man. And because His perfect work was to be imputed to sinners, therefore He was one person with the Godhead. The works which Jesus did were the works of the Son of God. This made all His works in the fulfilling of the law of infinite value. The blood of Christ, Who gave Himself an offering and a sacrifice for sin is an infinite atonement for it, an infinite price for the redemption of His people, and able to make them perfect as pertaining to the conscience, as they believe it to be the blood of God.

Thus God condemned sin in the person or in the flesh of His Son. He sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and by making Him a sin offering condemned sin, and executed His wrath against it to the utmost. Or, in other words, Jesus Christ underwent the death contained in the curse of the law, in the room of His people; their sins were charged upon Him, imputed to Him, and He actually suffered for them. So that He, though an innocent person, was treated as a sinner, forsaken of God, and condemned to the most ignominious death. This is what the Apostle means when he says in the text, that God sent "his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." He passed by us and punished our sins in the person of His Son. This agrees with those other strong passages which we meet with in scripture—"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God". "Ye know that we were

not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot".

Here it may not be improper to take a short view of the character of Jesus Christ. In doing this, we shall see the extent of God's holy law, and the perfection of that righteousness by which sinners are justified and eternally saved.

The character of Jesus Christ was the spirit and perfection of the divine law copied out in the temper of His mind, and the tenor of His actions. He undertook to fulfil all righteousness; and we see by His doctrine what an extensive view He had of the perfection of God's law, and likewise of all the artful reasonings that take place in the hearts of men, evading the force thereof. His comprehensive knowledge of the divine law, and what righteousness was necessary to honour it, as well as His unfeigned love of it, are set forth beforehand in the Psalms, in language adapted for Him. In the one hundred and nineteenth Psalm, which is employed from beginning to end, in drawing the picture of His heart, and in some others, we find him speaking in this manner, "I have seen an end of all perfection:" the breadth and the length of the most perfect character among men: "but thy commandment is exceeding broad." "Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto thee!"

We find the scope of the law often set before us in language to this effect: "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully: he shall receive the blessing from the Lord." The Saviour of the world came under this law, which condemned every transgression, and insisted upon perfect obedience. This law He fulfilled in the strictest sense. His life was a perfect copy of it. So that His righteousness shines forth with the most unexceptionable dignity and splendour. In this righteousness God rests satisfied and well-pleased; and it is through this righteousness that grace and salvation are conveyed to the children of men. 'Tis true the law makes no provision for one man's being benefited by the righteousness of another—*i.e.*, it does not provide a substitute: therefore according to that law which said, "The man that doeth them shall live in them." Jesus Christ could only obtain life for Himself by His own obedience. But God acts as a Sovereign and above the law. He does what the law could not do, by placing His Son under it, to fulfil it in the sinner's name; that because He lives the sinner might live also. For though the "law be magnified" by the obedience of the Son of God; though sinners are saved in a way of justice and equity; yet this salvation did not spring from the law, but from God's grace, as Sovereign, as acting far above, and beyond all law. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

What a glorious salvation does the gospel or the history of Jesus Christ present us with! Here salvation and righteousness spring up together. Sinners are saved, yet God's perfect law is fulfilled. Sinners are saved, yet all their sins are punished. God's wrath against sin is fully executed, yet complete deliverance is wrought for sinners. Well might the Apostle break forth into the following

exclamation—"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" The gospel reconciles men to the Just God, by shewing Him to be the Saviour. It reconciles men to have the same dependence upon God for their righteousness, as man, when upright, had for his food; for the justifying righteousness is as much the workmanship and gift of God, as was the garden of Eden.

From what has been said it is easy to perceive the difference between the law given by Moses, and the grace which came by Jesus Christ. The law ministered condemnation, the gospel ministers righteousness; the law demanded a righteousness, the gospel freely bestows one. According to that law which said, "The man that doeth them shall live in them", no man could obtain life but by his own personal obedience. But here, by the gracious edict of Him, Whom it becomes to act above and beyond all law for the relief of the guilty, commandment is given to the Son of the Highest, to fulfil the law given by Moses for the transgressors, so as they might live together with Him by His righteousness.

Agreeably to this, the Apostle John says, "This is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ"; not that we should do any thing to obtain life, but that we should live by what He hath done. It is a commandment not requiring any thing of us, but bestowing life by the knowledge which it conveys: for the belief or knowledge of Christ is happiness, as Jesus says, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." The belief or knowledge of a comfortable truth, is not work or labour, but rest and peace; and the heavenly Gift is conveyed unto men, even as God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, in this manner, *Be it known unto you.*

V.

Having spoken pretty largely of Christ's obedience unto death in our stead, it is time I should proceed in the *last* place, to consider THE END OF CHRIST'S OBEDIENCE, *viz.*, "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

When Jesus Christ undertook to fulfil all righteousness, He acted as a public person, as the Head and Representative of His people. He performed obedience to the perfect law in their name and stead; "so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." His righteousness is imputed or adjudged to them; for though they do not fulfil the law in their own persons, yet they fulfil it in Christ, their head and representative. Thus believers are said, in the text, to have the righteousness of the law fulfilled in them: but we cannot be said to fulfil the righteousness of the law by our imperfect obedience; for the law is "weak through the flesh"; the sense of the Apostle must therefore be, that we fulfil it in Christ the sinner's Substitute.

When Jesus became exceeding sorrowful unto death, He bare the punishment of all His people's sins; and when He rose, He rose in the name of His people, or as their head and representative. As their head He was justified, sanctified, blessed, glorified, and admitted into fulness of joy in a heavenly eternal life on the other side of death; so that His being made happy, effectually secured the like happiness of all His people. But though the chosen seed cannot perish in the judgment, yet no man can be assured

that he is justified, sanctified, or united to Christ, or in other words, none can be assured that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in him by any warm impressions or suggestions he may have; but only according to scripture which states the matter thus, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The righteousness of the law is only fulfilled in them who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. And as to those who walk otherwise, whatever their pretensions may be, or whatever fine speeches they may make, we must still apply what the Apostle says in this chapter, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

Flesh and spirit, in the text, are opposed to each other, as they are frequently in the New Testament, for the spirit here does not mean that divine person the Holy Ghost. By the flesh is meant the law of Moses, or the covenant from Mount Sinai, in distinction from the gospel, or the new covenant. These two covenants are also distinguished as *letter* and *spirit*; the first covenant being considered as a parable, and the new as the hidden sense, and scope, as the intention and spirit of that parable. The Apostle speaks of the flesh in distinction from the spirit, in the same sense when he says to the *Galatians*, "Having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect in the flesh?"

To walk after the flesh is to walk in the "oldness of the letter"; or according to the tenor of the covenant made with Israel at Sinai. It is to be led by an inclination to establish our own righteousness, and to seek to enjoy happiness of an earthly life; for self-righteousness and love to this world always accompany each other: and they who walk after the flesh are in captivity, in bondage to the law, and under its curse. Paul walked after the flesh when he boasted of his many privileges as a Jew, "Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." While he was serving in the "oldness of the letter", he sought no other righteousness but his own carnal one, to entitle him to the favour of God and eternal life. And all unregenerate men, all who are seeking salvation by their own works, either in whole or in part, are walking after the flesh. And while they do so, they will certainly desire an earthly paradise, an earthly life more than the life from the dead which is in Christ Jesus: for they are incapable of rejoicing in hope of His glorious appearing, and heavenly kingdom!

To walk in the spirit, or after the spirit, and to walk in the truth are expressions of the same import in the New Testament. The New Testament is the sense and meaning of the Old. The Old Testament prophecies foretold the sufferings of Christ and the following glory; the New Testament is the accomplishment of those prophecies. To walk after the spirit therefore must signify to walk according to the New Testament. To be led by a prevailing inclination and desire to be found in Christ, not having our own righteousness, but that which is by the faith of Him, if by any means we may attain to the resurrection of the dead. And this is quite above nature. This is the new creature; for we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works; and if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. The Apostle Paul tells the *Philippians*, that they who rejoice in Christ Jesus are said to worship God in the spirit; and he encourages them to consider themselves as the true circumcision while they had no confidence in the flesh, and did not hanker after the carnal

ordinances and peculiarities wherein the Jewish nation gloried. To worship God in the spirit is to worship Him as He is manifested in Christ Jesus, in whom all the Old Testament types and shadows have their full accomplishment. God's good pleasure rests upon His Son; and it is only through Christ's righteousness that He can be addressed or found propitious.

Thus it is easy for any one who is enlightened in the knowledge of the truth to perceive what the Apostle means by saying, "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The more any one loves the righteousness of Christ, the more he endeavours to imitate it, the more ardent is his desire after an eternal life from the dead; and such an one may be said to walk after the spirit. And let it be observed, that the righteousness of Christ is only imputed to them who walk after the spirit; for the Apostle here makes it to be the distinguishing character of them, in whom the righteousness of the law is fulfilled. Not that our walking in the spirit is the cause of our salvation, but an evidence or proof of our interest in the righteousness of Christ. This method God hath ordained in order to distinguish real disciples from hypocrites; and no man, however sound his profession may be, can enjoy that life which lies in God's favour, any further than as he imitates that righteousness by which he hopes to be saved.

Thus we have seen that "what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh", God's sovereign grace effected by another method, by "sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh" and by making Him a sin-offering, condemning sin in the flesh, for this very end, "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit"; that they might have a righteousness to boast of, sufficient to justify them and entitle them to eternal life.

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These pages (14 and 15) are the Official organ of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches in Ontario and Quebec.

337 Jarvis St., Toronto, Canada.

W. GORDON BROWN, Editor.

A CHURCH MOVES TEN MILES.

Ever since its beginning, the Emmanuel Baptist Church, in Wheatley, where Rev. John Dodds is the faithful pastor, has been greatly in need of a church building. They have been worshipping in an up-stairs hall; and, what with a long flight of stairs before the entrance, together with strong prejudice in a small town, it has been almost impossible of late to get the unsaved into the services. But now the problem is being solved. A frame building, formerly used by the Congregationalists, was bought, moved a distance of ten miles into the village, and set upon the church lot purchased for it. Excavation for a basement is complete, and when weather permits, the cement work will be done. In addition to this fine "move", the church has contributed \$250 to outside interests, \$155 of which was given by the small membership. A loan of \$1,000 makes it possible to build a basement, tower, etc., for the new church. These material evidences of reliance upon God's promises should encourage like faith in others.

* * * *

NEW-YEAR'S IN MONTREAL.

New Year's Day saw the Second Annual gathering of the Regular Baptists of our three witnessing churches in Canada's metropolis of Montreal, namely, Immanuel (English), Beneficent (French), St. Paul's (Bi-lingual), held at Immanuel Church, Verdun, Rev. C. H. Leggett presided at the well-attended meeting. Characteristic hymns, fervent prayers, and practical messages occupied the meeting from 10.30 a.m. till noon. Student B. Jamieson gave a glimpse of life at our Seminary, and Pastor A. St. James gave an impressive talk on a lead pencil. (Many children were present, and, anyway, older folks seem always to enjoy children's talks.) For the sake of others who might also make use of the thought, we give the following points: A pencil must be sharpened to be used; so must we to be prepared. Sharpening involves waste; so must we sacrifice. A pencil needs an eraser to complete it; so do we need Christ and His atoning blood to erase the crooked marks of our sin.

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BOSTON CHURCH FRUITFUL.

Since the anniversary of the Boston Church, last October 20th, seven have professed conversion, under the fruitful ministry of Pastor A. J. Loveday. The services, especially those on Sunday evening, are well attended. As a token of the esteem in which the pastor and his wife are held by the church, they were presented, at the Annual Sunday School Entertainment, on Christmas Eve, with an auto-robe and

an electric heater. Had the reader been present on the last Sunday evening of the old year, he would have enjoyed, not only the sermon, but also the lively season of testimony, which followed, when two or three would be on their feet at once. The Watch Night Service was well attended, much of the time being devoted to prayer for the careless unsaved and for indifferent Christians.

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CALL TO CALGARY.

Rev. M. R. Hall recently held a fifteen days' campaign in the Westborne Baptist Church at Calgary. The Lord blessed his efforts with the awakening of Christians and the salvation of a number of the lost. Westborne thereupon called Brother Hall to its pastorate. Because of the challenging opportunity in the West, where there are so few lighthouses of divine testimony, he has accepted its invitation. We shall be sorry to lose him from our work in Timmins, Ontario, but we do pray that he may have a ministry of continued and increasing blessing in his new work.

* * * *

NORTH BAY.

On Sunday, December 29th, Student Stanley Wellington preached in North Bay. One man, for whom much prayer had been offered, professed to have received the Saviour. The following Sunday Student S. Jeffery was the supply, and another man accepted Christ.

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BAPTISMS.

Three more were baptized on Sunday, January 5th, at Immanuel Baptist Church, Hamilton, where Rev. A. Milligan is pastor.

The same Sunday, a young woman from the village of Palgrave was immersed at the Orangeville Church; another young lady was baptized two Sundays previous.

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ON THE AIR.

Pastor W. J. H. Brown, of Annette Street Baptist Church, Toronto, has changed the hour of his Sunday broadcast from 12.45 to one o'clock noon. Those who tune in, report much blessing from this half-hour service. On Sunday, January 5th, a man over sixty responded to the Gospel appeal, came to the front of Annette Church, and was later found in the vestry, weeping over his sins. A young man in his twenties also made profession of faith in the service.

* * * *

ALTON.

We stated in a recent edition that three accepted Christ, following a ser-

mon by Pastor W. H. Turner, in Alton. The statement should have been: "Three children of God surrendered their lives wholly to Him, following an appeal made by the pastor." On a later Sunday a young married woman came forward to receive Christ as Saviour. She was followed a few moments later by a young man and his fiancée, also seeking the Lord. Last Sunday the pastor had the joy of baptizing two candidates.

* * * *

TERRA COTTA.

For some ten years there have been no regular services at Terra Cotta, a hamlet some forty miles from Toronto, and the church itself has been closed for some time. Now three years ago, two young people, in looking around for some place in which to do definite Christian work, felt that they should open a Sunday School in this place. They did so, and have had an average attendance of nineteen. Recently, older folks have also become interested, and Student George Gorman is now preaching in this church. Arrangements are not yet complete, but prayer is requested for the Lord's guidance and blessing in this work. Oh, how many other villages throughout Ontario have no Gospel testimony!

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THIRTY-SIX ADDITIONS.

Thirty-six have joined the Hespeler Baptist Church during the last year, under the fruitful ministry of Rev. T. Summers. During December, two were baptized, and three or four more are now waiting baptism. At the first communion service of this year, six were given the right hand of fellowship. Although it was not the custom to have a Watch Night Service in this church, a new precedent was established on New Year's Eve. About eighty gathered shortly after ten o'clock, and spent their time in prayer and praise. Most of those present were glad to testify to the saving and keeping power which they found in Christ.

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OUR INDIAN BRETHREN.

The Regular Baptist Church on the Medina Reserve, near Hagersville, recently held their annual business meeting. During the year there were received by experience, three; by letter, one; by baptism, seven; but there was a loss through death of six. Five others are now awaiting baptism. From all departments of the church \$467.49 were received, of which \$437.38 were paid out. Of this last, \$110 were used in repairing the church buildings. The church year was closed with a balance in the books of all departments. Rev. Melchie Henry is the pastor.

STIRRING DAYS AT CENTRAL.

Pastor James McGinlay has been working in London, Ontario, for a year now, and during that time score after score of precious souls has been won for Christ. Sunday evening, January 5th, saw the Capitol Theatre crowded with fifteen hundred people, while more than a hundred were turned away. The pastor was giving a special message on the need of fighting for the faith and maintaining spiritual standards in churches which profess to follow the New Testament. The people of Central believe that they see a little cloud, the size of a man's hand, and they are looking for a down-pouring, on-sweeping, soul-reviving manifestation of God's grace, which shall follow the Mount Carmel experience of their stand for God and His Word.

Accordingly, they are going on with their fine building. Their unique plan is to pay each bill as it comes along. This plan has been followed now for three months. During that time wages alone have been about \$400. Some weeks ago the treasury was reduced to \$250, with \$900 owing. What did the people do? They prayed, and that week God sent them \$1,850. Just the other day the treasury was reduced to \$154, and again it was refilled to the extent of \$800. But more is needed,—\$2,600 for steel, about \$3,500 for the heating plant, about \$1,500 for decorating, and about \$5,000 for the seating. We believe that every dollar invested in this building will be one hundred cents consecrated to evangelism and Bible teaching. Only eternity will tell the story, and only when the books are made up for the Bank of Heaven on the judgment day, will those who give to this worthy cause know what rate of interest their investments will draw. Now see what you can do. Write Rev. James McGinlay, 380 Dufferin Ave., London, Ont.

COURTLAND'S PROGRESS.

The best reports in the history of the church were given at the annual meeting of our brethren in Courtland, with Pastor R. D. Guthrie presiding. During the year there were received by baptism, thirty; by letter, four; by experience, six; a total of forty. From all departments \$2,700 were raised. The people praised God for this fact, when they remembered that two years ago, at the time when they took their stand, those who went out from them said that all the givers had left the church.

At this business session a motion was carried "that we as a church set apart Saturday evening of each week for the visiting of the homes of the community, to give out tracts and invitations to the Sunday services." No doubt, real results will be attained by this new plan. No wonder, then, that this business meeting began with the hymn, "Praise the Saviour", and closed with the verse, "Praise God".

The first Sunday of the New Year was also a time of blessing. One hundred and three attended Sunday School in this rural community. To the Gospel invitation after the evening sermon, a mother

of one of the Sunday School scholars responded.

* * * *

MICHIGAN NOTES.

By Rev. C. R. Peterson.

ENSLEY.

Bro. John Douglas has been pastor of this church for about one year. The church numbers nearly 115 members. Congregations are good, and the Bible school attendance is keeping up well. A preaching station is maintained every Sunday at Open Well school. Pastor Douglas recently baptized nine. Some of these were converts from a Sunday service, conducted at Flowing Well school, by Eddie Vanderjagt, of Grand Rapids. Before winter set in, the Chicago Pioneers, composed of 23 men and women, conducted a number of services at Sand Lake and Cedar Springs, as well as open-air meetings on Saturday nights at Ensley. Several professed conversion at these meetings.

* * * *

HOWARD CITY.

A year ago last September Bro. Lynn Stout came to this field direct from the Moody Bible Institute. He was told that he would starve on the field, but he was possessed of a faith and zeal that knows no retreat. He reports that the Lord has amply provided for him at Howard City, and he is happy in the work there. There has been a deepening of the Christian life of the church, which consists of about 45 members. Congregations are fair, and the Bible school has shown a healthy increase recently. During the year, six have been buried with Christ in baptism.

* * * *

GRAND RAPIDS.

Sunday, December 15th, was a great and a happy day for Dr. J. Wilson Brown and the members and friends of Berean Church of this city; it was the date of the dedication of their new house of worship. Services began at 6.00 a.m., and continued throughout the day, closing with a great service at night, when it is estimated that between 800 and 1,000 people packed the building, with several hundred turned away. Services were continued through Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. Monday was Community Night, Tuesday evening witnessed the dedication of the fine pipe organ, and Wednesday was Church Family Night. It was a time of great rejoicing. The Berean Church was organized in 1892, with fifty charter members. It now numbers about 450 members. It is located in a fine section of the city, and the outlook is indeed good for a splendid work. The new house of worship is the last word in everything that goes to make up a fully-equipped plant for carrying on effectually the work of Christ. *The Baptist Temple News* very fittingly and beautifully says: "The house is exceedingly attractive, and impresses one at once with its commodiousness, its economy, its fine taste, and artistic beauty. The pulpit front, choir-loft and baptistry are especially attractive. No one can come within the doors without experiencing a pleasant sensa-

tion, because the whole atmosphere of the place stirs the feeling that everything is well arranged, beautiful and conducive to the spirit of praise and worship." Pastor Brown and his people are to be congratulated on this fine achievement. Better even than all this, is the fact that all the fundamentals of the Gospel are preached and taught at this church. We pray that the Shekinah Glory may always rest upon Berean Church. From January 6 to 19, Mr. Roy Brown, of Detroit, will conduct a Bible conference.

* * * *

STRICKLAND.

We quote the following interesting item from *The St. Louis Tribune*: "On Dec. 23, Pastor Kaufman and family were visited by several members of the Strickland Baptist Church, who brought a trailer packed with the best that can be produced of good things, consisting of potatoes, apples, canned fruits, meat, eggs, honey and several other presents. Among other things was a beautiful quilt; and last but not least, there was a sealed box which proved to contain 'greenbacks'. The brother who drove the car while unloading stated that 'this we bring to show our appreciation in part for what you have done for us!'"

* * * *

"A KING'S PEN KNIFE".

The well-known Dr. I. M. Haldeman, of First Baptist Church, New York City, has a new book, "A King's Pen Knife, or Why I Am Opposed To Modernism", published by Francis Emery Fitch, Inc., 188 Pearl St., New York City, at \$1.25. Dr. O. W. Van Osdel, of Grand Rapids, says of it: "We think that if we could persuade all Fundamentalists to read this book, the year 1930 would experience a Fundamental earthquake. If we could persuade all of the Modernists to read this book, we have a profound conviction that some of them would be converted."

* * * *

MODERNISM IN INDIA.

A letter has been passed on to us, written from the Zenana Training Home, Poona City, India, in which the writer gives this significant report: "The other evening I went to hear a prominent minister who was in Poona, lecturing to the students. The hall was crowded with educated Hindus, the meeting being in English. A Hindu lawyer took the chair. The speaker gave a very eloquent address on 'the narrow way', but not 'the only way'. He had a good hearing; but when he had finished, the chairman, in fluent English, remarked, 'The speaker says he has found Salvation through Jesus Christ; we say we have found Salvation through God.' He says, 'The way is narrow; but in our Guita it says it is like the blade of a razor.' He says, 'He found Salvation through Jesus Christ; but God did not only become incarnate in the form of Jesus Christ, but as Krishna, Ram, etc. (mentioning other believed Hindu incarnations), as the need of the world was at the time.' The Hindus will take the Lord Jesus Christ along with their own gods, but not as the only Saviour, and the only way to God. He is the Stone of stumbling."

Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

Vol. V.

No. 1.

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, Editor.

Lesson 5. February 2nd, 1930.
First Quarter.**JOHN'S COMMISSION.**

Lesson Text: Revelation 1:9-20.

Golden Text: "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore; Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."—v. 18.

I. THE PLACE, (v. 9).

The name of the writer is first given, "John" the apostle of Jesus Christ, followed by his designation of himself as "your brother and companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." In this is seen his humility; he does not set forth his claim to apostleship, even as in his gospel he refrains from mentioning his name, referring to himself merely as the "disciple whom Jesus loved", (John 13:23). He is here seen as sharing in the tribulation of the saints. Such affliction has been the lot of the Lord's people throughout all ages, but at certain periods it has been especially severe. The reference to the kingdom and patience or endurance in Jesus Christ denotes the position of the saints in Christ, and gives the secret of their staying powers. It is only in the Lord they are enabled to persevere amidst persecution. In the second place the location of the writer when he received the revelation is given. He was on the "isle that is called Patmos". This is a small island of some thirty miles in circumference situated in the Aegean Sea. The reason for his incarceration upon this lonely isle being, "for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ". He was suffering for the Lord's sake. It is believed that this exile occurred during the reign of Domitian, and that his liberation took place under Nerva, when he returned to Ephesus in which place he died at a good old age.

II. THE NATURE OF THE COMMISSION, (vs. 10, 11).

The circumstances pertaining to the giving of the commission are first stated. John informs us he "was in the Spirit on the Lord's day", the day referred to probably being the first day in the week, although there are some who interpret it as the "Day of the Lord", that great day yet to come. John's condition was "in the Spirit", implying that he was

fully possessed by the Holy Spirit, wholly given up to Him, sensitive to His direction and power, and with the world shut out of his mind and heart. This ought to be our condition when we approach God in worship. It is all too often the case that we bring the world with us when we come into His presence. He desires us to worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:23). In this condition John heard behind him a "great voice as of a trumpet". Such an instrument was used in the service of the Lord for the calling together of the people on certain occasions. It was a divinely appointed signal which they understood, conveying God's message unto them. The utterance of the voice pertained to John's commission. There is first the designation of the speaker. He is the "Alpha and Omega", etc., (the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet), implying that our Lord was the great Self-Existent One, the Jehovah of the Old Testament period. This is followed by the commission, wherein John is commanded to "write in a book" the things seen; obedience thereto giving us the book we are now studying. We ought therefore to be most willing to read and study that which God has commanded to be written. After writing the matter in a book the direction was given to send it to the seven churches in Asia. In the last lesson reference was made to the significance of this number. The prophetic significance found in the condition of those churches is worthy of note, wherein the character of the church throughout the ages is depicted, beginning with loss of love as in Ephesus, and ending with self-satisfied lukewarmness as in Laodicea, where the Lord is found outside the door.

III. THE VISION, (vs. 12-20).**(a) The golden candlesticks, (v. 12).**

John heard the voice, then saw the vision, and in the vision he saw seven golden candlesticks. These represent the churches, (v. 20). In the Old Testament the candlesticks are united, (Ex. 25:32), but here they are separate, so each church is independent upon earth, though all are united in Christ. Their precious nature is seen in their composition, as gold is the most precious of metals. The churches are precious in God's sight. Their mission is also implied. They are lightholders. They are placed in the world to give light amid its darkness, for it should be noted that such light is not required except where there is darkness; and this is truly descriptive of the world's condition, (Eph. 5:8, 6:12). Emphasis should be placed upon the necessity for letting the light shine forth through each child of God, (Matt. 5:14-16).

(b) The Son of Man, (vs. 13-16).

In the midst of the candlesticks John saw "one like unto the Son of man". That title is descriptive of our Lord, and is found in both Old and New Testaments, (Dan. 7:13; Matt. 16:13; 27), implying His relationship to man in humiliation and glory. His position amid the candlesticks is worthy of consideration, denoting His presence in the midst

of the churches. A description of our Lord then follows. He was "clothed with a garment down to the foot and girt about the paps with a golden girdle", (v. 13). The garment denotes His position as a priest, (Ex. 28:2), and the girdle of royal metal His royalty. He is the King-Priest come forth to give judgment upon His churches. "His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow" (v. 14), denoting His dignity, honour and beauty. "And his eyes were as a flame of fire", implying a powerful, searching gaze from which nothing can be hid. How careful then should we be in all our conduct, both secret and public, "And his feet like unto fine brass as if they burned in a furnace" (v. 15), denoting absolute purity. It is with such feet of holiness our Lord walks among the churches. And He expects holiness in His people, (Heb. 12:14). "And his voice as the sound of many waters", inferring its wondrous majesty and power. This is the voice that has raised the dead, (John 11:43, 44), and will yet call forth all from their graves, (John 5:28, 29). "And he had in his right hand seven stars", (v. 16). The stars represent the angels of the churches, or the chief ministers, and they are held in the hand of the Lord, implying His possession of them, and their security in Him. As our Lord's servants, His ministers should be accorded treatment in keeping with their position. We are further informed that out of our Lord's "mouth went a sharp two-edged sword". God's Word is likened unto a sword, (Eph. 6:17), and this denotes judgment by the Word of God. And "His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength". The churches are candlesticks, the ministers stars, but the Lord is the sun. Note the transfiguration, (Matt. 17:2), and the light of the New Jerusalem (21:23).

(c) The effect of the vision, (vs. 17-20).

The effect of the vision upon John was very great. He "fell at his feet as dead", (v. 17). The sight was more than human nature could stand. This clearly betrays the weakness and frailty of man before God. We cannot look upon the Almighty and live, (Ex. 33:20), and it is only as He gives the needed life and strength that we shall view Him later in the glory. The loving consideration of the Saviour is manifest in His action and words thereafter. Upon John "He laid his right hand", imparting strength, and said, "Fear not, I am the first and the last", etc. It is only the wicked who have reason to fear God. They are rebels against His law, and alienated from Him; but His own children are members of His family, admitted into the fellowship of His presence, and receive nothing but love from Him. Note the angelic attitude toward the women at the tomb, (Matt. 28:5). Our Lord again designates Himself as the Great Eternal One, having the keys of hell or Hades, and of death, (v. 18), implying power over the souls and bodies of men, with authority to release from the place of the dead. And this power He will manifest on the resurrection morning. The last two verses contained a repetition of the commission and an explanation of certain symbols, (vs. 19, 20).