

The Gospel Witness

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

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DEMAS

It is sometimes remarked in disparagement of a minister or a church that certain people no longer attend the ministry, or that they have withdrawn their support or membership from a particular church. Such a course on the part of one who has been more or less prominent in the church or in association with the minister is, by some, interpreted as a serious reflection upon the church or minister forsaken. Such an interpretation, however, may be far from the truth.

In some cases such a separation, if correctly construed, would involve no reflection upon anyone. Both Paul and Barnabas were good men; and even John Mark was not a bad man. Mark's conduct may or may not have been justly censurable when, as is recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Acts, he returned to Jerusalem instead of continuing with Paul and Barnabas in their further journeyings. Neither Paul nor Barnabas would have claimed infallibility for his judgment in such a matter; but being men of strong convictions, and bold in their expressions, they had a sharp contention over their respective estimates of the conduct of John Mark. And when, as the fifteenth chapter of Acts records, they separated from each other, and Barnabas took Mark, and Paul chose Silas, there was no reason in any one of the disputants why he should be excommunicated from any church, or denied the fellowship of Christians generally. They were all good men; but men whose experiences had discovered and developed some native incompatibility which made happy partnership and frictionless co-operation impossible. They were therefore wise to separate, and when they had done so the blessing of God rested upon both parties.

Thus a pastor may leave one church and go to another; or a member may transfer his membership from one church to another; or one may deliberately prefer one ministry to another, without, by such change or preference, reflecting upon the Christian character or judgment of anyone concerned. How many heartburnings would be avoided if this simple principle were recognized!

God has room in His all-comprehensive plans for people of varied temperaments. There is no sound

reason why Silas and John Mark should not be friends because their respective partners entertain different views of either of them. This writer once had for a near neighbour a pastor who remains to this day one of his closest friends. We knew that mentally and temperamentally we were utterly unlike each other. Each knew and recognized that the other could minister to types of people that he could not touch. Therefore when new people moved into the neighbourhood, and having sampled both churches, elected to settle down in one, the pastor of the other found no reason in that fact for quarrelling with the other. Why should he? If Paul can work with Silas better than with John Mark, why should Barnabas be put out either with Paul or Silas? And if Barnabas insists on having Mark as a companion, since Paul would not work with Mark himself, how foolish he would have been had he denied to Barnabas the right to take Mark with him!

These considerations apply to other than strictly church relationships. It were as foolish as it were unjust to censure another—even supposing our particular John Mark is a bit of a failure—for making use of one with whom we have found it impossible to work. But, alas, there are some people who not only will not allow John Mark to go with them: they insist that he shall not be permitted to go with anyone else.

It ought therefore to be recognized that even good men may find themselves incompatible with each other, and that they can therefore be happier and more useful apart—and recognizing that fact they ought to be willing to part good friends, and pray God's blessing upon their separate labour.

Another Reason For Separation.

But there are other reasons than can be found in natural and justifiable incompatibilities for some separations. Paul was a minister who lost not a few of his followers. He must have had many disappointments in his long career. There has never been but One Who "needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man"; "He knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean."

He knew, too, who should deny Him, and predicted the denial. All others, even apostles, have had to await the event for a knowledge of it.

Therefore we need not reproach ourselves for having failed to discern in others a capacity to forsake, deny, or betray. The greatest of men have been thus deceived, and will be until the end of time.

Thus Paul once set a high value upon the character and service of Demas. In his epistle to Philemon he classes him with Marcus, Aristarchus, and Lucas, as a "fellow labourer". In the epistle to the Colossians we find him still in Luke's company in the words, "Luke the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you", while Aristarchus, Marcus, and Epaphras, are also named.

How long Demas kept company with Paul, sharing his labours, his vigils, his tribulations and triumphs, we do not know; and perhaps it would be difficult, even by the closest study, to determine. But there came a time when the value of Paul's companionship declined, his course became distasteful, his fellowship too expensive, so that to Timothy Paul wrote, "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." This separation, at all events, was not Paul's fault.

Do not blame the preacher when Demas stays away from church. It may be a high tribute to the pulpit when some pews are empty. Of course, when a church is not filled the preacher is usually blamed. When the church is not filled, the common remedy is supposed to be found in a change in the pulpit. We have known a church not very far from Jarvis Street, in which there were certain people who thought they could fill a church by declaring the pulpit vacant. They failed, and the same preacher is still in the pulpit; but notwithstanding their failure created a vacancy in over three hundred seats, the church, save under exceptional circumstances or weather, has been filled ever since. It is conceivable that it may sometimes be necessary to empty one or more pews in order to fill the church.

No: it would not be fair to blame Paul for the defection of Demas.

Furthermore, it is but begging the question to argue that Paul once classed Demas with the best workers. The apostle should not be blamed for thinking well of Demas. It were better to be often deceived, and even betrayed, by the unworthy, than to impute, even in thought, unfaithfulness to the faithful. There is no useful sphere for the cynic or pessimist in any church. Nothing is more deadly both in its effect upon others, and in its reaction upon the man himself, than a cynicism which discounts or denies everybody's sincerity.

All honour to Paul that he spoke well of Demas as long as it was possible in honesty to do so, and that he continued to think well of him until his true character was disclosed by his own conduct.

Demas forsook Paul because he "loved this present world". His course was but a confirmation of the Saviour's saying, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Defection from other faithful, scriptural, spiritual, ministries may be similarly explained.

But what does it mean to love this present world? Certain preachers denounce the card-table, the dance, and the theatre, as though these constitute the sum of all worldliness; and since preachers are seldom addicted to any of these practices, of course the preacher is free from worldliness. Ah, no! Such amusements are undoubtedly injurious to the testimony of disciples of Christ, even if

and when they be not injurious to their characters. Indeed, we can conceive of people's being too worldly to go to the theatre, the dance, or the card-table. While all these things are of the world, "this present world" is much bigger and more varied in its allurements than this trinity of evils. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

Demas had ceased to love God, and therefore could not keep step with one whose supreme passion was to please God. Spiritual decline usually lies at the bottom of such forsakings as that of Demas. When God ceases to be a reality in a man's life, when his spiritual eyes are darkened, his spiritual appetite fails, his spiritual understanding is beclouded, neither learning nor logic, nor tact, nor patience in the pulpit, will keep Demas in the pew. Nor, when he is a preacher, can any sort of consideration and co-operation in the pew avail to keep Demas in the pulpit.

Demas was probably a preacher; but he forsook Paul because he loved this present world. No one who loves the world can follow Paul even now. Those who battle for the Book, who contend earnestly for the faith, will not long have the help of Demas. No doubt Demas was thoroughly orthodox in his views, but his orthodoxy was not permitted to interfere with his temporal comfort and prosperity. Dr. Demas is still very much in evidence. Oh no! he has not forsaken the faith: he has only forsaken Paul; or Aristarchus, or Epaphras, who still keep Paul company. Dr. Demas does not follow Paul, nor allow his course to be determined by Paulinism, because he is himself a conservative! Those who go all the way with Paul—which means all the way with Christ—are "extremists" and "radicals" and "disturbers". Dr. Demas is the embodiment of dignity and, when it suits him, of urbanity and moderation. He is very sorry that Paul's militant "methods" and "spirit" make it impossible for such an influential man as himself to continue longer with him. If only Paul would modify his course a little, if only he would not insist on the letter of Scripture—as well as the spirit, if he would only be a little more tolerant of those who deny the truth, if he would use a little more tact, if he would substitute the pen of the diplomat for the sword of the soldier,—if—if—if?—Yes, he might lose Aristarchus and Epaphras and Luke—and perhaps the presence and power of the Holy Ghost, but he could retain Demas!

But Paul knew why Demas had forsaken him: he "loved this present world". That is why some Fundamentalists do not fight; that is why they support "the denomination"—they "love this present world".

"The lust of the flesh." That is one of the elements of this present world. Is it to such a lure Demas has yielded? Undoubtedly. By which we are not to understand gross sensualism. The flesh is merely the body, the carnal mind, the natural man. Eminently respectable, of course. Cultured and polite to the last degree, most certainly: but carnal notwithstanding.

What are the covetings of the flesh? The love of comfort, of ease, or at least of physical sustenance. A preacher who sells his soul for his salary is putting a very small price on his soul. But many are doing

it. Demas is a bread-and-butter preacher. That is why he elects to go to Thessalonica instead of to Antioch in Psidia. Yes, it is tragically true that bread and butter, dollars and cents, house-rent, temporalities in general, inspire the speech of Demas at a Baptist Convention, and decide his vote.—Did anyone ask for his address? In Ontario he may be addressed at Aylmer, or near Peterboro, at several places in Brantford, Hamilton, and Toronto. Demas has many places of residence in the United States, and many in England.

“The lust of the eyes”: which, being interpreted, means the lure of the things that are seen, “this present world” in contradistinction to “the world to come”. Men lose their sense of perspective, and become spiritually shortsighted. They change the emphasis of their message, and speak of the profitableness of godliness to “the life that now is”, almost entirely neglecting its relation to “the life that is to come”. When a man ceases to grow in grace, to add to his faith virtue and all related graces, he becomes blind and cannot see afar off, and forgets that he was purged from his old sins. Then the love of this present world masters him. All the tribulations and persecutions and disabilities incident to a life of loyalty to Christ and His gospel assume the character of afflictions, and afflictions are “light” and “but for a moment” only “while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

Whoever allows himself to be captivated with the lust of the eyes, and fixes his interest on the present world, and loses sight of the future, and of the rewards of by and by—the “far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory”, will be sure to forsake Paul as he moves toward Antioch, and to go somewhere else instead.

“The pride of life”: not necessarily physical comforts, nor interests that are tangible and visible; but

position, place, distinction, honours,—as for example, McMaster honorary degrees, the Presidency of the Convention, lunch at the club with a rich man—not the lunch, but the brief companionship of one who is called successful. Tinsel, wax-flowers, mere baubles, says somebody? Yes; but men have bartered eternal treasures for just such vanities. We have known many a Demas do so. One used to live at Boston, Massachusetts; but though he went to Thessalonica, or was it Washington, for “the pride of life”, the Presidency of the Convention managed to elude his grasp.

“Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.” Though a man love this present world, she is not easily wooed, and will ask a bigger dowry than thirty pieces of silver. No man did ever find that the price he received for being disloyal to Christ and His Word was sufficient to buy a moment’s peace of mind. “This present world” is an old jade whom no one would love if he were not more than half blind. “How can ye believe which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from-God only?”

How far better is it to follow Paul than Demas! The latter disappears from view to stand before the judgment seat of Christ at last, if saved at all, with nothing but wood, hay, stubble, to his credit, and saved only as by fire. But Paul, in the very chapter which records the defection of Demas, exclaims: “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” And in the next breath, having announced his own early departure for glory, he says, “Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica.”

Which shall we choose, Thessalonica or glory?

STRANGE LEADING

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

One of the most remarkable things in the experience of Israel after God had sheltered them from the destroying angel, was the way in which He guided their steps. In Exodus, chapter thirteen, verses seventeen and eighteen, we read “God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure they see war, and they return to Egypt. But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea.” Look at the story. The children of Israel started on their journey out of Egypt with their faces toward the Promised Land. They first encamped at Rameses. Then they journeyed on to Succoth, and next to Etham. Thus far the path is easily understood. They are facing Canaan all the time. Then comes an extraordinary command to Moses: “Turn”, said the Divine word, “and encamp before Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea.” This was indeed a

strange course to take. It took the people right out of their way to the Promised Land. They are to journey now at right angles to their previous course. They pass down on the wrong side of the Red Sea. At Migdol they go through a narrow space between hills and the sea into a plain entirely walled in by mountains on their right hand, which sweep round to the sea on the south, leaving a small opening through which, if the people passed, they must return to the Egyptian capital. The Egyptians truly said, “They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in.” So indeed it was. From the human point of view it was an awful mistake, for the people were led into a death trap. The Egyptians seeing this, mounted their chariots and, in hot haste, with the certainty of slaughter, rushed across the desert, and soon came within sight of Israel. The people looked back and saw the unmistakable signs of the coming

Egyptian host. They were perfectly helpless, overwhelming disaster seemed certain, and imminent; and the frantic cries of the people went up to God, while terrible language was used against Moses, the servant of the Lord. Yet this was the unmistakable leading of God. Moses would never have chosen this path. It was so strange and perplexing it must be Divine. This is a picture of the leading of God with His spiritual Israel, and of individual Israelites: He leads them sometimes where they would never have gone themselves. He places them in positions of overwhelming difficulty, where human effort can do nothing, and where in utter helplessness they are obliged to lean entirely upon the arm of God.

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

Do you ask why does God bring His people into such straits? In verse seventeen we have one reason why God led Israel there: "Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt". So God selects the path which is most suitable to the condition and experience of His people. There was deep tenderness in the heart of God toward Israel, but the people could not see it then. There is always a gracious purpose behind all His choices for His own. There are lessons which they need to learn, and He selects the path in which they are most likely to learn them. The great matter for the true Israel is to let God select their path, and direct their steps. When they are in His way He is there with them. In Israel's case we have the inspired record: "The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them by the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light." He Who selects the path for His people is always with them in that path, although the journey may be toilsome and dangerous, difficult and full of snares. On the sunlit hills He is with them to overshadow and to keep. In the deep, dark valleys He is still with them, and His rod and His staff comfort them. So there are reasons of deep tenderness in the heart of God in leading His people in perplexing paths.

But there are other reasons than this. One of Israel's great needs was to know more of God. All down the story of God's Israel this has been one of their greatest needs. And so God leads them into paths where they will be able to obtain the grandest views of Himself and His delivering power. The sublimest lesson the children of God can learn is to know more of God; and God shines out in special glory in His pathway of difficulty. God is not indifferent to the weakness and ignorance of His people; but He is not afraid to lead them into the most appalling trouble, if there they will learn more of the sufficiency of His grace, and the wonders of His power. Of course, as Cowper sings:

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain."

"Unbelief," says one, "leads us to interpret God in the presence of difficulty, instead of interpreting the

difficulty in the presence of God." A great difficulty is a new opportunity to see the glory of God. Too often unbelief is allowed to cause trials and sorrows and perplexities, to become clouds which obscure the face of God. But such was never His purpose. They are rather intended to clear the vision of the world's dust and mist, that God may be seen in undimmed splendour. And so when some new and totally unexpected perplexity arises or when some crushing trouble falls upon God's Israel, they should look up to God and say, "My Father, what new and astonishing wonders of Thy power and grace may I now expect to behold?"

What were these poor Israelites to do in their death-trap? They had had three days of freedom, but now they completely lost their self-control, and became a panic-stricken mob. Their cries were wild and frantic, for they were entirely shut in, and their blood-thirsty enemies were close at their heels. But Moses knew the difficulty in which they were placed was God's leading, and so with sublime self-possession, or God-possession, he uttered the great command, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." That is the first need in the day of difficulty, to be quiet. "He that believeth shall not make haste." All human fussiness and worry and agitation are worse than useless; they only "tend to evil." This is the time for God. And what is His first movement? A very Godlike and beautiful one, indeed. The pillar of cloud and fire, that wonderful symbol of the Divine Presence, passes from before Israel to their rear. It stands between Israel and the Egyptian host. In the place of sorest need there God places Himself. That same Presence meant dense darkness to Egypt, but glorious light to Israel. The way of Egypt is blocked, while the path of Israel is illumined with God's own light: This is what we ever see. The same ark of God which slew

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the Philistines, brought blessing to the house of Obed-Edom. The promised Child, Who was set for the fall of some, was also set for the rising of many. The Stone at which some stumble, is a sure foundation to others. The ministry of the gospel may be "a savour of death unto death" to some, but it is a "savour of life unto life" to others.

Let the perplexed Israelites stand still and see God. Then behold a wonderful thing! To the quieted people the pathway soon appears. By a strong wind the Lord plowed a pathway through the mighty deep, driving back the waters of the Red Sea, and clearing a way, perhaps step by step, as the people moved forward. Israel in their panic moments never dreamed that their God would do such a wonderful thing as this. But that is His way. He loves to surprise His people by new wonders of His love and power.

"He loves to come when others flee,
Or coming cannot aid;
To save in faith's extremity,
When hope's last glimmerings fade."

What a scene this story presents to us! Here are some two or three millions of people with flocks and herds in the night, which was as day for them, plunging into the divinely opened pathway. The awe-struck crowds, the howling wind, the glow of the pillar glistening on their way, the full paschal moon shining on the heaped up waters! How awe and hope must have increased with each step deeper into the abyss and nearer to safety! It was the path of faith. If God's command for His people is to go forward, they do not need to see the end from the beginning. It is enough for Him to see that. "One step enough for

me". God is with His own. They have only to trust and obey. When the Lord bids, it is Israel's business to go forward at any cost. He Who speaks the command will certainly clear the path for those who are to obey. The Lord conducted His people right through the sea; step by step they march onward until they reach the other side, and the last child, and the last sheep, has stepped out upon the Eastern shore. Then the waters returned to their place, and the Egyptian hosts which have also plunged into the sea were utterly overwhelmed. By one awful act of destruction Egypt's strength was broken, and Israel's enemies drowned. What a revelation of God! With Pharaoh and his host beneath the waves, Israel stood triumphant. Their joy was complete. What a wondrous God is ours! No child of God need trouble to take the path where He leads. All fears may be dispelled, for there is absolutely no reason for them, although the way may be wrapped in mystery. Let the Lord's people always remember that for every perplexing step in life the Lord has reasons that are at once tender and wonderful. "God led the people", and "He led them about" that they might be saved from defeat, and that they might experience new displays of the wonders of His power. Therefore, with holy calm, let us say, "What time I am afraid I will trust in Thee."

MY IMPRESSION OF JARVIS ST. BAPTIST CHURCH.

By Rev. H. G. Hamilton.

Sunday morning, February 16th, I arrived at Toronto to supply the pulpit of the Jarvis Street Baptist Church for two Sundays. I was met at the depot by Deacon Brownlee, a man of God whose interest centers in the missionary enterprise of the China Inland Mission. We have long known this faithful servant of the Lord whose deep devotion has time and again moved us to lofty heights of fellowship with our God.

In less than half an hour I was looking upon the building made famous throughout the world by the faithful ministry of Dr. T. T. Shields, and in which I was to be the supply pastor during his two weeks' absence. Our eyes have seen palaces and castles of the old world, we have looked upon the great buildings of state both in Canada and the United States; but we confess to an awe-inspiring devotion when we beheld the building in which the Jarvis Street Church worships the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. It is situated on one of the most prominent boulevards of this beautiful city, constructed of red and white sandstone. The spacious auditorium is designed in the shape of a horse-shoe. On seeing it, the immense gallery that surrounds the church compelled us to wonder if in these apostate days the seats were filled. Later, when the great School poured into the auditorium and filled the gallery, we were no longer left in doubt.

Less than an hour from the time of our arrival we were shown into the beautiful study of the famous church, and, finding a letter on the table bearing our name, we joyfully read the words of welcome to this great place. We were impressed by this expression of courtesy and affection from the life of this busy man who, in hurrying away to keep a preaching engagement in the Southland, tarried to write his regrets at not being present to greet us on arrival.

In a few moments we were introduced to the pastor's class, a class of men and women of nearly three hundred which meets in the church auditorium. What a joy it was to open the Book in such a fellowship!

At eleven o'clock Deacon Brownlee introduced us to the morning congregation, and so far as our eyes could see every seat was occupied upstairs and down. A great chorus

(Continued on page 13.)

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD AMUSEMENTS.

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Sunday Morning, February 13, 1921.

See note at the end of the sermon.

"And through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?"—I Corinthians 8:11.

The Christian attitude toward amusements is a subject of great importance. While belonging, in some respects, to the category of minor questions, to the "childish things" which we may be expected to "put away" as we attain to some degree of maturity in the Christian life: yet because, as Christians, we can never be unrelated to anything which affects in the slightest degree the spiritual welfare of the least of God's children, we cannot be either indifferent or superior to this matter.

It is a fact, moreover, which even the most liberally and charitably minded find themselves compelled to acknowledge, that vast numbers of professed Christians are now being carried away by an ever-growing love of pleasure, which, like a mighty tide, is sweeping over the world. It cannot be denied that many church members go oftener to the theatre than to church, and pay more for their amusements than for their religion; that there is reason to fear that many such are better versed in rules "according to Hoyle," than in the principles of the Gospel according to Matthew, and Mark, and Luke, and John; and are bolder and more expert in dealing cards than in disseminating the word of God. Some, too, there are, who are most punctilious in their observance of religious decorum; who would be offended by a colloquialism from the pulpit, or an inartistic performance by the choir; but who see no impropriety in the presence of professing Christians at the dance.

Nor is this condition of things peculiar to any one denomination, nor to any one country. It is a matter of general observation that vast multitudes of the professed disciples of Christ, by their addiction to these and other forms of amusement, openly advertise themselves to be "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God."

Candid minds, I think, will acquit me of the charge of exaggeration, when I say that this has had, and now has a deadening and almost paralyzing effect upon the life of the churches. The public worship of the sanctuary, the preaching of the gospel, the study of Scripture, the exercise of prayer, the spiritual service of the Christian life, and all the pure spiritual joys flowing therefrom, are esteemed dull and uninteresting.

And I venture the assertion that this inordinate love of sensuous pleasure vitiates not only the public taste, but the taste of that part of the public which professes to be Christian. This has resulted in many deplorable reactions upon the life and activity of the churches. Standards have been lowered to suit the popular taste. People who feed on Charlie Chaplin several days a week have but little appetite for anything but Charlie Chaplin on Sunday. Standards may not always, however, be vulgarized. They may only be reduced to fit the diminishing capacities of the people. The man who becomes addicted to the use of stimulants soon loses his appetite

for wholesome food, and what food is forced upon him must be administered in tabloid form. And it seems to be the policy of "the god of this world" to vitiate the appetites of God's children for all healthy spiritual enjoyments, by treating them with stimulants.

Respecting the particular form of amusement provided in the moving picture theatres, it ought frankly to be said that, independently of the character of the pictures, the habitue of the "movies" is certain to find the habit mentally demoralizing. Even now there are many who refrain from reading certain books, preferring to await their production on the screen. Quite apart from the moral quality of the pictures, this aspect of the influence of the craze for the "movies" should give educators, and all concerned in the cultivation of the mind, the most serious concern.

The great question, however, which faces us is this: What is the Christian Church to do? What is the truly Christian attitude toward these things? If people will have nothing but pleasure, is the Christian Church to provide it? If the multitudes insist upon being entertained, must those who serve in the Church, in the pulpit and elsewhere, learn the entertainer's art? If young people refuse to engage in religious exercises designed to develop both the mind and the spirit, unless such exercises are diluted with some sort of entertaining or pleasurable element, is it the duty of the Church to accommodate her ministry to the popular demand? Or is there higher and safer ground which we may take?

I.

LET US EXAMINE THE PRINCIPLE OF THE TEXT, for our answer.

It appears to have been common in pagan Corinth, as in other places, to offer for sale in the market place, meat which was the residue of sacrifices which had been offered to idols in heathen temples. Some of the Corinthian believers seem to have made a practice of using such meat for food. They argued that as an idol was nothing in the world, meat which had been presented to the idol in worship was neither the better nor the worse for having been so used. Therefore they saw no reason why they, as Christians, should not eat it.

But there were others who viewed the matter differently. Lacking the clear intelligence of their more enlightened brethren, they appear to have felt that since the meat had been used in idol-worship, the eating of it would involve some recognition of the idol. Therefore when they saw their fellow-Christians eating such meat, notwithstanding their unenlightened consciences felt the practice involved a recognition of the idol, they claimed the liberty their fellow-Christians exercised, and in the doing of it were caused to stumble.

It is probable that this matter had been submitted to the Apostle Paul for judgment, as the first verse of this chapter seems to imply—"Now as touching things offered unto idols"—and this chapter is his answer. Many a pastor in our day is asked similar questions by members of his flock who are sincerely desirous of knowing and doing the will of God in all things.

The Apostle begins by telling them that they are right in the assumption that "an idol is nothing in the world," and that, therefore, meat is unaffected by the fact that it had been used in sacrifice. He tells them that in the eating of such meat in itself there is no wrong. He lays down the principle that *there is a spiritual knowledge which affords liberty*: "As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many, and lords many, but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.) That is to say, when a man knows God as He is revealed in Jesus Christ, he knows there is no other God; and that God is a Spirit Who requires of His creatures a spiritual service; and that, therefore, we are not to judge ourselves nor others by outward forms, by the mere externals of life, such as eating and drinking. On the contrary, we know that it is spirit, and motive, and intention with which God is concerned. Or, as the same apostle says elsewhere (Romans fourteen, seventeen): "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

The argument, therefore, is that knowing an idol to be nothing in the world; so far as the act itself was concerned, and by itself considered, a Christian, knowing this, might eat meat which had been used in idol-worship without offence either to God or to his own conscience.

On the other hand, the Corinthians are reminded, there are some who lack the spiritual discernment to perceive that the nothingness of the idol leaves the sacrifice unpolluted: "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled."

And herein another principle is enunciated to this effect: that while the believer's relationship to God is unaffected by his eating or refraining, and his own conscience, therefore, is also undefiled thereby, *there is still another relationship to be considered, and that is, the believer's relationship to his neighbour.*

And here let me pause to interject a more general observation: In respect to its own desires, the human mind is marvellously resourceful in discriminative judgments. When it suits us, sin and righteousness are defined in terms of our human relationships, and men go so far as to measure a man's fitness for the presence of God by the service he appears to have rendered to his fellows. But how swiftly we can swing to the other extreme: "As long as I have a clear conscience toward God, whose business is it what I eat or drink, or where I find my pleasures or my recreations?" Thus we choose to magnify the one or the other of the tables of the law as comprehending our whole moral obligation, as the inclination of the moment suits us. One day we are sure that if our consciences be at peace with God, nothing else matters. The next day we are equally certain that so

long as we busy ourselves with some particular bit of human service—usually something we rather like to do—it really does not matter whether we pray or otherwise recognize God or not.

The underlying principle of Paul's teaching, however, is this, that the gospel provides a way whereby "the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit"; and that the principles of the gospel applied to life and conduct will relate the believer in self-denying service to both God and his neighbour too.

But now, to return to the specific matter more immediately before us. I have said the Corinthians are here reminded of their further obligation to their neighbour: "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge." "But," someone will object, "am I to be brought into bondage to another man's ignorance? Because he is so ignorantly superstitious stupidly to suppose that the idol pollutes the meat, or that the idol and the sacrifice are inseparable, am I therefore to be deprived of the liberty which my clearer knowledge gives me?" So secure did they feel themselves to be in their spiritual knowledge; they felt they could actually "sit at meat in the idols' temple" without violating their own consciences, knowing the idol to be nothing, and God to be all in all.

But our apostle lays down a further principle: *that while there is a liberty in knowledge, there is a still larger liberty in love.* "But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither if we eat not, are we the worse. (Which means that, knowing our relationship to God is not affected by such matters, we may do as we like. Thus the truth of God makes us free). But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak."

"But why should I allow the absurd prejudices of my ignorant brother to deprive me of legitimate enjoyment?" Because, my friend, you may cause your weaker brother to stumble if you insist on the exercise of your liberty. "But why should I be held responsible for his stumbling?—If I may legitimately do without injury to myself, that which, to him, becomes an occasion of stumbling only and wholly because of his ignorance, why should not his stumbling be charged to his ignorance, and I be left in the enjoyment of my Christian liberty? Is there any sound reason why my freedom should be restricted, why I should be required continually to deny myself for fear of offending the ignorant, old-fashioned, and superstitious?"

In effect, you really ask, Why should you care if the ignorant, and weak, stumble?

There is a reason why you should care, and why you should deny yourself for the sake of the most benighted human being. Hear the tremendous answer! *He is a soul "for whom Christ died"*! This man Paul has but one answer for every question: it is always the Cross! Everything is referred to the Cross. He sees everything and everybody through the medium of the Cross. He measures and values everybody, by the Cross. Nor is this a solitary note in his teaching. He wrote the same to the Romans: "Destroy not him with thy meat *for whom Christ died.*" Thus he measures and values all that is in this world and cries: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." And that is no more than our Lord Himself said: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny

himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it."

Thus our text, and the gospel generally, puts love before knowledge as the guiding principle of life, and as the foundation of the largest liberty. Knowledge afforded liberty conscientiously to eat meat: love gave liberty to refrain from eating for the sake of the interests of a soul for whom Christ died.

II.

LET US NOW CONSIDER SOME MODERN ILLUSTRATIONS OF THIS PRINCIPLE.

There are certain forms of amusement which are only evil. There are plays which cannot be defended before the bar of an enlightened conscience; there are uses of playing cards which lead inevitably to ruin; there are kinds of dances which are flagrantly immoral; and which no reputable person will attempt to justify. To these propositions no one in this audience will object. But with these things we have nothing to do in our present discussion. Every true Christian will instantly, and instinctively, recognize that the thing which is evil in itself should have no place in the Christian life. Participation in such amusements as I have just named, I feel sure every one here this morning will readily acknowledge, would be as unworthy of a professed Christian as lying or stealing.

The case before us is that of a matter which is not evil in itself, but which some un instructed people, here called "weak," think to be evil. It is with the Christian attitude toward these we are now concerned.

For the sake of argument let us assume that the theatre is an institution of great educational possibilities. Lest I be misunderstood, I give it as my personal conviction that the theatre, as an institution, is immoral; that its influence, on the whole, is not good but evil. But I speak of the theatre in this way as an institution. I shall not argue the point here, for that is beside my purpose this morning. There may be exceptions, and I am willing to assume the exception, to assume that there may be individual theatres whose management keep their stage clean and pure and wholesome. And this involves the further assumption that there may be good plays. Doubtless many are not good; but we will assume that some are, and that their teaching is morally sound, and their influence morally uplifting—or at least not degrading.

We may assume further that the conscientious Christian—and who can be a Christian without being conscientious?—will exercise the utmost discrimination, and will go only to the best theatres, and the best plays, in which there can be nothing that is in any degree harmful.

And we may make the same assumption respecting the playing of cards. Surely no one will insist that there is any evil in the cards themselves; they are neither moral nor immoral: but unmoral. That, to the discerning, is self-evident. But I am aware of the strong prejudice conceived by many against the cards themselves, as though the pieces of pasteboard so marked were essentially evil. Personally I know nothing of cards; but I suppose there is something peculiarly fascinating about the various games they are used to play. It is not difficult for me to imagine a game of cards to be a very pleasant diversion, nor indeed to believe that such a game may be mentally refreshing. I am not now speak-

ing of the use of cards for gambling purposes. No one questions that cards are frequently put to evil uses; that even in private drawing-rooms men and women have been inspired by a simple, friendly game with a passion for gambling which has led to their ruin, and even to suicide. No one whose knowledge is at all extensive, will deny that cards have been the latchkey to the penitentiary for many—to let them in, however, not to let them out. I say it is not to be wondered at that so many should look upon a pack of cards as having been printed in hell, in view of the terrible havoc they have wrought.

But it must surely be assumed that no true disciple of Christ would permit himself to have part in a game in which any of these things could find a place. He would play cards only in such a way as there could be "no harm" in it.

But what shall we say of the dance? I confess to having had no personal experience. There are those who insist that the modern dance in any and all its forms is always and only evil. I have no doubt it is often so. Indeed I feel sure that certain dances can work only evil to those who engage in them. But I have no time to-day to discuss that aspect of the question. I would take ground, for the sake of argument at least, that many censors of the dance who are better informed and more experienced than I, would not take, I would assume that there may be perfectly innocent and harmless dances. For I am compelled to assume that no Christian would deliberately and persistently participate in any sort of dance associated with the probability of evil. I assume, therefore, (I say again, for the sake of argument, for the testimony of the more experienced makes me cautious), that under right auspices some pure-minded people may dance without injury to themselves.

Thus I have assumed that it is only with the good play, the innocent card game, the harmless dance—if such there may be,—the Christian will have anything to do.

Can you, however, be sure that others will be equally discriminating? It is admitted that these things are not always good, but sometimes decidedly evil. What if others fail to exercise your carefully discriminating judgment? Perhaps someone will say that their failure to do so is their own responsibility. Beyond question, to great multitudes, the theatre is the theatre, the dance is the dance, and cards are cards. They do not discriminate, and they will not. Some fail for want of capacity to discern between the good and the bad, and some from want of inclination. "But that," I have heard even professed Christians say, "is their concern and not mine."

But remember, *the text lays down a principle for the governance of the relationship of a person of a very high degree of religious intelligence to one who is densely ignorant and superstitious.* You must draw the picture for yourself. At one end of the scale you have a religiously enlightened mind, plus education, culture, refinement, wealth; all these co-operating to discern between the precious and the vile. At the other end you have one steeped in prejudice, restricted in capacity, weak in character, and sheep-like in his imitative propensities. Between these two extremes there may be many varying degrees, of intelligence on the one hand or ignorance on the other. But I take the extremes. What principle can possibly bridge that gulf or span that difference of spiritual enlightenment and moral vigor? *Only the principle of the Cross!* And that is the principle by which all truly Christian conduct is determined, and on which

all Christian character is founded: "For whom Christ died"! Let me take the highest possible ground. I anticipate your argument as to your taste for literature and the drama, and your love of music and the aesthetic, and your passion for cultivated society and mental recreation, and your superiority to the degrading influences to which the less favored are subject. I will take your argument at par—"Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge"! Do you hear it? "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge." Let me thunder it in your ears: "*Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge*"! What then? "*Through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish for whom Christ died?*" Oh, my brother, do you care? Do you care for the soul for whom Christ died? What? Does this question of amusements affect the business of soul-saving? Yes, it does. Most emphatically it does! The passion for pleasure, for society, for worldly amusement, has made barren churches as it has made childless homes! *And we shall never accomplish our God-given task, nor glorify Him in the salvation of men, until by the power of the Holy Spirit we learn to relate ourselves to men everywhere as to souls for whom Christ died.*

III.

MAY I VENTURE NOW TO OFFER A WORD OF EXHORTATION AND APPLICATION? For the sake of clearness, I repeat, I have nothing now to say about indulgence in that which is known to be sinful. Nor have I any word of denunciation to utter respecting that which is not evil in itself. It would be as wrong to belie your moral intelligence by assuming there is evil where there is none, as it would be to ignore the ignorant conscientiousness of another, who, where there is no evil, thinks there is.

The supreme question is, Can any one of us afford to be indifferent to the fate of one "for whom Christ died"? That is the highest and strongest appeal which even God can make. From eternity He has estimated everything by the Cross! Have we learned to estimate men by the Cross? The man is poor, and ignorant, and obscure, and unattractive, I know; but he is a soul "for whom Christ died." For his own sake he is worth much; and he is one for whom an inestimable price has been paid.

For Christ's sake we cannot afford to be indifferent toward such an one. Can you not remember the thrill of satisfaction you experienced when you first realized that Christ died for you? And in that hour you realized His own satisfaction in some measure. Dare any of us consent to permit anything which might defeat the purpose of the Cross in another's life? Shall we have done once for all with all worldly standards, and henceforth measure all men by the Cross?

Do you realize that *some may be perishing through your act of selfish indulgence?* "It is only an innocent pleasure," you say. But the moment your pleasure becomes an occasion of stumbling it ceases to be innocent: "When ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ."

Do you see *what estimate they put upon the weak brother who selfishly insist upon doing their own pleasure irrespective of its influence upon others?* They put their own passing pleasure before the salvation of the soul. That is the text's teaching. That is the consideration it forces upon us: "Through thy knowledge shall the weak

brother perish for whom Christ died?" Is there a professed Christian here who will refuse to forego an evening at the theatre that another soul may have an eternity in glory? On one particular evening that weaker brother saw you there, and he found sanction for his course in yours. I know he is "weak," and "ignorant," and "prejudiced," and "narrow-minded," and all that is contemptible in the eyes of some: But for him Christ *died!* Can it be that anyone of us will deliberately sacrifice the interests of a soul for whom Christ died for a few hours' pleasure? Even to save a soul from death can we refuse to deny ourselves? I must be faithful. The spiritual requirements of the hour are insistent. The testimony of Scripture is most urgent: "Destroy not him with thy theatre-going, or with thy card-playing, or with thy dancing, or with the pursuit of any other kind of pleasure—destroy not him for whom Christ died!"

Does someone contend that such teaching is extravagant and impracticable? That it involves the erection of impossible standards? That such self-denial requires an unreasonable service? I remind you that the difference between the very greatest and the very humblest of earth, is infinitesimal in comparison with the gracious and infinite stoop of the Lord of glory when He died for your sinful soul? And for one for whom He died will you do nothing? For one for whom He sacrificed everything, will you sacrifice nothing?

No, my standard is not impossible. It is the simple standard of the New Testament. To be a "living sacrifice," to "be not conformed to this world," is our "reasonable service." It is for this we are here. For this we have been sent. I should be unworthy of my office were I to preach anything less. I must apply the principle to myself; and I say frankly; that if there be any pleasure upon which my heart is so set that it is more to me than the interests of a soul for whom Christ died, I am unworthy of my office, and I ought immediately either to resign that pleasure, or resign my office. And I say the same to the office-bearers in this church; I say it to the deacons: If there be a deacon of this church who thinks more of an evening at the theatre, of the diversion of a game of cards, or of the pleasure of the dance, than of the interests of a soul for whom Christ died, he is unworthy of his office; and he ought immediately to resign either his pleasure or his office. And the same may be said of Sunday school teachers and officers, and also of every member of the church. The teaching of Scripture requires that every interest in life should be subordinated to the purpose of the Cross—which is, that they should be saved for whom Christ died. For any of us who call ourselves disciples of Christ, there is but one course compatible with love and loyalty to Christ, and that is to resolve that by His grace, and by the might of His Spirit in the inner man, we will put Him always and everywhere first; that we will live to realize the purpose of the Cross in our own lives, and in the lives of others; that we will lose our lives for Christ's sake, that thus we may find them.

As I thus closed my meditation, a thought occurred to me, it may have been a day-dream—I said to myself: "What if some young man should rise in his pew before all the congregation and say, 'I have here and now resolved that henceforth at all costs, I will in all things put Christ first'—if such a thing should occur, who knows how many would follow his example, and perhaps the

revival we have longed and prayed for would come to-day." Shall we not all resolve to rededicate ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord, and from this forward, put Him always first?

(As the conclusion of the sermon was reached, a young man under the gallery rose and said, "I would like to say, Pastor, that I have resolved to put Christ first," and in a few moments a large number of men and women rose signifying the same decision.)

Note: This sermon, while being used of God to bring blessing to many the Sunday morning it was preached, proved to be "the last straw" with others, and ultimately produced the upheaval in the church, of which the entire continent has heard; but which cleared the way for the great blessing which the church has since experienced. While the sermon has twice appeared in *The Gospel Witness*, it is still being asked for, and we reprint to meet the requests that are reaching us.

THE GRACE THAT REIGNETH UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS.

A Sermon

by the Rev. Thomas Todhunter, M.A.

Vicar of Dacre, Cumberland, some time during the last half of the eighteenth century (The Editor's great-great-grandfather). Printed from a manuscript in the Editor's possession dated 1768.

"That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."—Romans 5:21.

The Apostle, from the twelfth verse to the end of this chapter, draws a parallel betwixt Adam and Christ; and plainly proves that as Adam's transgression entailed misery, condemnation and death upon all his posterity, or upon all his natural seed; so Christ conveys righteousness and eternal life upon all his spiritual seed. He all along represents Adam as a type of Christ in his public capacity, and shews how far the benefit of the second covenant, which was made with Christ, exceeds or stretches beyond the sad effects of the first covenant, which was made with Adam, and in which covenant the whole human race was included. And the parallel or comparison is concluded with these important words, "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord", in which words, these four things are observable: first, the extent of Adam's sin,—unto death; secondly, the source of man's salvation—grace; thirdly, the efficient or procuring cause of that salvation—the righteousness of Christ; and lastly, the effect or consequence of all—eternal life.

I.

LET US OBSERVE THE EXTENT OF ADAM'S SIN, VIZ., UNTO DEATH.

The death here spoken of, must mean a deprivation of the holy and happy life of soul and body: a loss of the image and favour of God, and of the communion with Him which he enjoyed, and which, if Adam had continued in his allegiance, would have been confirmed to him with rich advantage for ever. Accordingly upon Adam's sin he was liable not only to diseases and death of the body, but also to inward dread and horror of soul, under a sense of divine wrath, as appeared in his being afraid, and seeking to hide himself from the presence of the Lord.

By means of our first parent's transgression all the human race is corrupted and defiled—all mankind are subject to temporal afflictions and death.—For thus St. Paul undeniably proves the truth of it in the twelfth verse of this chapter, "as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that" (or as it ought to be rendered) "in whom all have sinned," that is, as by the first man Adam, who was the father of us all, and with whom the covenant was made in innocency for himself and

posterity, sin entered, and was propagated from him to all the inhabitants of the world, and became the source of all the iniquity, that has ever since been found among mankind; and as death, inclusive of all the miseries of this life, made its way into the world by his first sin, so death passed, in all its hideous forms, to the whole human race through him in whom they all sinned as in their public head and representative. That Adam's sin is transmitted and imputed to all his children in every generation, appears from hence. Because death exercises its sway over all orders and degrees of men, nay, it reigns over infants who have not committed any sin, who are not capable of sinning after the similitude of Adam's transgression. When we come into the world we are prone to all evil, and averse to all good; the moment we breathe we are liable to condemnation. Many of our modern advocates for moral rectitude affirm that we are born with good dispositions; but that we receive bad impressions and contract vicious habits from example, and not from any natural propensity in us to do evil: but how widely different is this portrait from the colours wherein we are painted in the holy scriptures! There we are represented, "by nature the children of wrath". There we are said to be brutish in our knowledge, Jeremiah ten: fourteen, to "be born like a wild ass's colt", which is not only a stupid, but stubborn and refractory animal; neither possesses valuable qualities by nature, nor will easily receive them by discipline. The scripture tells us that "they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." And I appeal to all who have the management of children, whether this is not true with regard to all children, yea, from the sons and daughters of the grandee, to the offspring of the meanest peasant. Which is a plain proof that this unhappy bias is derived from their parents, rather than caught from their neighbours; that it is owing not to the influence of external examples, but to a principle of internal corruption.

But perhaps some may say, that it is inconsistent with the justice of God, to make us parties in a covenant, which we did not agree to, and to condemn us for a crime which we never committed.

I think there is no cause for any complaint of injustice when we insist upon the sovereignty of an all-creating God, and his unquestionable right to do what He will with His own. Did He not condescend

to transact with man in the honourable way of a covenant? Were not the terms of this covenant perfectly easy and wonderfully gracious? The condition on man's part was the free enjoyment of millions of blessings and pleasures, with only the prohibition of one indulgence.

In order to see a lively representation of the justice of the Deity, let us consider a little the decisions of human equality. A father being degraded, all his dignity is lost both to himself and to his children, those unborn; as well as those who are in being: in him they all forfeit their fortunes, and all the advantages of civil society; because the offence of their father hath occasioned their deprivation of them. What then have they done to merit such treatment, which we have not equally done to merit such dispensations which we experience, in consequence of our descent from our first ancestor? And what right have we boldly to criticize upon the unfathomable decrees of divine justice? What wrong or injury have we received at the hands of God? He created the first man so perfect, He rendered the task so easy to him of preserving to himself and all his posterity that immense treasure which He had committed to his own personal disposal, that we cannot surely complain at seeing our destiny involved in Adam's. Had he continued in that situation in which his God placed him, he would in consequence have been rewarded in all his posterity. Original righteousness would have been a common inheritance, and we should then have blessed the divine Goodness, for having included in him the happiness of the human race. Why therefore, because we have forfeited that felicity, which he was invested with for our sakes, as well as his own: because human nature is become sinful in its branches, as well as in its original stock: why, I say, should we rise up rebellious against divine Justice? We have lost nothing to which we have any claim or right; why do we complain? We profess many blessings which are free gifts; why are we not thankful?

But notwithstanding after all the cavils of human pride and human reason, both scripture and daily experience concur to inform us, that we are shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin, that by the first man's disobedience we were all constituted sinners, prone to evil and made subject to death; that all mankind are upon a perfect level, equally subject to punishment, equally liable to condemnation, for we are all gone out of the way, all become transgressors before God, Who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil."

II.

Nor shall we have any reason to complain, if we consider THE ORIGIN AND SOURCE OF MAN'S SALVATION, GRACE.

The word *grace* has been much misinterpreted and abused. Many have imagined it to be some principle implanted in man, or something offered to him which he is to improve to the best advantage. But if these people would pay more attention to the scriptures than to their own deluded imaginations, they would find that the plain, simple meaning of the word Grace, is favour, mercy, good will, or compassion. For instance, when St. Paul tells the Ephesians that "by grace are ye saved", he undoubtedly means that their salvation is entirely a free and undeserved gift, owing

merely to the good will and favour of God. And in the third chapter of this same epistle, verse two, the gospel is called the grace of God; because it is a dispensation of mercy and free favour to sinners of mankind; because it discovers the riches of God's grace and compassion, in providing a full and free salvation. Again, St. Paul in his epistle to Titus has these important words; "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men," that is, the gospel of the grace of God, which is the effect of His free favour and compassion towards us, hath now shone forth in all its glory and splendour, like the sun, upon all nations, and in every way calculated to glorify its Author, to save and reform the chief of sinners. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation"; observe here, that the grace of God was prior and antecedent to the gift of His Son:—the death of Christ did not, as many imagine, purchase or procure the love of God, for then God would indeed be a tyrannical being. But He "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, (John three: sixteen). And again, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." By which it plainly appears that God's sending His Son to execute the work of redemption, was not from any consideration of previous love in us, but was entirely the effect or consequence of His preventing love, and unmerited grace.

The original source or fountain, then, of all the blessings of salvation, is to be ascribed to the grace or favour of God. Salvation, both in the root and branches is entirely of grace. The scripture ascertains this great truth by many cogent testimonies. Election is of grace: "Having predestined us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will". Equally gracious is our vocation: God "hath called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace". From hence springs justification with all its attendant privileges: "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." The consummation of bliss flows from the same Source: "The gift of God is eternal life". It is in every respect a gift; not only without, but contrary to all desert of ours. So that the foundation is laid in the riches of grace: the superstructure is reared by the hand of grace: and when the top-stone is brought forth when our felicity is completed in the kingdom of heaven, the everlasting acclamation will be, Grace, grace unto it!

III.

But thirdly, though grace is the fountain and source of salvation, though it is of God's mercy and compassion that we are any of us saved; yet this grace must run in its proper channel: and as God is perfectly just as well as infinitely merciful, He cannot save a sinner without, at the same time, shewing Himself perfectly just in so doing. The next thing, therefore, to be considered is the EFFICIENT AND PROCURING CAUSE, OR THE METHOD BY WHICH THIS GRACE IS CONVEYED, which is by righteousness, even the transcendently glorious righteousness of Christ Who was the Head of the second covenant, as Adam was of the first.

The case is this. We have already seen that we all fell in Adam; that we have all broken God's most holy and pure law; that Jews and Gentiles are all under sin; and obnoxious to punishment. How is it possible, then, that we should be restored to the favor of God, when we cannot so much as think a good thought? We are not to imagine that God, in justifying us, will either set aside, or so much as relax the precepts of His own law; for then it would not be so venerable as the law of the Medes and Persians which altereth not. How then must obedience, a proper and perfect obedience be paid to the divine law? God's own Son accomplishes the great work. As it was impracticable by us it was consigned over to Christ. He Who led a perfectly holy and righteous life, free from the least mixture of imperfection, He, I say, came to fulfil all righteousness in our stead. He obeyed the precepts of that law, which is a bright representation of God's most pure nature, a perfect draught of His most holy will, and never since the fall has been perfectly exemplified in any living character, but only in the Man Christ Jesus.

Let us duly and seriously consider the full extent of this law, as it is delivered by our Saviour in His sermon on the mount, that it requires truth in the inward parts, that it insists upon absolute perfection, in every instance, and upon all occasions, from the beginning to the very end of our lives. Let us attend to this, and we shall have the greatest reason to celebrate and adore the goodness of God, Who, in His immense mercy, and unsearchable wisdom, has found out a method, at once, to satisfy the unalterable law, and save insolvent man. So it is written that Christ Jesus "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." That is, He, through the whole course of His life, paid obedience to the demands of the divine law, both in fulfilling its precepts and sustaining its curse. And this is what is meant by the righteousness of Christ: and this is the righteousness, through which grace is said to reign in the words of my text. Grace is the source, and the righteousness of our Redeemer is the meritorious cause of our salvation. But perhaps it may be enquired: How the obedience of another can relieve my distress? How indeed! but by God's transferring my guilt to Him, and imputing His obedience to me. By this method the thing is clearly and completely effected. And this is the meaning of the scripture which says, "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." So that if the death inflicted on the first Adam included every evil consequent upon the fall, the obedience and death of the second Adam includes every blessing and advantage needful for our recovery. That is, if we fell or were condemned for a sin which we did not commit, we are saved by a righteousness which we have no hand in performing. Where then is the injustice of our being included in the covenant made with Adam; since if we only believe the gospel we are made partakers of the benefits of the covenant made with Christ?

God might have granted us remission of sins, by a mere act of sovereign prerogative; but then where would have been the authority due to His law or the satisfaction due to His justice? He could never have appeared both just and merciful in perfection, any

other way than by the obedience and death of His Son. Here all the divine attributes sweetly harmonize. Here we have a display not only of infinite love and mercy, but of inflexible justice and incomprehensible wisdom. And this is the meaning of such passages as these: "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness", What, without receiving any satisfaction from the offender or his surety? How, then, can He be faithful and just in forgiving sin? Nay, by the punishing sin in His own Son Who was our Substitute; by demanding and receiving obedience to the law from Him Who undertook to fulfil all righteousness in our stead. But how much more extensive is the reign of grace than that of sin. Sin reigns unto death; but grace reigns unto eternal life, a life of holy communion with God in this world, to be crowned with an eternal fruition of Him in another. Which is,

IV.

The fourth and last thing I was to consider, viz., THE END AND CONSEQUENCE OF ALL, ETERNAL LIFE. (Here is room to treat this matter very largely; but as my weakness of body will not permit me, I shall handle it with great brevity.)

The first Adam brought sin with all its attendant miseries into the world. Christ, Who is called the second Adam, made a full and complete atonement for it. The first Adam corrupted all the human race and disqualified them to perform any righteousness. The second Adam fulfilled all righteousness for us, and imputes it to all believers. The first Adam subjected us to death, and made us slaves to Satan. The second Adam destroyed death and him that had the power of death, the Devil, and brought immortality and eternal life to light by the gospel. The first Adam deprived both himself and all his posterity of the favour of God. The second Adam made peace by the blood of His Cross, has restored us to the divine favour, and taken possession of the mansions of eternal bliss, where He is gone to prepare a place for us: where we shall be free from all evil, having no inward corruption to waste and destroy the body, no enemies any longer to oppose or struggle with, for "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." "We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." We shall be transformed into God's amiable and divine image—we shall see Him, no longer through a glass darkly, but face to face. We shall receive the clearest manifestation of His ineffable holiness and glory, which will have just the same effect upon our souls as the imprinted seal has upon the melting wax.

When we perceive the odious depravity of our nature; when we discern the horrible iniquity of our lives, we may say: *Has sin abounded?* As undoubtedly it has, in our heart and in our life: yet *grace has much more abounded*, in the obedience of our Redeemer. Nay, *has sin reigned?* exerted its malignant power in the most destructive manner; rendering us subject unto death itself? Even so *has grace reigned*; exerted its benign efficacy, in a manner far more triumphant, and far

more extensive; not only rescuing us from guilt and ruin, but restoring us to everlasting life and glory. And all this riches of grace is discovered to us in a way of equity every way consistent with the divine perfections; all is effected by the righteousness, the complete meritorious righteousness of Jesus Christ.

And now I appeal to your consciences, whether the scheme of redemption revealed to us in the scriptures, is not the grandest, noblest and most magnificent that could be contrived! Every way worthy of its divine Author. Every way calculated for the glory of God and the comfort of sinners. Nay, if sin and misery had not entered, we should never have seen the divine glory shine in this salvation! Many of God's attributes would have been entirely concealed from us. For if sin had not taken place, God's boundless mercy and all-sufficiency to save had never been manifested; nor had His wisdom and power ever been displayed in bringing the greatest good out of the greatest evil. The apostle speaking in this very chapter of the happiness of those who are reconciled to God by Jesus Christ, adds, verse twelve, For this, namely, that this brightest discovery of the divine glory, this highest perfection of human happiness might take place, "sin entered into the world". For though sin has reigned unto death; yet grace reigns with uncontrollable sovereignty, and with the brightest glory, to eternal life as the reward of that righteousness wrought for us by Jesus Christ our Lord. May we then be humbled under a sense of our guilt and ruin by Adam's fall: and be thankful for the door of hope, which is opened for us in the gospel, by the superabounding grace of God! And may we take heed of denying imputed sin, as ever we would not exclude ourselves from the benefit of imputed righteousness.

Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be ascribed all honour and glory, power and dominion, now, and for evermore, Amen.

MY IMPRESSION OF JARVIS ST. BAPTIST CHURCH.

(Continued from page 5.)

choir was led by Mr. W. J. Hutchinson, together with the organ and orchestra whose music we heard through amplifiers several blocks down the street. At the close of the sermon we followed the Pastor's method of extending an invitation to accept Christ. Boys and girls, men and women, came forward and publicly confessed our adorable Lord Jesus. How our hearts were filled, and our souls thrilled, with adoring wonder of the Christ of glory Who stooped down to earth to snatch poor hell-deserving sinners from eternal ruin.

As the great congregation poured out of the building we soon discovered some old friends. We were happy to greet our brother in the Lord, Mr. P. J. Smith, of Winnipeg, who came near death's door as the result of the Des Moines University riots; and another clan of Hamiltons from Belfast, Ireland.

As the afternoon wore on, we tried to visualize the evening congregation. It was the coldest Sunday of the year in Toronto, the great Pastor of the church was absent, and there were many counter attractions in the city; but in spite of it all, this great church was packed to the doors upstairs and down. And how the blessing of the Lord came upon that crowd. Again we gave an invitation and held the usual after-meeting, when men and women, stricken with grief on account of sin, sobbed out their confession of faith in a crucified, risen, and exalted Saviour.

We wondered what the secret of it all was. To-night we found it at 8 o'clock, when men and women came together for prayer—only prayer; and they agonized with God until after ten o'clock. Such an atmosphere makes it hard for

men to sin, and easy to live for God. Still another cause for the evident favour of God upon this work is that the preacher is a man of the Book. He is fully aware that speculative utterances never won a soul. He believes with all his heart the words of our Lord Jesus, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." The Pastor of Jarvis Street Church is the most unselfish soul I ever knew—humble, kind, wise, and good; firm and steadfast and unshaken in the things of God.

On being invited here we requested that a meeting be arranged for each night, but were informed that the programme of the church is so intense that there are meetings every evening but Friday. Monday night we addressed a crowd of Sunday School teachers and workers that packed the lecture hall, on next Sunday's lesson; Tuesday, the Open Meeting of the Women's work; Tuesday night, the great prayer meeting; Wednesday night, a class of two or three hundred children and young people; Thursday evening, the Bible Lecture; Saturday, another great season of prayer—then comes Sunday, the great day of the feast.

No man or woman can be the same after being in an atmosphere such as this. Not only Toronto, but Canada, the United States, England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Belgium, and Germany, throb with the spiritual impulse that beats in the heart of this God-fearing people through its missionary interests and its printed messages in *The Gospel Witness*.

And what shall we say of the Toronto Baptist Seminary, housed in the building adjoining the church, with its nine professors and instructors; and, while only three years old, has a registration of eighty students. What a power this uncompromising Baptist seminary will be to the churches of Canada and the States in years to come! The Baptists of Austin, Minnesota, consider it a special privilege to be permitted in their small way to support this good work. Dr. Stockley, a man greatly beloved, is the honourable Dean, one whose rare piety and deep knowledge of spiritual things is well known in the ministerial and missionary circles of the British Empire. In these compromising and apostate days this faithful and loyal school of the prophets is destined to be the outstanding Baptist seminary of America.

A peep into the offices of the church reveals a staff of untiring secretaries and workers busily engaged in the routine work, so enthusiastic in their task they seldom know when to turn out the lights and go home. Rev. L. C. Whitlaw and Rev. A. H. Barham faithfully care for the visitation of the flock.

If you are planning a vacation this summer, you will be greatly profited by a Sunday or a week spent at Jarvis St. Baptist Church.

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The Union Baptist Witness

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.

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

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MID-WINTER CONFERENCE.

The Montreal-Ottawa and District Association of Regular Baptist Churches is a live organization. On Tuesday, January 28th, they held their mid-winter conference in the Buckingham Church; and in spite of the fact that the member churches are widely scattered, the attendance was good. In the afternoon the entertaining pastor, Rev. M. Doherty, welcomed the delegates, and conducted the early part of the session. Rev. W. R. Mackay, of Pembroke, gave a practical and helpful outline of the First Epistle of John. When he was well on with his address, a contingent from Ottawa arrived, their chartered bus having had difficulty with the snow. Rev. Jas. Hall, the President, introduced Rev. Mr. Davis of the Moody Bible Institute staff, who had been in Ottawa on business, and had been glad to accept an invitation to accompany the delegates; thereupon Brother Davis sang a solo and gave an encouraging word of testimony. Mr. Hall himself delivered the second address, which was also expository, being a careful outline of the Epistle to the Colossians. After supper, Rev. A. Penman led the song service, during which Mr. Davis again gave a message of song. He was followed by Pastor W. McArthur, in a devotional address on "The Unchanging Christ". Mrs. McLellan, who, with her husband, had succeeded in arriving from Ottawa, by their own car in time for the evening service, gave another message in song. Rev. C. H. Leggett delivered the concluding address, which pled for fuller consecration on the part of God's people, with a view to revival. It is planned to hold the summer conference in Calvary Church, Ottawa, and already the brethren are anticipating another time of glorious fellowship.

* * * *

CONFERENCE IN SPRINGFIELD.

The February meeting of the Pastors' and People's Conference of Hamilton-Brantford and District was a time of very blessed fellowship in the Springfield Church, where many delegates assembled in spite of drifted roads. The morning session of prayer was a time of refreshing, and was accompanied by an address on scriptural answers to prayer, presented by Rev. Donald Fraser. During the afternoon, Rev. A. J. Love-day led "the consideration of the elements of life in the early church, which made them a power, and which should also be present in the churches of Christ to-day, if they are to enjoy the blessing of God.

"Incidents of recent happening and of interest to all were described to the meeting, in every case leading up to a request for prayer. These Fundamentalists believe in prayer. Perhaps the most stringent test of a Fundamentalist is this, 'Does he pray?' Every point at which we take issue from the modernist, is a profession of our faith in the supernatural; and every profession of faith in the supernatural must be matched with a consistent practice of prayer. Schemes of men need no prayer to run them, but Christianity can only be lived by the power of God.

"The evening session was an evangelistic service, Rev. H. S. Bennett, of Otterville, preaching with earnestness and appeal for sinners to accept Jesus Christ. Several spiritual songs were rendered and proved to be an uplift to all present."—R. E. Jones, Secretary.

* * * *

LONDON.

Blessing continues on the work of Wortley Road, where Rev. T. J. Mitchell is pastor. On February 2nd, three boys came forward, confessing the Lord Jesus; and on February 9th, a young lady made profession of faith. The members are carrying on another house to house distribution of tracts.

In the work of Central Church, Pastor James McGinlay is preaching to a full theatre Sunday nights. From January 26th to February 9th, sixteen professed to receive Christ in this place. The work of the building is going steadily forward; the electric wiring is in, and plastering is proceeding. This means an increasing burden, financially, and a continuance in prayer, spiritually.

* * * *

CHATHAM.

"In response to our last broadcast, letters have been pouring in from all over the Western section of this province, -and also from the neighbouring states of Michigan, etc. Many of these have been from shut-ins and some from Old Convention Baptists who appreciate our message. We will be on the air again next Sunday afternoon at 1:30 over CFCO, and once more we invite Regular Baptists to listen in on wavelength 247.9 metres, 1210 kilocycles."—W. N. Charlton, Pastor.

* * * *

HARTFORD.

Because of illness on the part of Rev. R. Guthrie, the commencement of special meetings in Hartford had to be postponed, but it was hoped to begin last Sunday. Remember these evangelistic efforts in prayer.

DALESVILLE.

Our brethren of the Dalesville Church have suffered a great loss in the passing of Mr. George F. Calder, following a lingering illness. Himself a graduate of McGill University, and a lawyer of distinction, he occupied numerous and honored positions in his own community, so that the local paper says that their town has lost its "most honoured citizen". The funeral service was held in the Dalesville Church, where it was conducted by the Pastor, Rev. Arthur Penman, assisted by Rev. Mr. Cousens, with the building packed beyond capacity. Our late brother was a staunch Baptist and a firm friend of our movement from its inception. It was years ago that he saw the beginning of the drift toward Modernism in the Baptist denomination. We pray that God may raise up other brethren in Dalesville, to carry on the work laid down by one who has been promoted to higher service.

* * * *

MISSIONARY LEWIS.

A recent letter from Missionary A. J. Lewis tells how he is faithfully carrying on a Gospel testimony against great odds. The Bassa boys who attend his day school, are hearing the Bible stories, as well as learning to read and write. Pray for them, that from them may come flaming evangelists who will bear the torch of salvation to the whole tribe.

* * * *

THE LIGHT OF LIFE IN LIBERIA.

The Editor-in-Chief and, we are sure, all our readers had a good laugh over the last reported extracts from the letters of Mrs. H. L. Davey, our lady missionary in Liberia. And now come some more, which we present for your amusement, your information and, what is more, your responsibility in prayer.

Toothache.

"I am writing this letter," says our cheerful missionary, "while between times talking to a man with a toothache; so please excuse jerks. This poor old town-master has molars that need to be extracted, but we haven't forceps; so I have plugged the tooth with a little swab of iodine, and he is spluttering and groaning, much to the amusement of a large crowd of children, who welcome each groan with shrieks of laughter. Now I have to stop again, two more patients have arrived. . . .

"They have just gone, together with another one who arrived while I was looking after the two. One of these patients was the boy of whom I told you some time ago. He is just sixteen, but is covered with a horrible skin disease,—not a hair on his head, and his nails just

a row of thick scales. Honestly, when he came first, I felt ill when I looked at him; that was three months ago. He was nearly mad with the intolerable itch and pain, but to-day he is so different. The skin trouble is entirely gone; the sores, which were great holes in his legs, are healing, and his nails and hair are growing. The boy is certainly grateful. He has a little sister who is a leper, and to-day he brought another little girl for treatment. She, too, has that awful itch, and her hands are covered with bleeding sores. She has held them cramped so long that she cried when I tried to straighten her poor little arm. We shall see what a systematic course of treatment will do for her. My third patient was a woman with a bad abscess. Their coming to us shows their confidence, and, of course, means that they will come to the Gospel services,—that is my one stipulation: 'I give you medicine, you must come and listen to God's Word'. They do come and we pray they may believe.

Sunday School.

"We had a lovely time last Sunday. The Sunday School grows and the sand-tray lessons hold their attention. We had the story of Cain and Abel, and in Bassa we proclaimed that God's Word declares 'without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin'.

"You have already heard about the accident through the exploding of the cannon on Christmas Day. We have the badly injured man on our verandah, and although it is only a week since the accident, the flesh is healing without a scar, and the only difficulty is his eyes. We were afraid that he would be blind, but are treating him, and each day there is an improvement.

'Come to Stay.'

"Our endeavour to help the people in their need is slowly giving us a very warm place in their hearts, and a couple of days ago, a man came up to us and said, 'We are glad you came to our country; we want you to stay always'.

"Last Sunday, after the Gospel service, several responded to the invitation to accept Christ. Just whether they really meant it, of course, remains to be seen. Horace (Rev. H. L. Davey) is commencing a special class for these inquirers, and I know that we can count on the prayers of the dear home friends for a real work of grace to start in the hearts of these people. . . .

"New Year's Day Mr. Lewis entertained us for dinner, after which we went for a walk to several towns I had not seen. You see, Mr. Lewis is on the hill, the new mission site, about two miles from this town. I find that the walk of two miles each way, is all I can do most days; but yesterday we must have walked ten miles altogether, and I was so tired I didn't want to move much after doing it. Lots of the people had never seen a white woman, and they crowded around, wanting to see my long hair, and some would touch me to see what I felt like. I know now what the fat lady at the Exhibition feels like!"

OUR MISSIONARY BULLETIN.

February 17th, 1930.

Dear Brethren:

The Executive of the Union has felt for a long time the need of presenting to the churches some plan by which the missionary interests might be systematically followed.

With this in mind, the office will issue about the 12th of each month a Bulletin giving the latest news both from the home and foreign fields, together with any other information that calls for special prayer or thanksgiving.

That the hands of our missionary representatives, both home and foreign, will be constantly upheld by prayer, it is necessary that the constituency be intelligently informed of their problems and needs, and it is, therefore, suggested that the Churches:

1. Set apart one prayer meeting each month for special prayer and consideration of the missionary work.
2. That based on the information of the bulletin, the Pastor, Chairman of the Missionary Committee, or some other competent speaker, present the missionary information.
3. That following the Missionary Prayer Meeting, the Pastor, or such person as may be appointed, read at the Sunday morning service, the Missionary Bulletin, that those not present at the Prayer Meeting may be apprised of conditions and join the others in prayer for the work.

It is further suggested that the churches choose the third week in the month for this Missionary Prayer Meeting. The Bulletin news will then be up-to-date and there will be sufficient time for the speaker to prepare for the presentation of it.

Kindly let us know that your Church will co-operate and advise to whom the Bulletin should be mailed.

Yours sincerely in His service,

(signed) W. E. Atkinson.

* * * *

"THE SEMINARY ADVOCATE."

Students of our Toronto Baptist Seminary are now publishing a five page paper called *The Seminary Advocate*, which, as the cover sheet says, is "set for the defence of the gospel" (Philippians 1:17). The one edition does, and we believe that subsequent editions will, bring the reader into close touch with Seminary life. We read therein "A Message from the President", a missionary appeal, an original poem on "Be Yielded", news of "Students Activities" both of the men and women students, and these articles are interspersed with "Seminary humour". All who want to feel the beating pulse of Seminary life, should write in to Editor J. Fullard, 337 Jarvis St., Toronto, 2, enclosing five cents per edition.

* * * *

OHIO.

The February issue of *The Ohio Independent Baptist* shows that the general

Ohio Association of Independent Baptist Churches also has its local association meetings. For instance, the Hebron Association met in Lorain, where Rev. G. E. Wilson is pastor, on January 28th, and had a day of fine Christian fellowship.

The First Baptist Church of Struthers, Ohio, which "for years has been a Bible Union Church", has now joined with the Ohio Association.

In special meetings held in the Elyria Church, during the month of January, under the leadership of Pastor R. T. Ketcham, ninety-five persons made a public profession of Christ.

Special meetings also are going on in North Akron, and up to the time reported, there have been thirty professed conversions.

* * * *

THE PERSECUTION IN RUSSIA.

The following quotation from *The Watchman-Examiner* of January 23rd, is of special interest to those who remember the attendance of delegates from Soviet Russia at a meeting held in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, during the Convention of Baptist World Alliance last year:

"Paul Hutchinson left Russia late in the summer of 1929. Writing to *The Christian Herald* of his experience he says: 'I was talking with a man who probably knows more about the condition of the Baptists in Russia than any other American. He was largely responsible for making the arrangements by which a dozen Russian Baptists were allowed, with the apparent approval of the Soviet government, to attend the Convention of the Baptist World Alliance held at Toronto. He told me that every member of the delegation was under arrest within two weeks after his return to Russia; all but one of them have been sent into exile in Siberia; the remaining one is under what is called "home arrest". Practically every Baptist teacher in Great Russia has been exiled. Many laymen, including women, have shared the same fate. The repressive movement is now passing into the Ukraine and White Russia.'"

* * * *

STANLEY AVENUE, HAMILTON.

Rev. C. J. Loney, Pastor of Stanley Avenue Baptist Church, Hamilton, reports the spiritual tide in the life of his church the highest it has been during the fifteen years of his pastorate. Conversions are taking place at every service, saints are being built up in their most holy faith, and scores of the members are publicly consecrating themselves afresh to the Pastor's strong spiritual programme for the church. The Communion services are being largely attended, at which new members are being received. Last Sunday evening six were baptized; while among those saved was a Greek Roman Catholic whose wife recently confessed Christ.

Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

Vol. 5 No. 1

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, Editor.

Lesson 10 March 9th, 1930
First Quarter.

OPENING THE SEALS.

Lesson Text: Revelation, chapter 6.

Golden Text: "And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand." Rev. 6:5.

I. THE WHITE HORSE, (vs. 1, 2).

In the previous chapter there is depicted the action of the Lamb in taking the seven sealed book "out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne"; in this is recorded the opening of six of these seals. Nothing is said about reading out of the book as each seal is broken, action alone following on each occasion, signifying the actual taking possession of the inheritance rather than the mere recital of the terms of agreement concerning the same. In this and the scenes which follow there is portrayed in general the cleansing of the inheritance preparatory to the Lamb's taking full possession of it. The fulfilment is still future, although part in type may be observed in history. It will be profitable in connection with this study to read Matthew 24, where our Lord discourses on the end of the age.

On the occasion of the breaking of each of the first four seals a living creature gives the command to "Come" (R.V.) spoken not to John, but evidently to the one on the horse. The first one to come was white, and he that sat on him had a bow, an instrument of war, and a crown was given unto him, the sign of rule, and he went forth conquering and to conquer, implying victory. Difference of opinion is recorded concerning the identity of this one. Some think Christ is meant, but while he appears like Christ, we must remember our Lord as the Lamb is breaking the seals, and later appears on a white horse, (19:11-13). The interpretation is probably to be found in Matthew where we are warned that some would come in our Lord's name, (Matt. 24:5), and in other Scriptures we are similarly informed of the coming of deceivers, and of one in particular who would fight and reign, (2 Thess. 2:3-12; Rev. 13). Note the deceivers of the present day.

II. THE RED HORSE, (vs. 3, 4).

When the second seal was opened, the second living one said "Come". "And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another," etc. In this scene there is symbolized war upon earth. Our Lord has warned us of "wars and rumours of wars", (Matt. 24:6). Man has sought to bring peace to the earth, but has lamentably failed in his efforts, and in the future the same failure will meet him despite agreements reached at disarmament conferences, and league assemblies, because of the wrong attitude of the world toward God. Wars spring from the human heart, (James 4:1), and

not until that heart is right can there be peace. There will be some in the future as in the past who will dwell in the midst of false security, but sudden destruction will overtake them, (1 Thess. 5:3). This age will end in a state far from peaceful, with the hand of man lifted against his fellows.

III. THE BLACK HORSE, (vs. 5, 6).

When the third living one said, "Come" there came forth a black horse, and "he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand", and a voice said, "A measure of wheat for a penny . . . and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine". This gives us a picture of scarcity, of famine; the "measure" referred to would equal the ordinary allowance of grain to a man for one day's subsistence, and the "penny", that of an ordinary wage for a full day's labour. Under such circumstances a man would earn only as much as he himself would consume, leaving nothing for his family. Famine such as this generally follows war, for the land is denuded of its workers, lies idle, and where the fighting takes place is more or less devastated, but the oil and the wine are not so apt to be touched.

IV. THE PALE HORSE, (vs. 7, 8).

The fourth living one says "Come", and "behold a pale horse" comes forth, "and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him: And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth". Pestilence generally follows war and famine and it would seem that such is here described, for desolation of a terrible character is portrayed, and death and hell or the grave, are always present. With the presence of famine and the depletion in the numbers of men, the wild beasts become bolder and more ferocious, and attack human beings with resultant loss of life. Such scenes have taken place in history, but it would seem as if those herein described relate to the end of this age when in an accentuated manner such miseries will come upon the world. To believe so is not to become pessimistic, but is the part of wisdom, inasmuch as God always has a purpose in issuing His warnings. It is the wise person who can read the signs of the times, and is not deceived by anything falsely optimistic.

V. THE SOULS OF THE MARTYRS, (vs. 9, 11).

The events described as taking place at the opening of the seals are divided into four and three, a division of the perfect number found elsewhere, and having its due significance, four relating to the world, and three to the Godhead, the visible and the invisible. The four living ones no longer issue the call to come, for there is no one to come. John simply states he saw something. He "saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held." These were the souls of the martyrs who had been slain for their faithfulness to God. All through the church age persecution has been more or less present, the saints have had to suffer, and many have laid down their lives. But a more bitter persecution is yet to come, when during the time of the antichrist the

great tribulation will take place, and those who serve God will lose their lives. (Rev. 13:15). At the present time it means something to put God first. The world does not object to one being religious, but it does dislike the truly spiritual person. But the worst type of persecution these days come not so much from out and out worldlings as from carnally minded professing Christians, at least such is true of professedly Christian lands. John not only sees the souls, but he hears them speaking. They cry with a loud voice and say, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" This is not a vindictive request, but the expression of a desire for the vindication of God's righteousness in the punishment of His enemies. It must also be remembered the cry is recorded as being uttered during a judgment period. The condition of the martyrs is stated, "And white robes were given unto every one of them", implying God's approval; and they are told to "rest yet for a little season until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled", showing that others were to follow them. Note their position under the altar, and the Jewish custom of pouring the blood of the sacrifice at the bottom of the altar.

VI. CONVULSIONS IN NATURE, (vs. 12-17).

On the opening of the sixth seal John beheld great convulsions in nature. "There was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood. And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, and every mountain and island were moved out of their places". There have been earthquakes in the past in divers places, but none such as here described. These words imply the shaking of the whole of nature, with darkness during the day time, the heavens rolling up as a scroll (2 Pet. 3:12), and every mountain and island moving. Such a sight must be terrible indeed, presaging the coming of the King of kings, and the effect upon the unbelievers is in accord with its nature. Everyone is struck with fear, and "the kings of the earth and the great men and the rich men" with the poorest of the human family, hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains and call upon these to fall upon them and hide them from the face of God the Father, and the wrath of the Lamb, "for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" The great men of the earth after all are only men and before God they are helpless indeed. Many of them neglect God's salvation in this the day of His grace, and even state their disbelief in His very existence, but there is a day coming when they will have to give heed to the voice of God, and all unsaved alike, both rich and poor will be terror-stricken at His judgments. It is surely the part of wisdom to accept God's mercy now and be saved from future judgment, (Rom. 8:1; 1 Thess. 1:10). Now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of salvation.