

# The Gospel Witness

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

\$2.00 Per Year, Postpaid, to any address. 5c. Per Single Copy.

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

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Vol. 9. No. 10.

TORONTO, JULY 24th, 1930.

Whole No. 427.

## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

HOW THE DEVIL SLANDERS GOD.

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Canada, Sunday Evening, July 20th, 1930.

Broadcast from Station CKGW 690 K.C. 434.8 metres.

(Stenographically Reported)

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:  
"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light  
of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."—II Corinthians  
4:3, 4.

### Prayer before the Sermon.

O Lord, we are in Thy presence, and we know that we have Thine ear because we lift our hearts to Thee in the name of Him Whom Thou hearest always, even Jesus Christ the Mediator between God and man. We bring to Thee the praises, the adorations, of our hearts.

Thou hast redeemed us by Thy precious blood; Thou hast saved us from our sins through the infinite Sacrifice of the cross; Thou hast brought us into Thine own family, numbering us among Thy children, making us heirs with Jesus Christ. For all this, we thank Thee.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, to let Thine evening blessing rest upon this congregation, and upon all our invisible hearers whose heads and hearts are bowed in Thy holy presence at this hour. May the consciousness of Thy nearness come to everyone, and may the Lord speak to every heart and conscience this evening! We invoke Thine aid, that such as are Thy children may walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, adorning the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things, that everywhere and all the time, we may behave as those who are really the children of God.

We pray for those who are away from home, who are seeking rest and refreshment of mind and body. May they not be forgetful of Him from Whom all good and perfect gifts descend! We pray for those who are sick, for those who listen to us while stretched on beds of pain, while shut off from the companionship of their friends. Be gracious, we pray Thee, to all Thy suffering children to-night. Be mindful of those who are in a journey, those who speed along the highway, those who are by the lakeside; give Thine angels charge concerning Thy people to keep them in all their ways.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, to bless us in our meditation on Thy Book. May the Holy Spirit take of the things which

are Christ's and reveal them unto us! May this service result in the conversion of many whose hearts have hitherto been closed against the gospel of Jesus Christ! Bless us now for Thy name's sake, Amen.

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ"—or, the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ—"who is the image of God, should shine unto them." In the context the Apostle Paul speaks of the gospel as being a message of light. It is, indeed, a "manifestation of the truth", which he says is so manifestly true that it may reasonably be expected to commend itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

That is precisely what the gospel is, a message of truth, a message of light. He Who is the Subject of the story said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." He further said to His disciples, "Ye are the light of the world." He is so to dwell in us that we shall reflect His glory. Again He said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Ere He left this earth He promised that the Spirit of Truth should come, and of Him He said, "He will guide you into all the truth"—not into all truths, but "into all the truth". He promised His

disciples that the Holy Ghost should bring to their remembrance all things whatsoever He had said unto them. This promise was fulfilled in the experience of those who were chosen of God to write the New Testament, and we have as a result a Book written by men who spake as they were "moved by the Holy Ghost."

The Holy Spirit is also promised that He may interpret this infallible Word, so that the gospel is light indeed and truth indeed. It is not a veiled gospel in any sense. It is no dark secret hidden from men. It is a revelation of the very heart of God. And yet, strange as it may seem, there are many who do not receive the gospel. There are many who account it "foolishness", and labour to prove that it is untrue. There are some who raise questions about every word that is written, and lead men to doubt whether indeed this be the very word of God. There are others who profess to be seekers after truth, who declare they find themselves unable to understand the gospel.

How are we to reconcile these two opposing positions, that which declares the gospel to be a manifestation of the truth, and that attitude of mind which declares it is difficult to be understood?

My text gives the answer. This apostle declared that he was preaching a very simple message, that he used great plainness of speech, he assumes that there was no good reason why anybody should not be able to understand the gospel. "But", said he, "if our gospel be veiled, if there be some who do not understand, then it is veiled to them that are lost." The explanation of their failure to understand is here: "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

If there are some who hear me this evening to whom the gospel has never yet appeared as the power of God and the wisdom of God, if you have never yet been able to admire the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge which are placed at your disposal at the command of faith in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, I offer you, on the authority of God's Word, an explanation for your darkness. No, my dear friends, it is not because you are men and women of superior intelligence, it is not because of your larger learning, your profounder wisdom. In the last analysis it was not the college that upset you, it was not the books you read that disturbed your faith. Here is the philosophy of unbelief always: "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

### I.

Need I do more than pause to remind you of THE REALITY OF THIS MALIGNANT SPIRIT, the enemy of human souls here described as, "The god of this world"? The devil is very real; he is terribly real. The Scripture describes him as an "adversary", and says he goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. He is called "the accuser of the brethren", the "old serpent", the "dragon", the "prince of the power of the air". He is the enemy of mankind, and as surely as there is a God Who loves us, there is a devil who hates us; as surely as there is a

common Source of all that is good and true, so there is a common origin of all that is evil and sinful. "The god of this world" is, I say, a very real person,—not merely a principle, not merely an illusion of mortal mind; but a very real malignant personality who seeks the destruction of your soul and mine. As certainly as we have a Friend, a Protector, a Saviour, in the God above us, we have an enemy, a betrayer, a potential destroyer, in the devil who seeks our injury.

He is described here as "the god of this world"—not the god of the cosmos, not the god of the material world. Oh no! Thank God, this earth does not belong to the devil. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." But he is described as the ruler of the cosmos, the prince of this world. He is an usurper; he has taken God's place in the hearts of men, and in the affairs of nations. There is a spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. There is a chief of all the principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world and spiritual wickedness in high places. He is, in a very real sense, the ruler of the cosmos, of the earth, of the material world.

But he is not so called here. He is the god of this age. It is only for a little time that he takes possession of that which rightly belongs to God Himself. But during this age, this present time, this present evil world, or evil age, he has tremendous influence in the lives of men.

I wish I had time to expound that scripture, and confine myself to that this evening, "the god of this age". How truly Satan is followed by those who live for this age, for the things of time! When a man loses his sense of perspective, when he fixes his eyes upon things that are seen and are temporal, he inevitably becomes a follower of the god of this age. He is influenced by the standards of time, by the values of time, by all the influences which play upon human life in this present age; and he follows the god of this age.

The man who lives for his money, and for all that money will bring, however respectable, however religious, is a worshipper of the god of this age. And how many people there are who divorce their business entirely from religion. Monday is entirely different from Sunday. The principles which govern on Sunday have no application to the affairs of Monday at all. It must be admitted that money will do much. It will exalt men to positions of prominence. Money will exalt people to positions of power. It will buy houses and lands. It belongs to this age. It is the medium of exchange for the affairs of this age.

There was a time when our money was subject to a rather large discount when we got to the International Boundary. I remember during the war when it was as much as seventeen per cent., when they took seventeen dollars off every hundred when one crossed the line. I mean, Canadian money was worth seventeen dollars less. I knew some friends who laid in a store of German money—and found that it was not worth anything at all when the war was over. Those who worship the god of this age, and who lay up for themselves a store of this world's goods, are coming by and by to the boundary line. If you do not convert your money into something else, you will find that though it were worth a hundred million this side the

river of death, beyond it will have no value. Do as you like, my friends; live for this life if you will, but if you do you are really worshippers of the god of this age. Turn it over in your mind at the office in the morning, when you stand behind the counter, in the directors' meeting, in the bank, or insurance office, wherever you are—give all there is of you to the getting of money, living for the world and the things of the world, but remember that you are but worshipping him who is the god of this age. Bring your offerings to him, devote all your energies to his service, and the time will come when this age will pass, and other standards will obtain, other values will be recognized, and other currency will be necessary to buy favour there. Hence this alien prince, this usurper of the divine throne in the hearts and in the lives of men, is here described as "the god of this age."

## II.

But very especially he is described here as engaging in THE WORK OF BLINDING MEN'S MINDS. How does the devil blind the minds of men? Is that the explanation of the fact that so many people refuse to believe the gospel, because the god of this world hath blinded their minds so that they cannot? That is what the Scripture says. How does he do it?

I think one of the favorite weapons for this work is that of *prejudice*. How terribly prejudiced some people are against many things! Their minds, while they boast of their broad-mindedness, while they boast of their liberality, while they insist that we ought to maintain an "open mind",—their minds are closed and locked and double-barred by prejudice, so that the light cannot even shine unto their reason.

They are prejudiced against God. How many books I have read in which men attempt to describe "the God of orthodoxy", "the God of Evangelical Christianity", "the God of the Bible"—and these descriptions are leagues from the truth. No such god is revealed in the Bible. No such god is believed in by orthodox people. No such god was ever worshipped by evangelical believers. The sermons one hears nowadays which purport to describe the characteristics of the God of Evangelical Christianity are the most grotesque caricatures. I said of one man some time ago that he has evidently derived his knowledge of orthodoxy from a study of its caricatures. He does not even know what orthodoxy is. He has never even glimpsed the alphabet of Evangelical Christianity. But he represents—or misrepresents—God as a grotesque figure finding delight in the destruction of men, or, at least, as that being the God of the Bible.

I preached with all earnestness in this pulpit some years ago, and, as I thought, with the utmost simplicity. At the close of the service a man came to me and said, "Did I understand you to say, sir, that Christ had to die in order to make God willing to save sinners?" I replied, "I have not the slightest idea what you understood me to say. I only know that I could not even have thought it in a nightmare." One wondered whether the man had ordinary intelligence, or whether wilfully he misrepresented that which he had heard. The truth was, the god of this world had so blinded his mind that he could not even hear the truth,

he could not understand the simplest language in spiritual things.

I meet young men who say, "Do not quote the Bible to me, sir, because I do not believe it." I ask such an one, "Have you read it?" "No." "Do you know what it contains?" "I cannot say that I am very thoroughly versed even in the text of Scripture, but I know it is not true"! Why does he speak thus? Because the god of this world has told him so, because university professors and a great many preachers spend their time teaching their hearers to doubt everything that is written in the Bible.

By whose inspiration do such alleged prophets preach? Not by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, I promise you. It is the god of this world who blinds the eyes of men by fast closing them by every principle of prejudice, until they are prejudiced against God, against the gospel, against the Bible, against the church, against the ministers of religion, so that it is well nigh impossible to get a hearing for the Word. That is the surest method of leading people to the precipice, the shutting of their minds against the truth.

Then, men are blinded to the truth also by being *confined to occupations which prevent their taking a perspective view of life*. There are some people who keep their eyes so intently on their bank-book that they cannot even see the stars. They are so busy counting their pennies, they have no mind to number the mercies of God. They are so imprisoned within their business and their pleasures and all the occupations of time that they have no eyes for distant things at all. They are like the ponies in the coal-mines, that go down into the bowels of the earth and for years together never see the sun. Having no need for eyes, they lose the power of sight. Like bats and moles are some of these learned gentlemen who boast of their liberality.

But how many there are who are blinded by *false religions*, by preoccupation of the mind with that which is contrary to the truth! In many cases before the truth can find entrance, men's minds must be emptied of the accumulation of error which has found entrance there. Religions that promise men peace in the way of human effort; religions that teach men falsely that by works of righteousness which they may do they can make themselves right with God; religions that are opposed to the Bible and to the revelation of God's grace in Christ, so occupy the minds of men that there is no room for the gospel. "The god of this world" thus blinds the minds of those who believe not.

And oh, how many are blinded by *addiction to sin*! How many whose passion for evil actually closes their minds to the admission of sound ethical teaching! Go to the United States and ask a man on the train, or elsewhere, what he thinks of prohibition. Put before him the figures which prove beyond all peradventure that that which men decry and denounce and declare to be an utter failure is in truth overwhelmingly successful; put before him the figures of trade councils, of banks, and all the rest of it, but he will say, "Prohibition is a failure; it is the ruin of a nation." Why? Because the man wants to get drunk. He is so blinded by passion that reason utterly fails.

Turn to the sermon on the mount, and read God's law about divorce, see what the Master says about it. What then? "Why", said one man of distinction to me, "it is folly to invoke the authority of Jesus Christ in the matter of the marriage relation and of divorce." Why do men talk like that? Because they are so blind, and so determined to go their evil way, that they will not hear what the Scripture has to say.

So of every other kind of sin: when it grips heart and conscience it blinds the minds of men, so that they are unable to distinguish between right and wrong, and at last put light for darkness, and darkness for light. They call their foes their friends, and regard their friends as their worst enemies. They invert the very laws of nature, and see things in a light that misrepresents all the facts of life and closes their minds against the admission of the truth.

### III.

But that is not the worst of it. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." Which does not mean that he has merely veiled their minds. The figure is not that of one drawing down the blinds to shut out the sunlight, for then another might break in and lift the blinds and let the sunlight in. The figure is this, that **THE DEVIL IS ONE WHO ACTUALLY DESTROYS THE FACULTY OF SIGHT.** He blinds the eyes of men, the minds of men, so that they become at last incapable of receiving the truth; and, like Esau, when they long to find a place of repentance they find no place of repentance though they seek it diligently with tears.

That, my dear friends, is what evil does. Belief of falsehood at last makes it impossible for men to believe the truth. The penalty an habitual deceiver pays for his lying is not that nobody will believe him, but that he at last discovers it is impossible for him to believe anybody else. He speaks and acts a lie until he imputes to all others the principles which govern his own life, and at last becomes incapable of receiving the truth. If you cultivate a doubt of the Word of God, you will discover at last that the very eyes of your soul have become blinded.

One of the most terrible things I ever witnessed in my life was when I went to visit a man at his son's request. He said, "You had better take your Bible with you, for father is the greatest Bible student I have ever known." I called upon him, and found him saturated with Scripture. It seemed to me he could repeat the whole book of Psalms, and nearly every chapter in the New Testament. He was familiar with the whole Bible. He quoted it to mock, to laugh at it; and when I quoted a passage, hoping that God would somehow break in upon his understanding, he would reply with derisive laughter and say, "Let me give you the context." He would quote the context before and after, and hold the whole Scripture up to contempt. What was the psychology of it? Just this: he had refused to believe the truth so long, he had played with the very Word of God, he had trained his mind to question everything that was in the Bible, until at last it was utterly impossible for him to believe anything that was in the Bible. He died as he had lived,—his head full of texts of Scripture; his heart full of the devil. He died in his sin, went over the precipice, as a blinded soul.

That is what is happening to-day. People by the multitude are being blinded to the truth of the gospel. A young minister had been travelling in Palestine, and was returning, when he was stricken with small-pox. The ship stopped at some Mediterranean port and put him on shore. He was put in quarantine and in charge of an Italian nurse named Antonio, who nursed the young man tenderly, in a house that faced toward the south looking out toward the sea. Every morning he threw up the blinds, threw back the shutters, and let the light of day flood his master's room with its glory. One morning the patient said to his nurse, "Antonio, will it soon be day?" "Why", said the nurse, "it is day." "But the morning has not come, has it?" "Yes, the morning has come." "Well, then, Antonio, throw back the shutters, lift the blinds, and let God's sunlight in." "But", said the nurse, "the shutters are open, my master. The blinds are up, and the sun is shining." "But", said the patient, "I do not see any sunlight, Antonio. You tell me the morning has come?" He was quiet for a moment, then with a cry of anguish as the truth dawned upon him, he said, "Oh, Antonio, Antonio, is it true?" He put his hands to his eyes; the fatal disease had taken his sight away, and as he learned the truth he cried, "Oh, Antonio, Antonio! I am blind! I am blind!" But very soon he fell asleep in Jesus, and opened his eyes in the morning-land ("Hallelujah!" "Praise the Lord!").

Oh, the loss of physical eyesight, sad as it is, is not the greatest tragedy. But what a crime—oh, what a crime! when teachers and preachers and professors allow themselves to be used of the devil to gouge out the eyes of human souls, so that they cannot see the truth, and cannot look upon the face of Him Who is altogether lovely! No greater crime than that could be imagined. And this is the arch-criminal, the prince of darkness who hates the light, and thus destroys in men the very capacity for receiving the truth, the very faculty of faith, until at last men have no power to believe but fall over the precipice and into everlasting destruction.

### IV.

**BUT WHY? THIS IS THE REASON:** "Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Well does the devil know that if men, with the eyes of their heart, could ever once see Jesus they would fall in love with him, and that his power over them would be for ever broken. Hence, like the Philistines who put out the eyes of Samson, like Zedekiah's captors who gouged the eyes from the sockets and carried the king captive to a foreign land, so the devil destroys men's ability to receive the truth "lest the light should shine".

I repeat; the gospel is a message of light. If only you would let the gospel in, you would find what kind of man you are.

The gospel will give you light about yourself. Even a mirror is no good in the dark, but let the light shine, and you will see what a sinner you are. The gospel will give you light about Jesus Christ. It will remove all your misapprehension, it will nullify all the devil's misrepresentations. Let the

light shine, let the gospel of the glory of Christ flood your understanding, and you will come to see that He loved you before the foundations of the world, that He anticipated your folly, made provision for your sin, came from heaven to earth to die in your room and stead, was Himself made sin for you that you might be made the righteousness of God in Him, took the terrible smallpox of sin upon Himself, went into the outer darkness that you might live for ever in the morning land. ("Praise the Lord!").

If you could only see "the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ", if you could only know that He loves to forgive, that He loves to wipe men's tears away, that He loves to gird them with strength for the battle, that He loves to undo the work of sin and remake men into the image of God! The devil knows that if you could only understand that, you would be a Christian to-night. There is not a man or woman here this evening whose heart hitherto has been closed against the gospel, if he could only with the eyes of his heart behold "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world", who would not be made a new creature in Christ in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. But the devil stands between, "lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ . . . should shine unto you."

Listen! Listen! Even while I speak, someone is whispering, "Remember the book you read last week. Do not believe that old-fashioned preacher. I do not wonder people say so much against him when he talks such nonsense as that." Nonsense? Yes, it is nonsense in the view of the devil. But I beg of you, blind men, ere you reach the precipice and descend into everlasting destruction, send up a mighty cry that He may open your eyes to the light of the glorious gospel. You would say, "What a revelation! I thought God wanted to take all the pleasures of life away, I thought He wanted to destroy me; but you tell me that Jesus Who opened the eyes of the blind and made the lame to leap as an hart, Who unstopped deaf ears, Who forgave men their transgressions—you tell me that Jesus Christ is like God?" No, I tell you that JESUS CHRIST IS GOD. ("Hallelujah!") And He is the only God we know. He is the express Image of His Person. "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." "Before you go away", said Philip, "give us a picture of God; leave us a photograph of the Invisible, and let us know what God is like." To which our Lord answered, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

That is the God I preach to you, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, covenanting together for man's redemption from before the foundations of the world. Yield your poor blinded souls to Him instead of rushing to destruction, the victims of the blinding power of our worst enemy.

Will you turn to God this evening? Will you receive Him as He is revealed in Christ? Trust Him as your Saviour wherever you are, by the lakeside, out at the camp, down there in Quebec. I greet you Buckingham friends, Lachute and the rest of you; friends in New York State, in Pennsylvania, in Ohio, and in Michigan. Will you hear this gospel? Jesus Christ is as near to you as He is to us in this place of prayer. "Whoso-

ever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Cry out for light from above, and God will answer you; old things shall pass away, and all things shall become new. He will save you for time, and save you for eternity. And by and by He will not only clarify your vision, but He will wipe away all tears from your eyes. ("Hallelujah!").

I have preached to you the gospel of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, Who has loved you with an everlasting love, and with lovingkindnesses would draw you to Himself this night.

Let us pray: O Lord, many of us have come to Thee years ago, but we come again. Many of us have praised Thee for the precious blood ten thousand times already, but we praise Thee once again. Many of us have thanked Thee times innumerable for the salvation that is all of grace, but this evening we thank Thee once again. Many of us have prayed before, but we want to pray again the same prayer: God, be merciful to me a sinner. Thou hast said that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Mayhap even as we pray, thousands of others pray with us, and who knoweth but that some day it will be found that through this simple message the power of Satan has been broken in many a life, and hundreds have turned wholeheartedly to Christ? Hear us as we sing our closing hymn. Grant that the Holy Spirit may carry its message to invisible thousands who share this service. For Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

#### THE WEEK END IN JARVIS STREET.

The attendance at the School was 1,018. We were privileged to have a visit from Rev. A. J. Lewis, who has just returned from Liberia. Mr. Lewis gave a most interesting account of his labours there, together with Mr. and Mrs. Davey. We have never heard of a place which seemed to be more open to the gospel. It was a fine address by which the people were greatly moved. Not a few said that Mr. Lewis must have been compelled to return in order to be free to tell that story everywhere. At the close of the address the Pastor explained that the cost of sending out two new missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Hancox to Liberia would be approximately \$850.00,—that is, of course, merely for equipment and travelling expenses. He proposed that an offering be taken there and then to meet that amount. There was a hearty and generous response for a summer morning when scores, perhaps hundreds of the church members were away. The offering was taken, and resulted in gathering a sum of \$718.00. It is hoped the rest will come in later, as an appeal was made again in the evening.

In the evening there was a great congregation; notwithstanding it was past the middle of July, there was scarcely a vacant seat anywhere downstairs and a great company in the gallery. One of the sermons appearing in this issue was preached, and the ordinance of baptism was administered. Following the conclusion of the service at 9 o'clock another great service was held out of doors from the open air pulpit on the church grounds. A great congregation assembled, and the service was one of blessing.

## SECOND SERMON.

## MARY'S ALABASTER BOX.

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, June 22nd, 1930.

(Stenographically Reported.)

"Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her." Matt. 26:13.

## Prayer before the Sermon.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, to make us aware of Thy presence this morning. We know Thou art here. Thy word has never failed us. We have Thy promise, and we know that that promise is even now actually fulfilled; and that in the Person of the Holy Spirit, God Himself, is in this place. We have come to worship Thee, and we pray that, by the grace of Thy Spirit, our hearts may be drawn out toward Thee; that we may be enabled, indeed, to render to Thee to-day a spiritual service which Thou canst accept—notwithstanding our sinfulness—because it is offered to Thee through Him who died and rose again.

We do not know the circumstances of those gathered in Thy presence. We do not know the particular need of any one, man or woman, or boy or girl; but we rejoice that we come to a great God. Thou understandest our thoughts afar off; Thou knowest our yesterdays; our to-morrows are open to Thy view. The experiences of the past are written before Thee; and all that the future contains for us is equally before Thine eye. So this morning we pray that we may be nourished from the heavenly springs; that we may be fitted for the duty of the day; that this day, whatever our obligations as Christians may be, we may have grace to do Thy will; to bear witness to the saving efficacy of the blood of Christ, giving evidence that the Holy Spirit dwells within us to glorify our Father which is in heaven.

We pray Thee to look upon every member of this congregation. May Thine own people be led to rejoice in Thee this morning! May the stranger, the visitor, who is with us, knowing Thee, find himself or herself at home because Thou art here.

We pray that any whose hearts have not yet been opened to the Lord Jesus may be brought to repentance and faith, and that this day many may be led to yield themselves wholly to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

We think of the homes from which the members of this congregation come. Some come from homes where Thou hast blessed and prospered them;—where no real want is known; and where the material and spiritual blessings of the Lord abide. We pray that any such may not be forgetful of the divine Giver, and may not be ungrateful for all His lovingkindnesses. Help us, O Lord, that Thy blessing may bring us nearer to Thyself, and forbid that we should ever permit one of Thy gifts to obscure our vision of the Father of lights from whom every good gift cometh.

There may be homes represented here in which there is much distress. We pray Thee to visit them. Give help that is beyond human power. In Thine own way, O Lord, minister; and minister through Thy people so far as it is Thy will that such should be done.

We pray for any home in which there is sickness and sorrow. Some have come to Thy house this morning, perhaps, heavy hearted, cast down, and their souls disquieted within them. Grant them relief from their gloom this morning. May the glory of the Lord appear to them!

Remember, we pray Thee, all Thy ministering servants the world around, in this and other cities, and towns, and villages, in our own country, throughout this continent, even to the uttermost parts of the earth. We beseech Thee, O Lord, to grant that those who preach Thy word, may be empowered, by Thy Spirit that their witness may be made effective. Bless those who may be in a journey. Make Thy presence to go with them. Bless those who must labour on Thy day. Make even the sick room, or the place of duty, whatever it be, a Bethel, a veritable house of God. Minister especially to the sick, and suffering.

Open Thy word to us and our understandings to Thy word, and open our hearts to the reception of Thy truth. Help us,

O Lord, to receive the truth in the love of it. May our hearts be made hospitable to Thy precepts, and to the principles of Thy gospel. So bless us and glorify Thyself, for Thy name's sake, Amen.

There are many tales which pass from lip to lip, and obtain a wide circulation, which make no contribution of value either to the hearer or to the teller. There are many such stories which might better be left untold. There are many books that are published, for which people pay a good price, and for the publication of which the author is enriched, that have no real value. Newspaper men talk about stories of "human interest"—whatever that may be. Sometimes they speak of men, irrespective of what they do, or where they go, as being themselves, "news"; because of what the man is or of what he has done at some time or place, it is assumed that the world is interested in his movements. Hence it is reported, flashed by wire around the world, that this or that man is on a journey, or has arrived at a certain place.

This chapter contains the record of a particular act—it must surely be a "human interest" story. Our Lord Himself, the Author of all the world's harmonies, the Originator of all that is best in the music of human speech and song; Himself the Incarnate Word, the very Embodiment of the "good news", the Subject of angels' song and story—Jesus declared that what He Himself had just seen, and His disciples with Him, constituted a story of such value that He would Himself see to it that wherever His gospel should be preached in all the world, and to the end of time, to all generations, this incident should be reported: this story should be told for a memorial of the woman who had there ministered to Him.

A story that has such value that the Lord of Heaven declares His intention of being its Publisher—and when He declares that that story shall never die; that as long as His gospel shall be preached, that that story shall be an integral part of its message—when Jesus says that, we may surely conclude that it is a story of great value. I ask you to study it with me a little while this morning, that we may learn, if we can, something of the secret of its immortality. Other stories soon die; other items of news are published, and in but a day or two, forgotten. But here is a new story that shall be "news" to all the world in all generations. What is it in this story that merited our Lord's approval, and led Him to announce this great programme of publication?

## I.

It is a story first of all of AN OFFERING of LOVE. Jesus was in the home of Simon the leper, at Bethany. "There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head": she lavished her costly gift upon her Lord. That is the heart of the story.

Jesus expressed approval of a very generous gift. This ointment of spikenard, which was very precious, was

worth three hundred pence, or more. It was Judas who put that value upon it, and you may depend upon it that Judas knew the latest quotations. Judas was well instructed respecting the market values of the time; and when he said it was worth three hundred pence, it was certainly not worth less.

There is another story in the Bible which is very often referred to, and which seems to minister great comfort to many of us: the story of the woman and her mites. There are a good many people who speak about their widow's mite—although they are not widows, and although there is no justification for their giving a mite. But that story apparently is very popular. I would remind you that there was a great difference between the values, the intrinsic value of that which the widow gave and that which this woman gave. It was in the proportion of one cent to fifty dollars. The widow gave the cent, the woman, fifty dollars; or the widow gave the dollar, and this woman gave five hundred dollars; or, if you like, the widow gave a thousand dollars, and this woman gave fifty thousand dollars. It was a large gift. The usual wage of the labourer of that time was a penny a day, and this gift amounted to three hundred pence. The sabbaths, and other special days being omitted, it was virtually a labourer's wage for a whole year—all that a labourer could earn by faithful industry applied every day of the year. This woman brought the product of a whole year's labour, and lavishly poured it all upon the head of Jesus. Relatively, of course, the widow's gift was just as great as Mary's. There are people who seem to expect to receive some reward for giving a cup of cold water, when really they ought to install a water works system that would refresh a whole city. There are people who would give a widow's mite, and expect the Lord to say, "Well done". The truth is the widow gave all she had, even all her living. She did not give a tenth, nor a fifth, nor one-half, nor three-quarters;—she did not give a little out of her surplus, making sure not to infringe upon her bank account—all she had in the world was what she had in her hand; and without stint or reservation she gave it all. And it was that which called forth our Lord's approval. This woman gave the equivalent of a year's labour.

My friends, my plea is this: that we, as Christians, live too cheaply. We put but a small value upon our religion. We talk sometimes about being poor, while uncounted millions have never heard the story of Bethlehem or Calvary;—literally there are hundreds of millions of people who have never even heard the name of Jesus. And yet we, as Christians, congratulate ourselves that we have done something when we present our little gifts. My plea this morning is that the service of Jesus merits large gifts. He deserves our best. It was required of all who brought their thankoffering to the Lord—a lamb, or whatever it was—that it should be without blemish: the best we have our Lord requires. He demands the first place; and unless He has the first place, no matter what our profession may be, we have not made Him Lord.

Mary brought her alabaster box of ointment, and, holding nothing back, *she poured it all upon the head of her Lord*. I do not believe there is a church in Christendom whose members generally have learned Mary's secret. There are very very few of the Lord's people who have come within leagues of Mary's standard. We shall never have the Lord's "Well done", we shall never have peace

of conscience, and joy in our hearts, while we hold back from Him that which is His due. We ought, as Christians, every one of us, to hang our heads in shame, to be ashamed when we speak of giving merely a tenth. Somebody says, "But the tenth is an Old Testament standard!" We grant that for the sake of argument, but if God's people, who are not under the law but under grace, would approximate even the Old Testament standard, I will venture the assertion that if all who profess the name of Jesus Christ would even take the Old Testament standard, to say nothing of the New, and would even give to the Lord one-tenth, and trust Him to bless the nine-tenths, the missionary efforts of the churches could be doubled in one year. And if we were to go beyond the Old Testament to the New Testament standard, if we were to take Mary's standard, or the standard of the widow, and do as they did, and just live for Christ and for His work, and set our affections on things above, and lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven instead of upon earth, if we were to do that, this church could increase its missionary givings ten times over. We could give more to missions in one year than all that we ever raised for our own work, if we were to take the New Testament standard of giving. Oh, how far short we have come of these great ideals of the New Testament!

"There shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her." It was as though Jesus had said, "I will let my believing people in all the world, in all generations, know what one woman did for me, in order that they may meet that standard. Oh, my brethren and sisters, there is not one of us that has reached this standard set by Mary in Bethany.

## II.

This was THE OFFERING OF A GRATEFUL LOVE. The circumstances under which this offering was presented are full of instruction. It occurred in the house of Simon the leper. He was not a leper now. He was probably one of the many lepers whom Jesus had healed; and he had come home to his own house. For long years he had been separated from all his loved ones; he had dwelt apart; "without the camp" his habitation had been. But now he has been touched by the healing touch of the divine Healer, has been made clean again, and has come back to his own house; and has been welcomed to his own family.

We have no explicit statement of scripture for it, but Jewish tradition makes Simon the leper the husband of Martha. According to tradition Martha had lived a life of widowhood for many years, because her husband was stricken with that terrible disease. But Simon had been healed and had come back to his home, and to Martha, his wife. "Martha served." I do not wonder she served. This is not the occasion, you know, when Martha grumbled. That was another occasion. But on this occasion they made a supper, and Martha served; and Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. What a picture! A leper made clean! A man who had been dead, made alive! And Mary was there, the sister of Martha, and a sister-in-law of Simon. What a picture of the church that is! A cleansed leper, dead souls quickened, everybody happy, everybody serving! The disciples were there: the Master in the midst. And Mary's heart simply overflowed. She could not help it; she owed everything to Jesus. You remember Tennyson said?—

"Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,  
Nor other thought her mind admits!  
But, he was dead, and there he sits,  
And He who raised him up is there."

Her eyes rested upon the face of Lazarus; and then she looked at Martha, and behold the cloud gone! She looked at Simon, and he was healed; and then she looked at Jesus, and said, "He did it all! What can I do for Him?" She took all that she had; she took her alabaster box of very precious ointment, and broke it and poured it upon His head, saying "Nothing is too good for Jesus."

Oh, my friends, how much we owe Him! How much we owe Him! How many of us have been like Simon, —cleansed lepers,—or like Lazarus,—dead in trespasses and sins, and made alive again. What blessing has come to the home by the advent of Jesus! How lives have been transformed! How the family circles have been changed because Jesus has come!

Once I was in a man's office one evening. He was at the head of a large business concern, and had been greatly prospered. We were going out of his office late in the evening. It was in the days of the open bar; and right across from his office there was a saloon. There was some sort of wire screen screening the bar so that you could not see it from the sidewalk, but from the elevation on which we were standing, we were able to look down into the saloon bar. There were men crowding that place, three or four rows deep, just drinking themselves drunk, like beasts. As we came to the door my friend's eyes caught the sight. He took me by the arm and stopped for a minute, and overcome with emotion, as the tears streamed down his face, he said, "Look, Pastor, take a look at that scene for a minute, will you?" I stood and looked upon it. Just a little bit of hell on earth, and the beginnings of hell for as many homes as were represented in that bar! Then my friend said, "Do you see that?" pointing to his great factory; "and do you see this?" pointing to the saloon. "There had I been but for the grace of God. I never should have built this. I was on the way to hell when Jesus found me, and I should have gone all the way if He had not stopped me." Where would you have been but for the grace of God? Where should I have been? Where should we, any of us, have been? And notwithstanding all, what meagre gifts we bring to Him Who is our Saviour and Lord!

There was a deep spiritual significance in this meal at Bethany for the one accustomed to sit at His feet, and hear His words. And somehow she understood as nobody else understood it. When the Lord talked about going up to Jerusalem and dying there, Peter did not understand what He meant, for he said, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee". Jesus said, "Get thee behind me, Satan". Peter was the voice of Satan to Him. But Mary never said that. When she brought her alabaster box, and broke it, and poured it upon His head, Jesus said, "Ah, Mary, thank you. You are the one and the only one who understands. I know why you did it. By and by they will take me down from the cross; and they will wrap my bruised body in the clean linen; and they will perfume my dead body with spices, and bury it in the grave. But you come with your ointment beforehand to anoint my body to the burial. You are the one person in all the world, Mary, that understands, and who, in advance of the cross, has had fellowship with my sufferings, being conformed unto my death." Mary looked

upon Jesus, and she understood. She said, in her heart, "He is going to die for me; He is my Authority for saying that." "Against the day of my burying hath she kept this."

There was not a man there who understood what Jesus said. On the other side of the grave, before the thorns were pressed upon His brow, or the nails had been driven through His hands and feet, or the spear had been sheathed in His side, Mary saw it by faith, and she said, "What shall I do? What shall I do? I will do all I can." And she took everything she had, and brought this alabaster box, and said, "Lord, it is all for you."

If you and I could live before the cross of Jesus,—if that prayer could be answered in our experience,

"Near the Cross! O Lamb of God,  
Bring its scenes before me;  
Help me walk from day to day,  
With its shadow o'er me",

if we could remember His death, not only as we go to the Lord's Table and take the bread and drink the wine, but if we could remember the Lord's death when we arise in the morning, when we go to our daily toil: just remember that He died for us, if we could remember the Lord's death always—always—when we withhold our testimony, when we would play the coward in the face of the enemy, when we are tempted to do wrong, or find ourselves reluctant to do right, and when we are going to present an offering to the Lord,—let us get ourselves out of the way, let us die with Him, so that we can see nothing but Jesus—then we shall bring our alabaster box of ointment, very precious. Ah, yes, we could come to Him thus:

"Under an Eastern sky,  
Amid a rabble cry,  
A Man went forth to die—For me!

"Thorn-crowned His blessed head,  
Blood-stained His weary tread,  
Cross-laden, on He sped—For me!

"Pierced were His hands and feet;  
Three hours o'er Him beat  
Fierce rays of noontide heat—For me!

"Thus wert Thou made all Mine:  
Lord, make me wholly Thine;  
Grant grace and strength divine—To me!

"In thought, and word, and deed  
Thy will to do. O lead  
My soul, e'en tho it bleed—To Thee!"

We shall be happy only as we abide in Him. Our hearts can be full of joy just in the measure in which we get near to Him. We shall be in heaven when we hear His "Well Done".

But, my friends, here is the strange part of the story: *Mary's act is criticized*. One would expect that in that home in Bethany everyone would admire Mary's gift; everyone would have accorded her her due meed of praise. But instead of that one said, "To what purpose was this waste?"

You must not assume that because you are led of the Spirit of God to do a good deed, you will meet with general approval. When Peter and John met the lame



man who sat at the gate of the temple called Beautiful, and made him whole so that he leaped and walked, and went with them into the temple, praising God, one might have supposed that the whole community would have said, "These men are benefactors of everyone. While the blessing is individual, it is a social blessing: it relieves us of the burden of this pauper at the Beautiful gate." But instead of that they were hailed before the council as though they were criminals, and forbidden to repeat the miracle!

When Mary in the seclusion of that home where the friends of Jesus alone were gathered, opened her heart, and poured its entire wealth upon the head of her beloved Lord, she found even among the disciples some people who began to growl. That is what the word literally means:—They murmured, they growled at her. Oh, what a lot of grumbling Christians there are! They do little themselves, and they are always finding fault with other people for what they do. If you give yourself—I care not in what form—if you give yourself without reservation to Jesus Christ; hold nothing back; live for other people; pour out your very life's blood in the cause of Christ; get yourself on the cross; trample all your personal interests under your feet, and live for eternity instead of time; put Jesus Christ first:—then you will have a good time! Will you? No! You will awaken a storm of criticism! Everything will be wrong. Somebody will find fault.

"To what purpose was this waste?" The plea was one of economy, if you please. "Why", said Judas, "did she spend so much money that could have been more usefully expended? If I had had the disbursement of it I can tell you there would have been no three hundred pence spent for a box of ointment. No sir. Why this waste?" Why is it, dear friends, that when we come to our religious life, our devotional life, when we touch that part of our life which has to do with our personal relation to Jesus Christ, we are so ready to economize? Many people in hard times begin always to economize on what they spend on the Lord's work. They are living in the same houses; they are paying the same rent; they are eating the same food; and they must wear the same clothes. But because they cannot afford to keep up what they formerly did, they must reduce their contribution to the Lord's work. If any economy is to be practised anywhere, begin on Jesus! That is the rule always. In prosperous times I can give a tenth, but in hard times I cannot! He who gives us all is the One to suffer!

Now that is the rule, but it is far below Mary's standard: "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase"—in hard times as well as good times;—put God first, and as God hath prospered us, let us minister to Him, and propagate His gospel to the ends of the earth, so far as we have power; and the Lord will see to it that His promise is fulfilled. It was when the widow had only a little meal in the barrel, and a little oil in the cruse the Lord sent a prophet, who was the representative of His cause at that time in the day of famine. And he said, "I have commanded a widow woman . . . to sustain thee." I wonder why He did not send the prophet to a millionaire? But He did not. The prophet said to her, "Put God first: go and make me a little cake." But she said, "I have only enough for myself and my boy. I am just now going to gather a few sticks, and I am going to bake that last

cake, and then we will die together." He said, "Make me a little cake first—first! God first! and God's word for it that even in a day of famine the barrel of meal shall not waste nor the cruse of oil fail till the Lord shall send rain upon the earth." Put God first; keep Him first; always first. That is the rule.

Is it not remarkable that *when Martha made a supper, Judas did not find fault with it?* He did not say, "Martha, this is an elaborate menu you have. You should not do this. There are so many poor people about. Why did you not make a simpler meal, and give the rest of it to the poor? Look what you have on your table! You are too extravagant, too elaborate altogether." Never a word of criticism did Martha's supper receive: It never does! Never! Spend as much as you like upon the supper, because Judas is going to have a share of it. He said, "I am going to share in it; the better it is, the better for me." Do you know why people talk about "social service" nowadays? Just because they do not want to give everything to the Lord. No criticism of the supper! I have read somewhere of people talking about the "supper room" being substituted for the "upper room". Well you will always find that the supper room will be popular with carnal Christians. But give all that you have to the propagation of the gospel,—give everything to Christ—and you will hear from Judas! How artfully he covered his true purpose, and everyone said, "What a financier Judas is!"

Do not blame Judas too much, because *when Judas said that so said they all.* If you criticize somebody for doing something for Christ, you will always get a hundred people into the choir to help you. But bring all that you have, and give it to Jesus, and you will sing a solo. Anybody can start criticism of anything on the ground of economy, on the ground of superior wisdom and discernment. When you do that you join in the chorus of which Judas is the conductor, always. And I will tell you why,—the Bible is very discerning—"This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein"—not because he cared for the poor! No! He thought of himself! That was all. That was the reason.

The Bible speaks of covetousness as idolatry. And that is what it is. Whether you are a preacher, or a layman, or whatever your occupation is, the man or woman that sets his or her heart upon the things of this world, and determines to put them first, will wither up, spiritually. I have watched it through the years, and I have never yet known a growing, fruitful Christian, whose testimony was blessed of God who had not learned to honour the Lord with his substance. We may not have much; we may—as most of us do—belong to the widow's company, and have only two mites. But that is all God needs. There is a place for large gifts, but the widow's mite was a large gift, for Jesus said, "All these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had." In the estimation of Jesus Christ her gift was more than the gift of all the rich men. It is "according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." All that Jesus Christ requires of us is that we should put Him first, and keep Him first all the time: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you". Put Jesus Christ first! "You do not mean that literally; you mean

just in prayer meeting, in Sunday School; you mean to give a measure of my time to Him?" I mean this: If you are a blood-bought Christian, wherever you are, Jesus Christ should be first, before every one, before every thing. We are living below our privileges if any one or any thing has been permitted to take His place. Oh, how simple it all becomes when He is first.

### III.

I must hasten to this:—for that is the best part of the story—PUT HIM FIRST, AND JESUS WILL LOOK AFTER YOUR CRITICS; you will not need to. He said, "Let her alone; keep your hands and your tongue off Mary. I understand her case. She hath brought her ointment beforehand to anoint My Body to the burial. She hath done what she could." I do not know that there is any other record in the New Testament, or in the gospels in which Jesus said of any person, "That man or that woman has done his or her best." But here Jesus said in effect, "I know that Mary could not have done any more. She would have done so if she could. She hath done what she could, and all that she could. Well done, Mary!"

O have you ever heard the Master say, "Well done" to you? I hear people say sometimes: "When this life is over, may we hear Thy word 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'" Somebody prayed that once in one of Dr. Gordon's prayer meetings. When the brother finished praying Dr. Gordon said, "Do not pray that prayer any more, brother. You do not need to ask that the Lord will say 'Well done!' All you need is grace to be faithful in a few things." And if you do that you cannot escape His "Well done"; it will come inevitably. And if you are not faithful in a few things, you may pray to the crack of doom and you will never hear it. Never! He requires such faithfulness of every one of us.

Our Lord loves to dwell among generous people. Oh, I wish I had time to say what I should like to say; but I will suggest it to you and you may think it over. Will you try to remember this? First of all He Himself is a generous Giver. He always gives largely in nature. I took a trip out of the city early Friday morning away up into the country a couple of hundred miles, just to get some trees to put around here on the lawns. And what profusion! What wealth! Somebody, who was an expert, looked at one of them and said, "You do not mean to say you found that growing wild!" I said, "There were acres of them, my dear friend." Go where God is the Gardener, and see how things grow. "Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness." Oh, think that over: how God, out of His abundance, lavishly pours His wealth upon the world. Look at this—poor, poverty-stricken souls that we are—we have these switches so that we can turn the lights off and economize. (Turning on the pulpit light.) But God just turns on His switch, and says, "Let it blaze forever. It will never wear out." And He never has had to repair that mighty orb up there since He hung it in the skies. But we have to renew these lights again and again. He gives His abundance of light so graciously. He lets it fall on the just and on the unjust, and His rain comes down;—I wonder what we should do if we had to have rain by water meter, if we had to pay taxes on the rain? But He just opens the windows of heaven, and pours it out.

That is the God you are dealing with. When you come to Him, do not be niggardly, do not be small when you are serving Him. Do not hold back, and give Him but a little. That is not the way He gives to you.

I wish I could turn back the pages of your history and say, "Come with me. Do you remember that day?" "Yes, Pastor, I remember that day." "It was a day to remember when you got to the end of yourself, and God stepped in. And what wonders He did for you!"

*In providence* He does exceedingly abundantly! What stories we could tell! God's providential care of His people, if it were written, would make a more thrilling tale than any work of fiction.

And then His grace! When we come to that word we cannot describe it. Listen: here it is, "God so loved the world" that He sent His angels to tell of His love! "God so loved the world" that He sent Michael, the archangel! No, No! "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son"—all that He had! If I may reverently say so, He emptied Heaven's exchequer—gave everything—for the redemption of your soul and mine. And if we are going to do anything for the Lord, we need to come back to Mary's standard.

*How shall we do it?* Sit at His feet and hear His word first; and hearing His word you will understand the cross; and understanding the cross, it will become subjective as well as objective, and you will be crucified with Christ; if crucified with Christ, you will go down into the grave with Him, and say, "Farewell, old world; good-bye! I am standing on resurrection ground, and I hear Him say, 'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above.'" And so, while I expect to get to that new Jerusalem of which we have been reading this morning, I shall get a taste of it, if thus I come, conscious of the aspirations of the denizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, to join the happy company in whose hearts and lives Jesus Christ is first.

The religion of Christ will make you happy as well as safe, if you get enough of it! You know what I mean. There are some people who have just enough religion to make them miserable; just enough for a long face, enough to make them grumblers and critics. Open your heart and let Jesus Christ come in and fill and flood you, and you will say about all these things:

"My heart refuses joys like these  
Since I have known the Lord."

Many years ago I stumbled upon some lines that have lingered with me ever since.

"I read a story of a monk, who painted  
In an old convent cell, in years gone by,  
Pictures of martyrs, and of virgins, sainted,  
And the sweet Christ-face with a crown of thorns:

"Poor daubs! not fit to be a chapel's treasure,  
Full many a taunting word upon them fell;  
Yet the good abbot let him, for his pleasure,  
Adorn with them his solitary cell.

"One night the poor monk mused,  
'Could I but render honour to Christ, as other painters  
do!

Were but my skill as great as is the tender  
Love that inspires me, when His cross I view:

"But no, in vain I toil and strive in sorrow;  
What man so scorns, still less must He admire!  
My life's work is all valueless; to-morrow  
I'll cast my ill-wrought pictures in the fire!"

"He raised his eyes within his cell—O wonder!  
There stood a Visitor—thorn-crowned was He!  
While a sweet voice the silence rent asunder,  
'I scorn no work that's done for love of Me.'

"There is a meaning in the strange old story:  
Let none dare judge his brother's worth or meed;  
The pure intent gives to the act its glory,  
The noblest purpose makes the greatest deed."

May the Lord so help us, for His name's sake.

Let us pray. O Lord, we pray Thee graciously to help us that we may follow Thee very closely: that indeed we may so abide in Thee that there shall be no distance between us at all. Help us to receive Thy truth; help us to receive it even if it is unwelcome; help us to receive it even though it pierces to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow. And if this simple story should have discerned the thoughts and intents of our hearts, help us to welcome it, and yield ourselves to the sanctifying power of Thy word. We ask it in Jesus' name, Amen.

## THREE GREAT WONDERS

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

(Continued from last week.)

But the Scripture quoted from Galatians, chapter four, says that as a result of the redemptive work of Christ "we receive the adoption of sons", which means the recognized position of sonship. John, however, never uses the term adoption. He speaks of the believer as the child of God, one who has received the very nature of God, being born of God by the agency of the Holy Spirit. Is not this a wonderful thing?

Then the wonder which impressed the apostle was not only that we should *become* the children of God, but that we should be *called* so. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be *called* the sons" (or children) "of God." It is not a name that we ourselves have assumed, for surely no human thought could ever presume to confer so dignified a name upon sinful men. It is the Father Himself Who calls us children. He says, "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters". He bends down with infinite tenderness, and bids us call Him Father. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that the Lord Jesus is not ashamed to call us brethren. The Holy Spirit also calls us children. He breathes the spirit of the child into our hearts, and enables us to say, "Abba, Father". Thus the Triune God: Father, Son, and Spirit, calls those who believe in Jesus, the children of God. Oh, it is wonderful! It would be well if we called ourselves "children" also. Billy Bray used to delight to call himself the King's son. And if God is pleased to call us sons, we should surely rise to some realization of our exalted position.

The Revised Version shows us that we are not merely called by the name "children", but that we are such in deep reality. After the words—"that we should be called the sons of God"—the Revised Version restores this beautiful little sentence—"and such we are". So we are not only called the sons of God, but we *are* His sons in deep reality. How wonderful this is! And have we not proved the wonderful fatherly love and care of God? In our spiritual infancy how He took us into His arms, and nursed us into strength. And when like prodigals we wandered away, what a welcome He gave us on our return! He received us with the Father's kiss of forgiveness, clothed us in the "best robe", put on us the ring which

assured us of our union with Him, and the shoes which told that we were not servants but sons, and loaded us with the best of His gifts. All along life's way have we not realized the Father's infinite love and tenderness? In days of anguish, and of loneliness, of darkness and of pain, how amazingly dear He has been, and how close He has come to us to help and succour us! Yonder in the midst of some of Nature's loveliest scenes there stands a magnificent mansion. Its owner is wealthy, and he lives in luxury. Within, the mansion is adorned with the finest productions of artistic taste and skill. How beautiful everything is! But in one of the quietest rooms there lies a suffering child. He is the son of the wealthy lord. Now what is it that mostly fills this rich man's heart, and absorbs most of his thought? Is it the splendour of his mansion? Is it the loveliness of its surroundings? No. It is that little sufferer. His fleeting smiles charm that father more than ought beside; his symptoms hush him into breathless solicitude; his little wants are matters of his greatest concern. It is that dear child in his weakness that holds the father's anxious thought. That is but a faint picture of our heavenly Father's care of His own. It is not the vast material creation, or its amazing sublimities which attract His attention most. His children are His chief concern. And if any of them are in suffering and in pain, the whole universe is passed by, so to speak, in order that He may bestow upon His dear ones His tenderest sympathies and care. Yes, we know that we must be the children of God because we have been the objects of such unbounded love, and sympathy, and grace. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God. And such we are." How unspeakably wonderful it all is!

There is a third great wonder in the scripture on which we have been meditating, it is the wonder of our life. The Apostle John says, "Therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew him not". The wonderful relation between the heavenly Father and His dear children is neither understood nor recognized by the world. The world sees little if any difference between the experiences of the children of God and the rest of men. If there is a financial catastrophe, they suffer as others do; if there is a railway accident,

they are killed or hurt as others are; if there is a disaster at sea, they go down beneath the wave like the rest in the ship; if there is some awful earthquake or hurricane, they and theirs suffer as others do. Where is the difference? The world does not see any. Have you stood sometimes by the side of the telegraph wires and listened to the mystic moan of the wind in the wires like the strains of an Aeolian harp? Is that all that you heard? But there is an inner language; for, flashing along those wires, swift as lightning, messages are passing, far-reaching and full of meaning—messages of joy, or of sorrow which no stranger could know. You have heard the sighing of the wind, but you have not known anything more. The believer's life is very much like that. The outside world perhaps hears his sighs and groans, the expressions of his grief in sorrow and pain, but it knows nothing of the inner communication between the soul and God: the desires, and yearnings, and the answers from the Father's heart; the sweet communings with the Unseen, and the messages of celestial peace—the world is a stranger to all this, for "the world knoweth us not". The believer's life is an uncommon life, the world does not understand it at all. There are in the world great students of nature who discover its wondrous secrets, almost touching the very Hand of God, and yet they do not recognize Him. In the Person of the Lord Jesus, God came to the world. He came to His own

world, but His own people received Him not. They did not perceive His glory; so they cried, "Crucify him, crucify him". And if the world did not know God as He came amongst its peoples in the Person of His Son, is it any wonder that they do not recognize the Lord's children? If they did not see the glory of the Sun, how can we expect them to see the faint twinkling of a distant star? Inasmuch as God Himself was not recognized, let us not be surprised if God's children should fail to be known. The day is coming, however, the great manifesting day, the day for which the Apostle Paul sighed when he said; "The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God". The wonder of the believer's life will then be manifest indeed.

These are the great wonders revealed to us in the scripture to which we have referred—First, the wonder of the Father's love. How beautiful it would be if we enjoyed the richness and tenderness of that love more! Second, the wonder of the fact that we are the children of God, and that the Father calls us children. May some rays of the Father's holiness and grace beam forth from us continually. Third, the wonder of our life—which the world cannot understand to-day, but which will be manifested in splendour when Jesus comes. May the wonder of that life grow till the world shall have to exclaim; "This is the finger of God!"

## A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR INVESTMENT

Shares from Ten Dollars to One Thousand. Some Shares as Low as Five Dollars or One Dollar.

("The Gospel Witness" Heartily Endorses Every Word of This Appeal.—Ed. "G.W.")

"For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."—1 Cor. 16: 9.

Ambassador Baptist Church, Windsor, of which Rev. William Fraser is pastor, has secured an option for sixty days on a church property admirably suited and conveniently located for the establishing and developing of a great Gospel Centre.

The property is located in the most densely populated section of the Border Cities, and stands on a corner lot 125 feet frontage and 115 feet deep. The auditorium will seat six hundred and fifty people, and the large Sunday School hall downstairs will accommodate four hundred. Adjoining the church, on the same lot, is a splendid brick parsonage in excellent condition, included in the option.

The lot alone, estimating it at sixty dollars a foot, is worth \$7,500.00 and the parsonage is valued at \$8,500.00. The church, which is a frame building, standing on a cement block foundation, with stucco finish inside, could not be duplicated, according to an expert valuator's appraisal, for less than \$14,000.00 at the present rates for building.

The total value of the Lot, Church and Parsonage may be conservatively estimated at \$30,000.00, and after much prayer and many conferences with the present owners, the Ambassador Baptist Church has secured an option of purchase within sixty days for the comparatively small figure of \$13,000.00 for the

entire property, or a little more than one-third of its value, the option to close on Saturday, August 23rd, 1930. Provision has been made for an extension of thirty days or until September 23rd if it is deemed necessary.

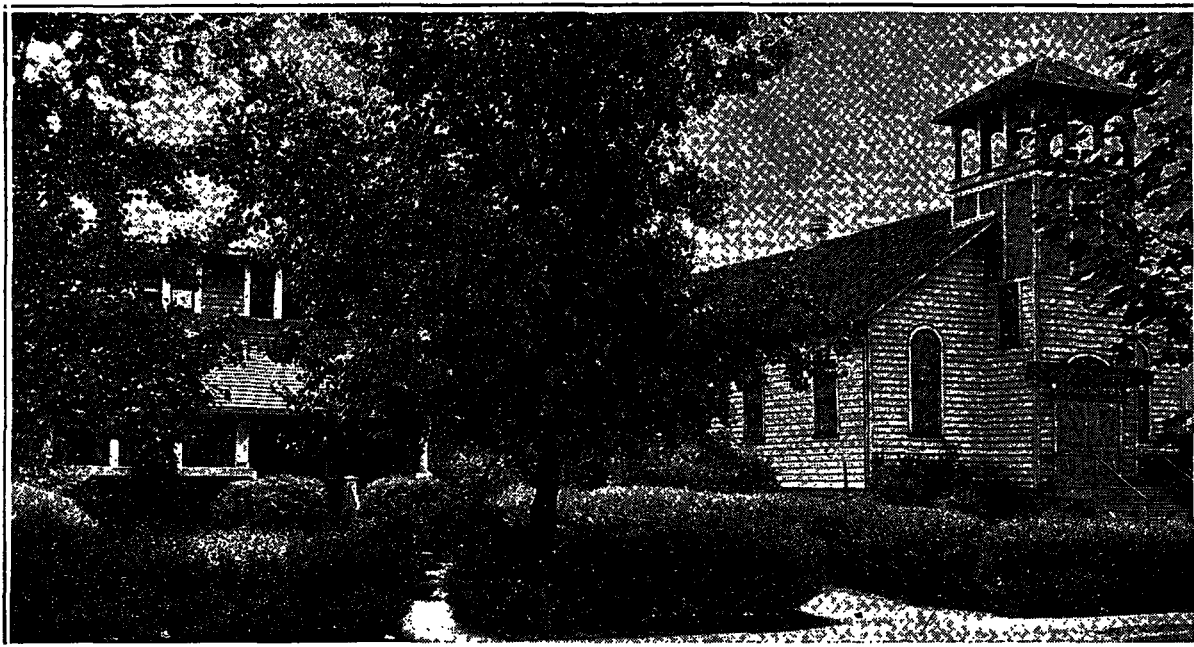
### A FEW FACTS ABOUT AMBASSADOR BAPTIST CHURCH.

Because of the paralyzing effects of Modernism and Worldliness in the life of the Border Cities Baptist Churches, a number of believers were compelled to withdraw from their churches about two years ago, and accordingly formed a separate fellowship where they could give a consistent and uncompromising witness to the Lord Jesus Christ and the power of His gospel.

Public services were commenced in the Oddfellows' Temple, Windsor, in October, 1928, and two months later a church was organized and named "The Regular Baptist Church of Windsor".

From that time forward regular services and Bible School have been held every Sunday in this hall and prayer meetings have been conducted in the homes of the people on Tuesdays and Fridays, as the hall is not available on week days.

In June, 1929, Rev. William Fraser, formerly associated with Dr. T. T. Shields for nine years in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, was extended a unanimous invitation to accept the pastorate, and believing it to be God's call, he accepted it and commenced his ministry in Windsor in September of that



Front view of property, showing church and parsonage, on Curry Avenue.

year. Shortly after this the name of the church was changed to the "Ambassador Baptist Church" as suggested by II Cor. 5:20.

#### A Great Door Opened and Many Adversaries.

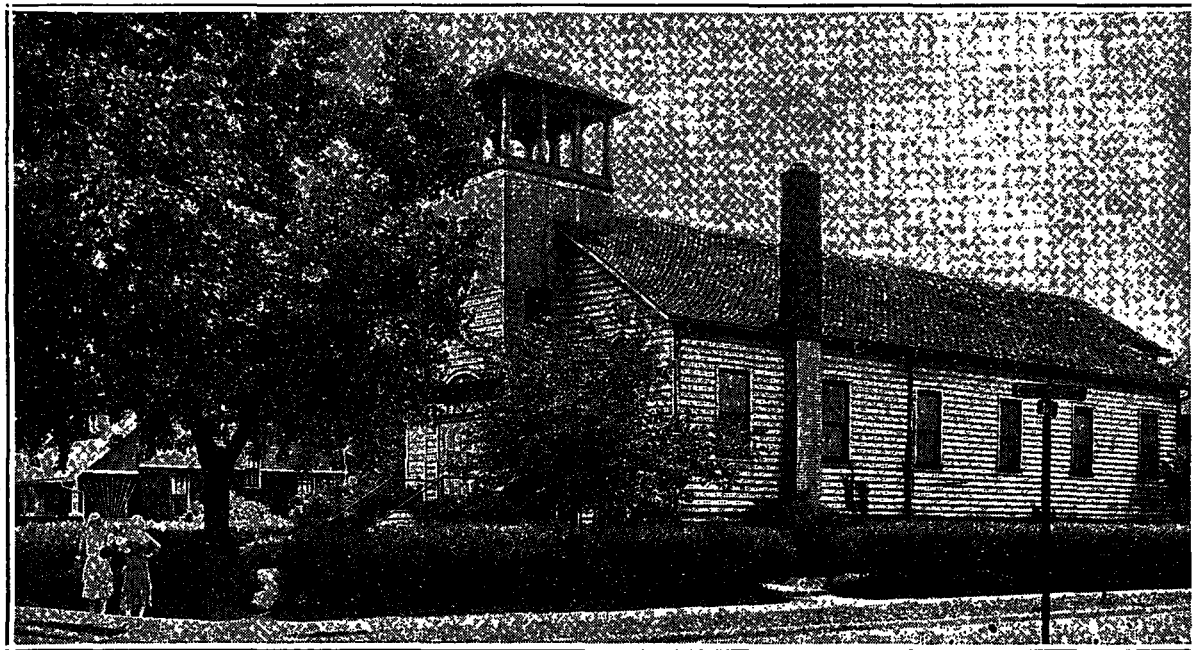
The Border Cities have long been considered one of the hardest and most difficult fields in which to labour for Christ, and many a faithful preacher has left with a broken heart after heroic but apparently unavailing efforts. This field, therefore, presents one of the greatest challenges in Canada in which to preach the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to demonstrate once again that it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

#### A Large Population.

The population of the Border Cities is approximately 120,000 and continues to increase every year. With the exception of the Calvary Regular Baptist Church in East Windsor, ministering to the various nationalities in that district, and a few small evangelical bodies, there is practically nothing being done to reach this vast multitude for Christ.

#### God's Seal Upon the Work.

The ministry of Rev. William Fraser has been signally blessed of God from the very beginning in the salvation of souls, the restoration of backsliders, the strengthening of believers and the awakening of large



Side view of church on Martin Avenue.

numbers to the perils within many of the professing Christian churches, and a clearer understanding of the issues involved in the present departure from and surrender of "the faith once for all delivered unto the saints".

About fifty new members have been added to the church in the last six months, and the prayer meetings are so crowded in the homes of the people that the church has been led to cry to God for a building where the work may be more conveniently and effectively carried on.

The Canadian and American newspapers have given wide publicity to the work being done and the witness being given, and the local press has devoted much space in its columns week after week to the reporting of messages being preached by the pastor, thus arousing a widespread interest in, and response to, the testimony of the Ambassador Baptist Church.

#### The Appeal of a Desperate Need.

Economic conditions in the Border Cities for the last year have been the worst in their entire history, and it is chiefly on this account the owners have consented to sell the property at this amazingly low figure. At this point we gladly acknowledge our indebtedness under God to the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec for their generous financial support during the last nine months, for without their assistance we should have been unable to continue as we have. The church is also happy to be identified with the aforesaid Union.

Being unable to raise large amounts from those of the present membership of the church we have been led to send forth this urgent appeal with a great prayer that hosts of God's people everywhere may be stirred and moved by hearing of this unique opportunity to have some part in securing this magnificent property for the permanent establishment of a New Testament Church and soul-winning agency which, by the blessing of God, may be used to His glory and to bring untold blessing to thousands of needy souls who are without God and without hope in the world, as well as providing a church home for many who have ceased to derive any spiritual blessing from the cold and lifeless churches they attend.

#### Where Will the Money Come From?

God, who owns the silver and the gold and the cattle on a thousand hills can bring it from strange and unexpected places, as evidenced on the occasion when the Lord commanded His disciple to go and catch a fish and in its mouth he would find a piece of money. Believing in the same miracle-working Saviour and identifying ourselves as His disciples we are casting out this net, trusting it will reach a great shoal of those with pieces of money for His use.

There may be found some faithful steward of God who could say "Amen" with a thousand-dollar cheque—God bless you, dear friend, you will never regret this investment so long as you live, and in eternity you will be still receiving dividends from it. Then there will probably be quite a few who will say "Yes, I can help a cause like this and I am enclosing a cheque for a hundred dollars". Thank you, beloved, you certainly know how to give. Verily you will have your reward and God will never see you want. May He richly bless you for this generous act.

But the vast majority of those who will be interested in an opportunity of this kind, while having hearts of gold, will not be able to give large amounts. Many, perhaps, will be able to give fifty dollars, and we shall certainly have a special thanksgiving service on the arrival of your contribution—then perhaps many more will manage to send twenty-five dollars and heaven will rejoice at the mailing of your cheque, and so will we. But the remainder will be well able to send ten dollars, and how the barometer of our enthusiasm will rise as these contributions come pouring in—And among those whose hearts are with us, but who cannot spare even ten dollars, nearly all of them will say "Somehow or other I must find five dollars before the sixty days are passed, with which to oil the hinges of a door which God has so wonderfully opened so that tired and weary sinsick souls will have no difficulty in entering into the courts of the Lord, and into the joy of His salvation.

There are also hundreds of Christian boys and girls who could easily save a dollar and send it to us before August 23rd and, like the boy with the few loaves and the few small fishes, God will multiply your gift and make it go a thousand times further for others than it could possibly go if spent otherwise.

Now in case you might have thought that because you could not send a large amount toward this great appeal it would be hardly worth while to send small amounts for such a comparatively large need, this appeal is being sent out with the suggestion that after you have decided the amount—whether large or small—you will cheerfully give—for God loveth a cheerful giver—you might visit, telephone or write those Christian friends of yours TO-DAY, and tell them what God is doing in the Border Cities. Perhaps you could get your praying friends to join us in prayer to God, that He will send us the \$13,000 before 23rd August.

**Do something—do it to-day—do it right away** while the matter is fresh in your mind, and while souls in the Border Cities are still within our reach for Christ.

As there are no seats in the church or Sunday School hall, we would be interested to hear of any which may be for sale—or, better still, of anyone who wished to donate them.

Hallelujah! three members of the church have opened the fund with pledges amounting to seven hundred dollars; Praise ye the Lord! Let the Border Cities know, let the modernist preachers know, and let the churches of the Border Cities know; Yes, let Canada and the world know there is a God, and that He is the God of the Bible, and that He is our God, and that He still hears and answers the cry of all those that put their trust in Him.

Kindly send your contribution by cheque or money order (please do not use currency in the mails) to the Secretary-Treasurer of this special fund, payable to D. E. Temple (in trust)—every dollar of which will be strictly reserved for the purchase of our new church home.

Secretary-Treasurer's Address:

Mr. D. E. Temple,  
926 Pelissier Street, Windsor, Canada.

Option taken June 23, 1930—Option closes Aug. 23, 1930.

# The Union Baptist Witness

This page is the official organ of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches in Ontario and Quebec.  
337 Jarvis Street, Toronto, Canada.

W. GORDON BROWN, Editor.

## NOW FISHER'S GLEN.

At last the week has come, and this Saturday, July 26th, is the date on which opens the F.B.Y.P.A. Summer Camp, to close on August 4th. This Camp combines recreation with Christian fellowship. Lasting friendships will be formed; health of bodies, stimulated; and consecration of spirit, deepened, for those who gather on the seventeen-acre site near Port Dover. Besides registration for the full ten days, we hereby announce that "week-end accommodation is being arranged on a flat rate basis of five dollars per person (including board)".

## OPENING ST. PAUL'S.

St. Paul's Bi-lingual Baptist Church, where Rev. Arthur St. James is the veteran pastor, is holding dedicatory services in their new building. On the Sunday Pastor St. James will preach in the morning; at 7 o'clock Pastor Jules Dautheny will administer baptism and preach the Gospel. Thus has "ex-communication and rejection" led, "by the grace of God, to a new and commodious building", says the pastor. "But we need help just now. Thankful we are for small favours, larger ones in proportion!"

## WINDSOR'S OPEN DOOR.

With very little real Gospel preaching for a total population of about 120,000 in the Border Cities, "a great door and effectual is opened" to the Ambassador Baptist Church to let men know that the God of the Bible is our God. Through a fearless ministry, "about fifty new members have been added to the church in the last six months, and the prayer meetings are so crowded in the homes of the people that the church has been led to cry to God for a building where the work may be more conveniently and effectively carried on." Accordingly, an option has been secured on a suitable church property, "located in the most densely populated section of the Border Cities, on a large corner lot, with an auditorium for six hundred and fifty people, not to mention a Sunday School room to hold four hundred, and the fine parsonage adjoining, at a total cost of thirteen thousand dollars, which is less than half the value of the property. "This amazingly low figure" is due to the present economic depression in Windsor. "Hallelujah! three members of the church have opened the fund with pledges amounting to seven hundred dollars." Write for pamphlet with pictures of the property and full details, and send your generous contributions at once to Mr. D. E. Temple, 926 Pelissier St., Windsor, Ontario. Surely this is a worthy object, for in three weeks, seventeen have professed conversion even in the open-air.

## WALSH.

Speaking of fellowship, we were much impressed by the description one of the

faithful members of the little Regular Baptist Church at Walsh, where Rev. O. Boomer is pastor, gave us of the times of spiritual up-lift which they as a church enjoy in prayer meeting and preaching service. Some of our churches may not be large in numbers, and yet enjoy glorious fellowship with the Lord and with one another. This church has rejoiced to have members of other Regular Baptist Churches in their services. Any who are holidaying nearby will be accordingly welcomed at the Faith Church, Walsh.

## BROWNSVILLE.

Other news we heard at London had it that sixteen had been baptized by Pastor G. F. Watts in Brownsville, that eleven of them had been received into the Brownsville Church, and that three more would join Springfield.

## WORTLEY ROAD, LONDON.

Pastor T. J. Mitchell is spending his vacation in Scotland. On Sunday, July 6th, before he left for the Old Land, he gave the right-hand of fellowship to seven new members. The following Sunday, Student Robert Brackstone, of our Seminary, took the preaching services. In the evening a young girl came forward seeking Christ.

## WAVERLEY ROAD, TORONTO.

There have been more baptisms so far this year than throughout all of last year in Waverley Road Baptist Church, Toronto, where Rev. David Alexander faces many hindrances through unemployment, sickness, and the heavy debt on the church property. Well-attended prayer meetings, even in summertime, are a source of power. Sunday School has increased over last year, and there are now four hundred and eighty on the roll, although the attendance at the Sunday School picnic reached six hundred and fifty.

## BARRIE.

Collier Street, Barrie, has organized a Young People's Society. Recently the young people have been helping Pastor A. C. Whitcombe with the services at West Oro, where he is supplying during the holidays of Pastor A. T. Finlayson.

## GUELPH.

Last Sunday Rev. Fred Kendal, with Mr. Thomas McClure, began an evangelistic campaign in the Union Regular Baptist Church of Guelph.

## SEMINARY STUDENTS.

Mr. Gladstone Franklin has been accepted by the Latin American Evangelistic Society for work in San Jose, Costa Rica, Central America, where he expects to go in the Fall.

Mr. Roland Smith is working with Rev. J. H. Greening in conducting Daily Va-

cation Bible Schools near Galway, New York.

Student E. V. Apps is at his home in Vancouver. He has been seeking to preach the Gospel in a tent in the section of the city known as New Westminster, but encountering great difficulties.

## FORT WILLIAM.

When Dr. T. T. Shields recently visited the Fundamentalists of Fort William, he spoke at the Tabernacle Baptist Church in the afternoon to about one hundred people, and in the Elks' Hall in the evening to at least four hundred and fifty. "We had a great time." The afternoon subject was "Joseph," and the evening's, "The New Testament Church."

## ORANGEVILLE.

Last Sunday evening the Orangeville Baptists held their service in the town Park, using the band stand as platform for the choir, preacher and piano. Thereby attendance was doubled. Many were present who never go to church or hear the Gospel. Last Friday evening the pastor spoke at a gathering in the Second Markham Baptist Church, when a number expressed their readiness to put Christ first in all things in their lives. On Saturday night workers from Orangeville helped Pastor C. Wright in the open-air meeting in Fergus. The special campaign there has closed, although Sunday service is still held in the tent. In all, through the six weeks of meetings, some ten were definitely converted to God.

## MEDINA INDIAN CHURCH.

Another ordination recently held was that of Pastor Melchie Henry, of Medina Indian Church. Here the monthly meeting of the Pastors' and People's Conference of the district was being held. The morning session, as usual, was devoted to prayer, the address of real interest being given by Student-pastor Dynes, of St. Thomas, where he is serving the Hiawatha Street Church. In the afternoon, with Rev. G. F. Watts as Moderator and Rev. O. Boomer as clerk, a roll-call showed thirty-eight delegates from sixteen churches. The candidate told of hearing the Gospel preached by Rev. Percy Near, now of the Belgian Congo, there in the Medina Church; of three times putting God to the test that he might know His will in regard to the Christian ministry; of studying in the Toronto Bible College; and of his clear views of the Word of God. After the unanimous decision for ordination, at the evening service, Rev. H. W. Bower offered the ordination prayer; Rev. T. L. White gave the charge to the candidate; Rev. W. F. Mesley, to the church; Rev. W. T. Farr, the right-hand of fellowship; and Rev. A. J. Love-day preached the ordination sermon. Throughout the day the delegates enjoyed the hospitality of their Indian brethren.

## Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

Vol. V. No. 3

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, Editor.

Lesson 32. August 10th, 1930  
Third Quarter.

### PREPARATIONS FOR JUDGMENT.

Lesson Text: Genesis, chapter 6.

Golden Text: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Genesis, chapter 6:5.

I. THE UNEQUAL UNION. (vs. 1-4).  
The Union (vs. 1, 2).

Various opinions have been expressed concerning the interpretation of the subject of these verses, the differences relating in the main to the identification of those who are termed the "sons of God." Some identify them with fallen angels, and quote in substantiation thereof, the manner in which the term is used elsewhere in reference to angelic being (Job 1:6, 2:1), and the statement concerning the angels who left their own habitation (Jude 6), etc. Others claim they are the descendants of princes; while a third class applies the term to the Sethites who called themselves by the name of the Lord. (ch. 4:26) In relation to this third interpretation, which is the most reasonable, note our Lord's statement that angels do not marry (Matt. 22:30), and here they are stated to do so; also that the term "sons of God" has an application to men (Ps. 82:6; Hos. 1:10). It may further be noted that, while mention is made of judgment falling upon men, nothing is said about the same coming upon those angels if they were such. The meaning of the passage would seem to be that the descendants of Seth, the godly seed, intermarried with the descendants of Cain, the worldly seed, and thus formed an unequal union, for such mixed marriages are forbidden by God. (Deut. 7:3, 4; 2 Cor. 6:14) They are fruitful of misery and much evil and lead only too often to loss of testimony for God. "Be ye not unequally yoked together", should be remembered by all Christian people and accepted as a guide in all the relationships of life.

The respite (v. 3).

A great increase in numbers and wickedness had taken place among men, only one family remained true to God, and the time for judgment had nearly arrived. A respite is granted the world, however, before the coming of the deluge. This is made clear in the twofold statement before us. First, we are informed the Lord said His Spirit should not always strive with man, for that he also was flesh. This intimates that God had not left those antediluvians alone. He had endeavoured to win them from their wicked ways, His Spirit no doubt working through His word and through His preachers, as Enoch, Noah, etc. In spite of these efforts on the part of God, men continued in their sin, and apparently became hopelessly bad; but before judgment fell they were granted one hundred and twenty years of respite in which no

doubt God made further appeals unto them through His servant Noah. Note the mercy and severity of God.

The giants (v. 4).

"There were giants in the earth in those days". Those giants were distinct from the product of the union described in the first two verses, who are referred to as "men of renown". In relation to them "the term in Hebrew implies not so much the idea of great stature as of reckless ferocity, impious and daring characters, who spread devastation and carnage far and wide". We need not wonder, therefore, that God determined to destroy them. Note the awful possibilities and consequences of leaving God out of the life and serving sin.

II. THE DECISION TO DESTROY THE WORLD (vs. 5-8).

The reason.

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually". The reason for God's decision is found in the great wickedness of the people. In the light of our Lord's statement concerning the likeness of a future day to the time of Noah (Luke 17:26), it is of interest to note some of the characteristics of that time. These may be stated as follows, namely: great wickedness, corruption, evil imagination, lawlessness, violence, irreligion, total depravity, etc. Compare the present with the past in relation to the signs of the times.

The decision.

There is first the statement concerning the Lord's attitude, "It repented" Him, "That he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart". This is a statement indicative of an alteration in God's visible procedure, not of a change in Himself, for He cannot change. It is the use of the human figure to enable us to understand His attitude. By this we know He was greatly affected by the sin of His creatures. Sin brings sorrow to Him, and it is of such a heinous nature that He must judge it; so the decision is stated here. "The Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them". This meant complete destruction for every living thing on the earth and emphasizes the awful wickedness of the people of that time. There was but one exception to this judgment sentence — "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord". Out of the thousands only one man pleases God. Throughout the ages the people of God have ever been in the minority, and we need not expect anything else in the future, for this world is, as it ever has been, opposed to God. It lieth in the wicked one. (1 John 5:19, R.V.).

III. THE GENERATIONS OF NOAH, (vs. 9-13).

After the statement concerning Noah's favour with God, we are informed of his character and generations. Of him it is said, he "was a just man and perfect", or upright, "in his generations", and he "walked with God". This denotes his righteous character and manifests his complete contrast to the people around him. It implies the possibility of living righteously amid unrighteousness, of the

almighty power of God to keep in the midst of sin, of the reality of the victorious life in God, and of the further blessed possibility of enjoying the presence and fellowship of God in a world wholly given over to sin. We are informed in other scriptures that he was a man of faith, and a preacher of righteousness. "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith". (Heb. 11:7) There was nothing in nature to warn Noah of the deluge which was coming; everything was going on as in the ancient time; but God had informed him of His decision and he chose to believe God and to be guided by faith rather than by sight. In this he is an example to us. "without faith it is impossible to please him" (God). (Heb. 11:6.) Receiving this declaration from God denoted the bestowment of the divine favour upon Noah. God honours those who honour Him, and those who despise Him are lightly esteemed (1 Sam. 2:30). God has informed us of another judgment coming, and again there are no signs in nature of its immediate approach; but we believe God's word and act in faith concerning the future.

Noah was a preacher of righteousness. It is said, God "spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly". (2 Peter 2:5.) As a preacher there is no doubt he proclaimed faithfully the message, but his converts were few. Outside the members of his family, no one apparently accepted his message. His duty, however, was to deliver his message, irrespective of results. Even so must the preacher of the present day be faithful, leaving all consequences with God. The attitude of the people of that day was one of unbelief, if not of incredulity (concerning the truth of God), and Noah's faith and patience would be greatly tried. Perhaps indeed they made the preacher suffer by their mockery and evil sayings concerning him.

IV. DIRECTIONS CONCERNING THE ARK (vs. 14-22).

Description of the Ark (vs. 14-16).

For the salvation of Noah and his family, directions are given concerning the making of an ark. The material of which it was to be made is first stated. It was to be of gopher or cypress wood, remarkable for its durability and growing in abundance in the mountain regions of Armenia. It was to be made into rooms or cells, and pitched within and without with pitch, thus making it watertight. Its dimensions are mentioned, but not its shape. Not being meant to sail but only to float, it would not be made in the exact shape of our ocean liners, but it at least was as large as some and larger than others. The relation of its length to its breadth and height has been found to be scientifically correct, as indeed it must have been with God as the architect. Direction was also given concerning the admittance of light, not simply one little window, but in some way unknown to us, extending all around the ark. The nature of the door is clearly stated.