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

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MARTHA AND MARY

The story of Martha and Mary is one of the most familiar in the Bible, and yet it is one whose teaching we fear is quite generally missed. It has special value because it depicts an ordinary scene in common life. Comparatively few persons are called to public and prominent positions, and even those who are, live the greater part of their lives in private. And it is in the ordinary, everyday things of life the deepest things are learned, faculties are developed, and character is formed. The most useful of all sciences is that which consists in knowing how to number our days so as to apply our hearts unto wisdom; and the finest of all arts is the art of winning divine approval. It is instructive to observe how Christ enters into our everyday life to enable us to understand this science and to practise this holy art. This simple narration of His reception at Bethany may be said to teach that the art of holy living, of living deeply, and widely, and richly, and symmetrically, and beautifully, consists in giving precedence to the essential, in appreciating the simple, and in choosing the enduring.

I.

To live well and wisely, we must give the first place in our lives to essential things. Martha was a good woman, and was an ardent lover of her Lord. She received Him into her house with a warm and generous hospitality; and whoever thus receives Christ is a Christian. But she had not the discernment to distinguish between that which was incidental and circumstantial, and that which was indispensable and essential. Hence, she lived eccentrically, out of time and out of tune with the centre and heart of things. Her life was out of order because she put things of secondary importance in the first place. Her hospitality consisted in ministering to the physical. To her the household affairs were the most important things in life. Mary, on the other hand, recognized that the body is more than meat and the life than raiment; that man doth not live by bread alone, but by every

word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God. She discerned that mind was more than matter, and spirit than body. She divined that the essence of true hospitality lay in a ministry to the mind and spirit of her Guest, as well as to His body. She had learned that the atmosphere of a home has more to do with its happiness, than all its material trappings; and that the home's atmosphere depends upon the mutual and reciprocal understanding of the ministry of those who dwell together there. Mary, therefore, would suspend the kitchen operations until she had had opportunity to open her mind to the Lord, until spirit with spirit could meet. Therefore was it, that she "sat at Jesus' feet and heard his word".

We are all learners, or at least we ought to be, whether we go to college or not. And none should go to college or to the school of experience as one goes to a store—to bring something home in a basket. The mere acquisition of knowledge is not education, and the knowledge acquired in a college or university course is necessarily very small. We should meet our day, whether we are students in college, in the store, on the street, or in the home, very much as one would go to a gymnasium or to an athletic field, to learn how to develop and discipline our natural powers. Those who are thus trained, the Bible describes as those "who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil". Education consists in the exercise of the senses, enabling a man to discern between things that differ.

And this developed faculty of discernment should be exercised to save us from making Martha's mistake. The matters which so completely absorbed her attention will endeavour to monopolise our attention too. Of course, they must not be ignored. The affairs of the kitchen, the wardrobe, and of the household generally, are important. The externals of life have their place. The age-long questions; "What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed?" are as insistent as ever. And there is a

strong temptation to regard these things as the prime essentials of life. But the person with an awakened mind will refuse to allow them wholly to engage his thought. He will see that, while they are important factors in making up the sum of life, the things of the mind and of the spirit are of greater moment, and we must seek to put the essential things first and the other things in their secondary and proper place.

Martha is a striking example of the loss they suffer who neglect the cultivation of the mind and spirit. We are aware that Martha has many apologists, but with all her good qualities she lived in a very narrow sphere. She was never still or quiet. She was seldom kind to her own soul; and did not see far outside the boundaries of her house. Of the height, and depth, and length, and breadth, of the reach of a developed mind, Martha knew very little.

Observe, too, what she missed of her sister's companionship. Mary had learned that the soul was enriched by thinking. She had tasted of the joys of deep and quiet meditation. She was generously hospitable to ideas. She was a great listener, because she had cultivated the art of listening. She had a mind that was rich and responsive. But Martha did not know it. There were great stores of wealth within her reach upon which Martha never called. The Marthas always needlessly remain poor because they fail to exchange ideas with the Marys. Martha can talk about "things," about dresses, and parties, and dishes, and dinners, and houses, and lands; she may be able to tell you what "They" say or do; she may be a housewife, or a business woman, or a society belle; but she cannot exchange an idea with anyone about aught but things. Mary, on the other hand, has travelled far. On wings of imagination she has explored every realm of human experience. She may not have gone a hundred miles away from home as to her body, but her mind is stored with gems of thought she herself has quarried from the mine. An hour's conversation with Mary is a mental tonic for any one.

We may be instructed also by studying these two women in relation to Christ. An archangel would have envied the opportunity of the sisters of Bethany. What a privilege to receive instruction from the lips of the Lord Jesus! But Martha understood him so imperfectly she thought only of getting His dinner! Mary alone learned the mystery of the Cross, and alone, of all the disciples, understood that Christ must die. Thus she came to an appreciation of the significance of life, and subordinated the incidental to the essential. And in our religious life this lesson must be learned. Neither Martha nor the Martha-spirit must be allowed to break up the hour of meditation and communion. The soul must be fed as well as the body. The faculties of the soul must be exercised as well as our physical powers. The soul's communion with God must be maintained if life is to be lived in an orderly way.

II.

We have here a further lesson to the effect that we must learn to appreciate the simple. Martha's conception of life is a common one. She cumbered herself with unnecessary things. Her entertainment of her Guest must be on an elaborate scale. No doubt she

thought to do Him honour. Her motive was pure; but she did not understand that her Guest was great enough to be very simple in His tastes. How common is this mistake! Martha wears herself out, trying to keep up with the fashion of the day. In her dress and in her household arrangements, in her social engagements, in her pleasures, in her conversation, and even in her religion, she prefers that which is showy and elaborate and cumbersome. But Jesus said, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things. You think to do Me honour, but you do not understand My tastes. Life for Me does not consist in the abundance of possessions; its peace does not depend upon its material comforts. The birds of the air have better houses than I. But I have learned to do without unnecessary things. I am simple in My habits and tastes. I have overcome the world by doing without it. I do not want you to spend your time and strength on non-essentials. The simplest meal will suffice. But one thing is needful, to put the requirements of the soul before those of the body, and the reception of My grace before all else. I should be better pleased if you would sit with Mary at My feet; and, later, a few moments will suffice to prepare My simple meal."

True greatness is always simple. It chooses the one thing needful, and puts aside the many non-essentials of life. This principle is illustrated in the lives of all great men and women. They are always simple in their tastes and habits, as well as in their conversation.

It would be wise, therefore, to cultivate simplicity of life as a matter of personal economy. We do not mean economy of money merely, but economy of all the resources of life. The one thing needful is easily carried. It is the many things which burden and weary the soul. Do not take a trunk when a handbag will hold all your things. It is well to be simple in dress and in speech and in all our personal habits. It will leave us more time to cultivate our souls, to sit at the Master's feet. The great scholars, the great thinkers, the great authors, the men and women of great achievements in every walk of life, as well as the great saints, almost without exception, have lived simply; and they have achieved greatness because they have been simple; and they have been simple because they have been great. It is what the Apostle Paul means when he speaks of Christian women, saying: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

We shall do well to cultivate simplicity for the sake of our own peace of mind. Martha complained of her sister, and in so doing rebuked her Lord, and disturbed the peace of the home; and all about something which did not really matter. Half the friction of life is due to the same cause. How little we really need! Many a home is made almost a purgatory by its want of simplicity. One must transfer half a dozen pillows to the floor before he can find room to sit down. He must put up the blind, and push back two or three curtains before he can have light enough to read by. And

half the time the housewife is occupied in keeping the dust off these superfluous things! And poor Martha goes to bed suffering from an attack of nerves, and the rest of the household are almost equally troubled! And all about nothing!

We need to cultivate simplicity as an aid to independence. Mary is in the best sense self-sufficient. She can do without Martha, but Martha cannot do without Mary. People of simple tastes can more easily develop their own individuality. The person who thinks independently will be independent in conduct and character too.

The simple life is the richer life. It permits intercourse with the great. Perhaps most of us fear to ask certain people to our homes. We imagine they live on such an elaborate scale that they would be uncomfortable with our simple fare and manner of life. And yet, if we knew them we should probably find that they live even more simply than we do, and we might be enriched by their society if we would. Simplicity of life tends to sincerity and genuineness, because it leaves no room for the artificial.

Above all, we should be simple in our faith. We should take it for granted that Jesus delights to have us at His feet. Martha never guessed that such simplicity would please Him. Otherwise, we make a labour of religion, and the reception of Jesus only adds to the weariness of life. But simple trust always brings peace and rest, in the sense of His approval.

III.

The simple and the essential things of life are the things of enduring value. We have all had our rosy dreams of the future. What should we do if we could not dream! May life hold in store for our readers as few disappointments as may consist with their highest welfare! But the "many things" of Martha's care "perish with the using". Only the "one thing needful" abides, and whoever chooses that shall find "it shall not be taken away from her". The life that finds its strength and inspiration in Christ, that takes time to listen to heavenly voices, to breathe deeply the heavenly atmosphere, is the life which in the end is the most influential. It does not spare the alabaster box, but lavishes its wealth of affection on Christ, and in Him, upon all worthy things, and merits the highest and most honourable of all degrees—the approval of the Lord, and touches all generations by its sweetness.

THE CONDUCT OF THE PRAYER MEETING.

From almost the beginning of our ministry we have heard ministers and others complain of the prayer meeting as a "problem". We have never been able to share this complaint: on the contrary, in our view, the prayer meeting has been of all the services of the church the most delightful. We have in years past from time to time received advertisements announcing the publication of books containing short "prayer meeting talks". We must confess we have never felt the slightest interest in such announcements. But this somewhat common complaint respecting the difficulties supposed to be inherent in the prayer meeting, sug-

gests that an article on the subject might prove to be useful.

It should be recognized, first of all, that a prayer meeting is held not to provide an opportunity for singing hortatory hymns, nor yet to afford opportunity for an extended discourse on prayer or on any other subject. It is not held that people may come together and talk about prayer; nor, primarily, is the end of such a meeting to supply an opportunity for what is called "testimony". A prayer meeting, properly understood, is a meeting of believers who come together simply to pray.

It may be assumed, therefore, that those assembled believe prayer to be a privilege of the Christian life, that a personal God does really hear His children when they cry; and that some special advantage is to be gained by people praying together.

We are not here speaking of the philosophy of prayer. We assume our readers understand that there is but one way to approach God, and that is through Christ; that there is but one ground of acceptance with God, and that is the atoning work of our Lord Jesus Christ effected by His expiatory death on the cross. It is understood also that as our great High Priest He is seated on the right hand of God, and ever liveth to make intercession for us; and that therefore all true prayer must be offered in the name of Jesus. We may assume further that our readers understand that nothing can ascend to heaven which does not first come down from heaven, and that all true prayer is the breath of the Spirit of God in the human soul; that prayer, to be prayer at all, must be prayer in the Holy Ghost; and that our only ground of assurance that our prayers are heard, and that in due time answers will come, is in the divinely-inspired promises of the Word of God. All this is taken for granted: Our subject is *the conduct* of the prayer meeting.

I.

The ministry of the Holy Ghost never puts a premium upon ignorance; nor may we reasonably expect special blessing if we set at naught every principle of common sense. When our Lord answered the devil's temptation to cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple by saying, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God", He meant to say: Thou shalt not challenge God to interpose miraculously to save one from the consequences of violating the laws of one's physical nature. By the same principle, if we defy the laws of our physical nature by meeting in a room that is too hot or too cold, or badly ventilated, we have no right to expect God to work a miracle to neutralize the blunder we have made, or to overrule our violation of the laws of nature. It is true that God may overrule and do wonders in spite of our folly—He often does; but we have no right to expect it.

Similarly, if in our conduct of the meeting we do violence to the laws of mind, setting aside every sound psychological principle, and throwing all common sense to the wind, we have no right to expect that the Holy Ghost will especially bless our stupidity. Hence, while believing in the promises of God, in the atoning work of Christ, in the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and in His presence and power in the midst of the church, we should seriously address ourselves to a study of

sound spiritual psychology; for as surely as a man may be unwise in preaching, in the content of his sermon, and the manner of its delivery, he may also be unwise in his praying.

II.

The leader of the prayer meeting should recognize that the meeting is made up of people of diverse temperaments who are placed in situations greatly different from each other, and whose experiences in the hours immediately preceding the prayer meeting are likely to have been as varied, or perhaps even more varied, than their names. Comparatively few are afforded opportunity for quiet meditation. Some must needs travel long distances, and on the journey be subject to the distractions of the way. Some come in great depression of spirit, others are buoyant and jubilant in their minds. Some have left trouble in the office, or have brought it with them to the meeting. Others may have had difficulty at home with the children, or with some unconverted member of the family. It would therefore be folly to expect that these human units so diverse from each other, should be fused into a perfect unity of spirit in a few moments. Hence a prayer meeting may seem to "drag" or "lag" in the beginning,—not because the people are unprayerful. Had they not desired to pray they would not have come. The reason is their minds have not had leisure for repose, much less for concentration.

Let the leader give them time; let him be patient; and before long he will see the results of the goings of God upon their spirits. How people are to be prepared for a concert of prayer we do not at the moment say: we are only insisting that such preparation is indispensable. Failure to recognize this simple psychological fact ruins many a prayer meeting. "While I was musing", the Psalmist said, "the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue". But there are leaders of prayer meetings who regard all pauses as being "awkward", and who give the people no time for musing; and therefore the fires do not burn, nor do they speak with their tongues.

III.

Let us here state the case negatively respecting the leader's responsibility for a wise conduct of the prayer meeting.

Scolding will ruin any prayer meeting. People cannot be whipped into a devotional frame. If people are not moved to pray by the Spirit of God, they had better not pray at all. We have known leaders to attribute a somewhat protracted silence to the presence of the devil in the meeting. Such statements are absolutely inexcusable, and are bound to do harm.

We have known people whose silence would be an almost infallible indication that they are under divine control. We know there are dumb devils, but it is folly to blame the devil for a quiet prayer meeting, or to resort to scolding or impatient exhortation in an endeavour to make the fire burn more brightly. Moreover, the leader should not fail to recognize that many of the most devoted people find public prayer impossible, and many who really walk with God express themselves publicly with difficulty. Many of the most useful members in a prayer meeting pray silently; and

if the people are scolded for their silence, or impatiently urged to "take part", their sensitive spirits are grieved: and we believe the Holy Spirit is grieved also.

IV.

Another primary consideration has to do with the element of praise. All true prayer has in it an element of praise, expressed or implied. Therefore the hymns sung at a prayer meeting have much to do with the making of the meeting; and at this point let it be said that the leader should never sacrifice the interests of a meeting as a whole, to the whims of one person. Therefore if an unsuitable hymn is announced, he ought tactfully to select a substitute. When a fire is burning brightly it will convert almost anything that is thrown upon it to its own temperature, but when it is but a feeble flame even a heavy stick of wood may put it out. Thus hymns which may be quite appropriate toward the end, or even in the middle of a prayer meeting, may be quite out of place in the beginning.

In the beginning, hymns should be selected which will lead the singer directly to address the Father, Son, or Holy Ghost. They should be hymns of praise, of devotion, expressive of faith and love; otherwise, hymns which ascribe glory to God, or which celebrate the achievements of divine grace. Hymns which are virtually calls to various forms of activity, or which mutually exhort the singers to more faithful service, however excellent in the latter part of the meeting, are quite out of place in the beginning. For instance, "Stand up, stand up for Jesus", is a good hymn; but it is a poor hymn with which to begin a prayer meeting. "Work for the night is coming", is a useful exhortation, but that also would be out of place in the beginning. Yet we have heard people try to light the fire at the prayer meeting by announcing the hymn, "Let us scatter seeds of kindness", or "Let the lower lights be burning", or perhaps, "Standing on the promises". We have no objection to offer to these hymns, as such, but they are not the sort of fuel to start a fire with.

On the other hand, who can sing, "Jesus, Lover of my soul"; "Rock of Ages". "Oh, Thou that hearest prayer", or "Oh, worship the King", without, by the very singing of the hymn, being brought into a devotional frame of mind?

A little later in the meeting it is well that the people be given opportunity to pour out their souls in hymns expressive of the glory of the Divine Character. For instance, "Oh, could I speak the matchless worth!", "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds", "When I survey the wondrous Cross", or "O Christ, what burdens bowed Thy head". Hymns descriptive of salvation, objectively and subjectively considered, are most useful in developing a spirit of devotion. For example: "There is a Fountain filled with blood". "Grace, 'tis a charming sound". Then, too, hymns which rehearse the deeper experiences of the soul, such as Murray McCheyne's great hymn, "Jehovah Tsidkenu".—"I once was a stranger to grace and to God", "I heard the voice of Jesus say". Hymns which breathe the soul's desire for a closer walk with God and a deeper trust, are of great value, such as, "Begone unbelief", "Come, my soul, thy suit prepare", "Oh, for a closer walk with

God", "Jesus, keep me near the Cross", "Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole"—all these hymns are of such a character that whoever sings them with the understanding will most certainly be moved to a higher plane of devotion.

V.

The conduct of the meeting should be the opposite of mechanical. It may be reverent and orderly without being stiff and formal. It may be spontaneous and worshipful at the same time.

If an instrument is used to accompany the singing, it is a great advantage to have someone possessed of the sense of what we understand is called "absolute pitch". In the church of which this writer is the Pastor we are blessed with several who seem to have every tune that ever was written in their minds, and when a hymn is "started" by someone in the meeting, the piano will be sure to join in the correct key before the end of the first bar is reached. It would greatly aid the devotional meetings in our churches if our church members would store their minds with the great hymns of the church. Hymn books are more or less of a handicap. We all sing better when we sing from memory, and it is delightful in a prayer meeting to be able to sing with closed eyes. This exercise greatly helps the spirit of a meeting when someone is able to begin a suitable hymn, as for example, "I need Thee every hour", "My God, I have found the thrice blessed ground", "Alas, and did my Saviour bleed", "Father, I stretch my hands to Thee", "Lord, I hear of showers of blessing", "Pass me not, O gentle Saviour", "Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole", and many other hymns of the same class may be useful for this purpose.

VI.

And now as to the prayers: room must be left for the worshippers to obey the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. If the leader prays at the beginning of the meeting, it would be well for him to make his petition very brief, especially pleading for the presence of the Holy Spirit, and for liberty in prayer. If the leader's prayer is a Cook's Tour, the people will feel like going home when he says, Amen, instead of embarking on another journey. Long prayers in a prayer meeting are almost invariably injurious to its spirit. Occasionally some specially gifted brother, led of the Spirit of God, may offer an extended petition in which the whole company will join; but prayers which are made up of vain repetitions should not only be discouraged, but should not be permitted. A leader may better spoil one prayer meeting by openly rebuking such an offender than permit the long-winded brother to spoil many.

In our prayer meetings we invariably have a large number of requests before us, many of which are sent in from far distant places. These are read one at a time, and silent prayer is offered, and then those who lead audibly bring these requests to the Throne as the Spirit brings them to their minds.

The church of which this writer is Pastor is blessed with a deacon to whose care the prayer meetings may safely be entrusted, and who has led them now, in the beginning at least, for nine years. The Pastor is often

engaged with enquirers, but comes into the meeting as soon as possible, and the deacon carries on until such time as the Pastor may feel led to take part in the leadership; and the transition from one leader to the other takes place as easily as the coupling on of a new engine at the divisional point on the railway when the passengers do not know they have a new driver.

What place has the reading of Scripture in a prayer meeting? Those who talk to God should hear a word from God. A scripture selected as an aid to devotion, as a foundation for faith, may be read by the leader; occasionally a few observations may be offered. Sometimes it is well that the people should supply the scripture, each quoting a verse. In all this there should be great variety. But an extended address is likely to put a damper upon any real prayer meeting.

We close this little study, then, with this suggestion which we have used in this connection somewhere before. We have read that when anthracite coal was first discovered, the discoverers had to learn how to use it. They tried to burn it as they had burned soft coal. When its ignition seemed to be slow, they sought to aid combustion by poking—with the result that they seemed to poke the fire out. One day when they had tried many devices, in sheer desperation they let it alone—only to discover that they soon had a fire burning at white heat. Many prayer meetings are ruined by much "poking", by scolding, and exhortations, and prodding of one sort and another, which leave no room for the wind of the Spirit of God to fan the fire to a flame. "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength."

In the church of which the writer is Pastor, there have been three church prayer meetings held weekly for now nearly ten years. Many other meetings for prayer are held by the Sunday School departments and classes by the Missionary Societies. But the regular church prayer meetings last from eight to ten o'clock. We do not suggest that prayer meetings are likely to be good merely because they are long. But an assembly of cold lumps of coal cannot be made into a hot fire in a few minutes. Pentecost was the result of continuing in prayer. Both mind and spirit require time to be holy.

"THE WHOLE TRUTH."

The following anecdote was given me by a gentleman who witnessed the scene, in South Carolina;—The Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians, in a small community, agreed to build a meeting-house in common—preaching by turns. When it came to the turn of the Presbyterian minister, he said he felt it his duty to preach on Baptism, and did so, remarking that he should give them the truth, and the whole truth, on the subject. In the course of his discourse he quoted Hebrews 10:22, "Having your hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience"; and there he stopped. A little German member of the Baptist Church was sitting in one corner of the house. He could only speak broken English; but, Bible in hand, he turned to each passage referred to. Observing the minister stop at "conscience", he continued out loud, "and your bodies vashed vith pure vater". This much confused the min-

ister, who to recover himself repeated his last sentence, "Having your hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience"; "and your bodies vashed with pure vater", was again the response of the pertinacious German. The minister was so annoyed that he wound up his discourse. The congregation all began to read for themselves, and several became Baptists. As for the little German, he defended himself by saying, "Vy, de minister say he vas going to give us de truth, and de whole truth, and this vas de whole truth."—Dr. Curtis.

JOHN PLOUGHMAN'S TALK.

Stick To It And Succeed.

Rome was not built in a day, nor, much else, unless it be dog-kennel. Things which cost no pains are slender gains. Where there has been little sweat, there will be little sweet. Jonah's gourd came up in a night, but then it perished in a night. Light come, light go. That which flies in at one window will be likely to fly out at another. It's a very lean hare that hounds catch without running for it, and a sheep that is no trouble to shear has very little wool. For this reason a man who cannot push on against wind and weather stands a poor chance in this world.

Perseverance is the main thing in life. To hold on, and hold out to the end, is the chief matter. If the race could be won by a spurt, there are thousands who would wear the blue ribbon; but they are short-winded, and pull up after the first gallop. They begin flying, and end in crawling backward. When it comes to collar work, many horses turn to jibbing. If the apples do not fall at the first shake of the tree, your hasty folks are too lazy to fetch a ladder, and in too much of a hurry to wait till the fruit is ripe, and falls of itself. The hasty man is as hot as fire at the outset, and as cold as ice at the end. He is like the Irishman's saucepan, which had many good points about it, but it had no bottom. He who cannot bear the burden and heat of the day is not worth his salt, much less his potatoes.

Before you begin a thing, make sure it is the right thing to do, and call in Mr. Conscience. Do not try to do what is impossible—ask Common Sense. It is no use blowing against a hurricane, or fishing for whales in a washing tub. Better give up a foolish plan than go on and burn your fingers with it: better bend your neck than knock your forehead. But when you have once made up your mind to a good thing, don't let every molehill turn you out of the path. Nothing is so hard but what a harder thing will cut it: set a strong resolution against a strong task. One stroke fells not an oak. Chop away axe, you'll down with the tree at last. The iron does not soften the moment you put it into the fire. Blow, smith, put on the coals, and hit hard with the hammer, and you will make a ploughshare yet. Steady work does it. Hold on, and you have it. He who sticks to his saddle will be in at the death. Brag is a fine fellow at crying "Tally-ho!" But Perseverance brings home the brush.

We ought not to be put out of heart by difficulties: they are sent on purpose to try the stuff we are made of; and depend upon it they do us a world of good. There's a sound reason why there are bones in our meat, and stones in the land. A world where every-

thing was easy would be a nursery for babies, but not at all a fit place for men. Celery is not sweet till it has had a frost, and men don't come to their perfection till disappointment has dropped a half hundred weight or two on their toes. Who would know good horses if there were no heavy loads? If the clay was not stiff, my old Dapper and Dobbins would be thought no more of than Tomkin's donkey. Besides, to work hard for success makes us fit to bear it: we enjoy the bacon all the more because we get an appetite while we are earning it. When prosperity pounces on a man like an eagle, it often upsets him. If we overtake the cart, it is a fine thing to get up and ride, but when it comes behind us at a tearing rate, it is very apt to knock us down and run over us; and when we are lifted into it we find our leg is broken, or our arm out of joint, and we cannot enjoy the ride. Work is always healthier for us than idleness; it is always better to wear out shoes than sheets. I sometimes think, when I put on my considering cap, that success in life is something like getting married: there's a very great deal of pleasure in the courting, and it is not a bad thing when it is a moderate time on the road. Therefore, young man, learn how to wait, and work on. Watch the market, and the price will be right yet. Don't throw away your rod, the fish will bite sometime or other. The cat watches long at the mouse-hole, but catches the mouse at last. The spider mends her broken web, and the flies are taken before long. Stick to your calling, plod on, and be content; for make sure, if you can undergo you shall overcome.

If bad be your prospects, don't sit still and cry,
But jump up, and say to yourself, "I will try."

Miracles will never cease! My neighbour, Simon Grasper, was taken generous about three months ago. The story is well worth telling. He saw a poor blind man, led by a little girl, and playing on a fiddle. His heart was touched, for a wonder. He said to me, "Ploughman, lend me a penny. There's a good fellow." I fumbled in my pocket, and found two half-pence, and handed them to him. More fool I, for he will never pay me again. He gave the blind fiddler one of those half-pence, and kept the other, and I have not seen either Grasper or my penny since, nor shall I get the money back till the gate-post outside my garden grows Ribstone pippins. There's generosity for you! The title of this bit of talk brought him into my mind, for he sticks to it most certainly: he lives as badly as a church mouse, and works as hard as if he was paid by the piece, and had twenty children to keep; but I would no more hold him up for an example than I would show a toad as a specimen of a pretty bird. Better things are in this world than anything a goldscraper lives for. While I talk to you, young people, about getting on, I don't want you to think that hoarding up money is real success; nor do I wish you to rise an inch above an honest ploughman's lot, if it cannot be done without being mean or wicked. The workhouse, prison as it is, is a world better than a mansion built by roguery or meanness. If you cannot get on honestly, then be satisfied not to get on. The blessing of God is riches enough for a wise man, and all the world is not enough for a fool. Old Grasper's notion of how to prosper has, I dare say, a

good deal of truth in it, and the more's the pity. The Lord deliver us from such a prospering, I say. That old sinner has often hummed these lines into my ears when we have got into an argument, and very pretty lines they are not, certainly:—

"To win the prize in the world's great race
A man should have a brazen face;
An iron arm to give a stroke,
And a heart as sturdy as an oak;
Eyes like a cat, good in the dark,
And teeth as piercing as a shark,
Ears to hear the gentlest sound,
Like moles that burrow in the ground;
A mouth as close as patent locks,
And stomach stronger than an ox;
His tongue should be a razor-blade,
His conscience india-rubber made;
His blood as cold as polar ice,
His hand as grasping as a vice.
His shoulders should be adequate
To bear a couple thousand weight;
His legs, like pillars, firm and strong,
To move the great machine along;
With supple knees to cringe and crawl,
And cloven feet placed under all."

It amounts to this: be a devil in order to be happy. Sell yourself outright to the old dragon, and he will give you the world and the glory thereof. But remember the question of the Old Book, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" There is another road to success besides this crooked, dirty, cut-throat lane. It is the King's highway, of which the same Book says: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." John Ploughman presents his humble respects to all wise men, and begs to say that having tried the high road here mentioned, he can strongly recommend it to all who wish to prosper.

PRAYER.

By Dr. Joseph Parker.

"Our Father in heaven, we thank thee that all things are moving on to the song which thou didst mean at the first. Thou dost work but for music. Thou dost not leave things in roughness, incompleteness, and discord. Give us the spirit of patience, that we may wait for thee calmly and hopefully. We would be strengthened by a strong assurance that Thou art on the throne, that not a wind flutters in all the forest of the stars but by Thy decree, or Thy permission. We would be strong men dwelling in a strong tower. Lord, increase our faith. In the tower of faith we shall be safe; yea, we shall enjoy from its windows all the storm and wrath of the sea. We know that Thou art on the throne; Thou art a great King above all gods. Ambition has tried to share Thy throne, and has failed: love has been bowed down before Thee in uttermost and sweetest humility, and because of this Thou hast called love to share Thy throne. We would have the long sight of faith: we would have the infinite patience of love. We would not drive with

the fury of ignorance, and the fearlessness of mere audacity; we would be quiet with the calm of God. We would know that the days are not longer than one another, that all things are measured and timed, and that at the right pulsestroke Thou wilt come, or go, or shine forth, or becloud the heavens with night. Thou doest all things according to Thine own counsels, and Thine own power and might in Christ Jesus the Lord. Keep us from meddling with God. Give us the faith that waits; that does everything by doing nothing; that has learned the mystery of the Cross, and the virtue of standing still. We have come to thank Thee in common song for common blessings. The air belongs to every man; every child bathes in the infinite sea of the sunshine. All the earth is Thine; Thou dost let it out unto husbandmen to grow fruits and flowers for Thine own using, thou King of kings. Help us by the power of the Holy Ghost to make all life one sacred discipline, one delightful revel in goodness and in hope; one holy sacrament of obligation and responsibility. Look upon us as a whole; a company completing one another, helping one another towards the expression of manhood in Christ Jesus. Be graciously pleased also to look upon us individually. Every flower has its own root, or its own portion of the common root. The heart knoweth its own bitterness. Each spirit is rich with a sorrow of its own, with wounds it cannot communicate. Thou hast given each a burden to bear, a life to lead; oh, that we may individually so lead the personal life as to make it finally part of the common and infinite harmony. Some are bowed down and dare not say so, lest they should lose what little repute they have amongst men. Some are living a double life giving the devil one hand, and professedly lifting the other to Thy holy heaven. And each is struggling with the flesh, with wolfish, tyrannous, insatiable desire for blood, and gratification and delight forbidden. This body is waiting for its burning into a better house. Others are full of joy, because every day shows them some larger, brighter vision of heaven; the horizon is farther off; the night is richer with stars; and the sun is but the visor of Thy face. Come to us, we humbly pray Thee, at the Cross; to each soul as it most needs, and give each a draught from the well of living water. Omit none from Thy blessing. If any man has broken his vow, may it not be resumed to-day? If any man has neglected his oaths, may he not recall the holy words as empty vessels, and fill them with the wine of his repentance and love? If any man be a stranger in the house of God, having been wandering in stony places, and listening to noise in which there is no music, if he has returned to the house, may he not also return to the home, to the inner place, and to the table of sacrifice and redemption? Lord, lift us by the power of the gospel heavenward; give us nobleness and elevation of soul; may all that is sordid and temporal pass away out of recognition, lie down in the lowest dust that it may not stand between us and the light. Come with comfort; smile death into life; speak comfortably to those who are dwelling in the valley; inspire every soul with a deadly hatred of sin, and inspire every spirit with a holy ambition after righteousness. We breathe our trembling, but believing, prayer at the Cross. If that cannot save us then salvation is impossible. Amen.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

CAN THE SOUL ONCE SAVED EVER BE LOST?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, August 3rd, 1930.

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(Stenographically Reported)

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."—Hebrews 5:9.

Prayer before the Sermon.

We draw nigh to Thee this evening, O Lord, that we may worship Thee. We remember that Thou art a Spirit, and that no man hath seen God at any time. Yet we rejoice that the Only Begotten of the Father, Who is in the bosom of the Father, hath declared Him; and we have seen Thee in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord. We come to worship Thee through Him this evening. We give Thee thanks for the old, old story of Jesus and His love; for the fact that He lived our life for us, died our death for us, and is risen again and ascended to the Father's right hand where this evening He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

We desire, O Lord, that in this service everyone within these walls may be made aware of Thy presence. If there are any who have come without thought of meeting with Thee, we pray that Thou wilt introduce Thyself to such. And may those who have really gathered in Thy name, with an earnest desire to hear some word from God, be conscious this evening that the Good Shepherd has drawn near and hath called His own sheep by name. Discover the lost ones, we pray Thee, and bring them home. Find out the weary-hearted, and give them rest. Lay hold of those, we pray Thee, who are all but over the precipice, and bring them back to safety, and give to them Thine eternal gift. Strengthen those who are beset with great temptation, and help them to stand in the evil day. Bless those who are discouraged, whose souls are cast down and disquieted within them; make them full of joy with Thy countenance, we beseech Thee. Be mindful of those who are in great bodily weakness. Some share this service with us while lying on beds of pain. Soften their pillows, we pray Thee. Be Thyself at once their Physician and their Nurse. Minister graciously to them, that they may know that God is with them. Have regard to those who are in a journey, whether by land or sea, by rail or car; give Thine angels charge concerning them, to keep them in all their ways.

This evening we would pray too that Thou wouldst speak especially to those whom we do not see, the hearts of many of whom ascend to Thee in earnest petition for Thy blessing. Meet with them where they are, far removed from us, some of them, but may this be an hour of real communion with God to all such. Bless any who listen from curiosity only. Thou Good Shepherd, speak in such a way that they may know it is the voice of God, and not the voice of man.

We pray Thee to use this service this evening that it may bring comfort to Thine own people, that it may establish many in the faith of Christ, and that it may bring many from the far country to the fulness of the Father's house. So glorify Thyself, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." I am this evening to discuss with you a question of profound interest to a great many people, namely, Can the soul, when once it has been saved, ever be lost? Is eternal salvation promised in the Bible? Is it possible for us this evening to be assured that we are saved for ever? Or must there, of necessity, be some doubt, some question? That is the question I desire to answer this evening from the Word of God. The text I have announced tells us that our Lord

Jesus Christ was Himself made perfect, that He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all that obey Him.

I lay down the proposition that the salvation which is in Christ is eternal, that the life He gives is everlasting life, that those who are once saved by His salvation can never, by any possibility, be lost. The salvation which is in Christ is eternal, and I shall endeavour to argue that with you a little this evening in the light of the teaching of God's Word.

I.

I say, salvation is eternal, and MUST BE SO IF GOD IS THE AUTHOR OF IT. If salvation is of men, or of man, if there be in it at all a human element, if there be a human link in the chain which binds us to the throne of God, then, by that, we are made insecure; and on that ground we could not be sure of salvation. Nothing human abides. I know there are buildings of great age that are of human construction, but they are all in process of decay, and most of them are preserved and maintained only by constant repair. The school I attended as a boy was held in a building which was eight or nine hundred years old, and it had been used constantly as a school for more than three hundred years. It was an old building, but there was a staff of workmen always employed repairing it; so that I suppose, while the building, as such, could be dated back through many centuries, it had been renewed in every part so often that possibly much of it was of a later date.

Anything that comes from man must decay. We have no power whatever to impart immortality, continuity, perpetuity, to anything we do. But it is not so with God. "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him."

If salvation be of man, I say, we cannot be sure what the end may be. Even though it were found in an institution, it would still have in it elements that were not permanent. It is true that corporations, institutions, continue independently of the individual units which compose them; and that an institution may outlive its founder and go on for years, even for centuries. But if, as some people believe, salvation is in the church, then we are not on very solid ground, are we? For even churches change; even those institutions which boast of their immutability are not always precisely the same.

And certainly if we had to save ourselves, we could not be sure. No matter how well we might have lived up to this hour, who shall say what distresses to-morrow will bring to us? what temptations may overwhelm us? what mistakes we may make? what defeats we may suffer? If we had to depend upon our own efforts—I do not see

that we could have peace, or really be satisfied with the assurance of eternal salvation.

But *salvation is of God*: it is not of man. "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord"—not a part of it, but all of it. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. He is both the Foundation and the Topstone. He is all and in all. He became our divine Lord, the Author of our salvation, so that it is a matter that is out of our hands entirely. Someone else has provided it for us.

Just think a little of what is involved in that tremendous fact. If salvation be of God, of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, do you not see that *His own nature and character—I mean that which is deepest in God, which is of the very essence of Deity, as well as that which is revealed, disclosed to us in His glorious, symmetrical, character, that what God is, makes it impossible for one to believe that He could ever half do anything, that He could begin anything without finishing it.* Not such a God is ours. Think of *His wisdom*. Why is it that we begin things which we are unable to finish? We have not the wisdom that would teach us of what materials to build our house. We do not know how to construct that which will abide. Therefore we must experiment. Hence we try one thing, and when it fails, we try something else. But our God is infinite in wisdom, and if He undertakes to save the soul, surely He knoweth well how to do it.

If it be God's salvation, He must have known what was necessary to justify the sinner. He must have known what His law, which is a transcript of His own nature, required; and it is unthinkable that He should have provided a salvation that was not adequate to meet all the requirements of the constitution of His government, of His universe, and of Himself, Who is the Centre of all. If salvation be of God, and I am asked to trust Him, I may be sure that His wisdom would make it impossible that anything necessary to my ultimate perfection should have been omitted from His plan.

Somebody says, "It may be well enough for you to say that, sir, but human nature has to be considered, and there are depths of depravity in many of which I was myself unaware until experience showed how black my heart really was. Has God taken account of all that?" Do you not see that *His omniscience*, His all-knowledge, and *His prescience*, His foreknowledge, His ability to see to the end of a thing, make it impossible that He should have escaped observing you? "He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." And when He became the Author of salvation it was a salvation that was designed to meet the exigencies arising in the life of just such a frail and sinful creature as you are.

I think I once told you a story, but I will repeat it, of some member of a noble family in the Old Land who gave his heart to a Southern woman, a member of a great family in the Southland. She reciprocated his affection, and they were betrothed; the day of the wedding had been set. One day when he came to see her she had gathered together all his presents, she had taken the engagement-ring from her finger, and as he sat down in the library she pushed them across the table to him and said, "You must take them all back, for the marriage can never take place". He begged her to tell him what had come between them. She said, "Nothing"; she assured him there was no change in her affection, and he said there was none in his. He was at a loss to know why their engagement should be cancelled. At last, after much persuasion,

with great reluctance she told him that an old nurse in the family—who had received the information from generations of nurses in the house, had acquainted her with the fact that many generations back there had entered into the family line a drop of coloured blood; and she said, "I never could consent to union with such a noble house as yours." Her lover simply lifted the ring from the table and replaced it on her hand and said, "Is that all?" "Why," said she, "is not that enough?" "Perhaps, but I knew all that before I asked you to be mine."

Sometimes we discover things in ourselves of which we imagine Omniscience has not taken cognizance, and sometimes we feel that it cannot possibly be that He should have chosen us to be His for ever. But He tells us that His wisdom and His omniscience have anticipated every possible objection. He "knew all that" before He gave us His invitation, before He wooed and won our hearts. The Object of our faith is the Author of our salvation; because of who He is, and what He is, it is impossible that any who have once been numbered among His chosen should be permitted to be lost.

What if I were to speak of His mercy? You might say, "But, sir, my sin is so great that it seems impossible for me to believe that it should be forgiven, especially when, after I have made profession of His name, I have fallen again into transgression. How is it possible that He should forgive me?" Because, my friend, His mercy, like every other quality of His being, is infinite,—

"There's a wideness in God's mercy
Like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in His justice
That is more than charity."

There is no limit to the mercy of God, and unbelief can find no encouragement, nor faith any obstacle at that point.

What if I speak of His power? How limitless that is! "I am such a big sinner, and yet I am so weak in respect to righteousness; strong-willed and stubborn in the direction of evil, but so easily turned aside from that which is right; such a combination of opposites I am, sir, that I do not see how it is possible that such an one as I may be brought to the place here and now where I can say that I know I am saved for ever." That would be perfectly true, my friend, if there were an infinitesimal element of human merit in salvation; but seeing it is His mercy, His faithfulness, His power, in a word, His grace, that you are asked to trust, since He is the Author of salvation, and "having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end", doubt is left without excuse. So that whatsoever aspect of the Divine Character you may have under review, to whatsoever quality of Deity you may direct your thought, because Jesus is God, from everlasting to everlasting, God, because salvation is of His doing in its beginning and continuance, and I had almost said, its ending, but there is no end—because it is of God, you may know that you have it, and rejoice in the everlasting possession of it.

II.

Then a further consideration: think of THE NATURE OF SALVATION ITSELF. What is it He gives us? He became the Author of salvation—is that what my text says? No; it says "he became the author of *eternal* salvation". Eternal salvation! Salvation that in its very nature and constitution is like God Himself—because it is God Him-

self! There is no salvation apart from God; therefore it is eternal. If you are saved at all, you are saved for ever.

What is salvation? It is described as *a life*. What sort of life? "Everlasting life"; "eternal life". "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life." If salvation were a system of ethics, if it were a philosophy of life; if it consisted in the laborious effort of endeavouring to realize some objective ideal; if salvation consisted in our bringing ourselves under the discipline of the mind, and thus seeking to do that which is represented as being right by a standard objective to ourselves—if that were what salvation is, then I grant you we might well be a little doubtful of its eternal continuance. But that is not what salvation is: it is a life, it is something which God imparts, it is something which God gives us, which, until He touches us, we have not in our possession.

"You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." And the life which He gives, is the life which is one with His own life, for He is represented as the Head, and believers are the members of His body; so that precisely the same quality of life is in the humblest member that you will find in the Head. My little finger is just as old and as young as my head; it is part of me. The body is one though it has many members. And "we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one." As the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are one and inseparable, so believers are one in Christ, and are inseparable from Him.

I delight to recall that when the soldiers came to the three crosses when permission had been granted by the Roman governor to hasten the death of the three supposed malefactors that their bodies might not remain on the cross over the Sabbath, they came to the thieves and found them breathing, and to hasten dissolution they brake their legs; but when they came to Him Who hung upon the central cross they discovered that "He was dead already"; and they brake not His legs—do you know why? Because of old God had said, "A bone of him shall not be broken." They pierced His hands, they pierced His side, they drove their nails through His feet, they put a crown of thorns about His brow; but He carried a perfect body into the glory, not a dismembered body. *No member was absent!* When the soul believes on Jesus, he or she becomes a member of the body of Christ, and it is just as possible for the Head in the glory to perish as for any member upon earth to be lost. It is His life that is in us,—and that is eternal. Saith He: "Because I live ye shall live also."

Remember what He said: "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." He said, "No man taketh it from me." And even when He stood before Pilate, and Pilate asked Him if He did not know that he had power to crucify Him, He said, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above; therefore he that delivereth me unto thee hath the greater sin." All the power of Rome could not have crucified Him, all the power of the ecclesiastical world could not have brought Him to the cross, for He was "a Priest for

ever after the order of Melchizedec," made "after the power of an indissoluble life;" and that life which is indissoluble, that eternal life which is His, is mine, because He has given me eternal life.

Then, my dear friends, this salvation is described as "*a new creation*"; "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature (or a new creation): old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." You remember how death entered after that God had said all things were good, and that the crown of His creation, the man made in His image and likeness, was "very good"? "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death be sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Everything was death-stricken because of sin, but God, on the ground of the infinite Sacrifice of the cross which cancels our obligation to the law, which pays the utmost farthing of our indebtedness, makes us new creatures in Christ, gives us new natures, new hearts, new consciences, new memories, new wills—everything new, "the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness". That "new man" is a part of God, and can never die.

This salvation *establishes a new relationship*. "Now therefore," we read in the second of Ephesians, "ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." The believer is brought from strangerhood to sonship, from poverty to wealth, from the far country to the Father's house, from destitution to heirship, sharing with Christ His unsearchable riches. The Lord will not cast away His children, He will not shut the door in the face of any in whom He has implanted that principle of eternal life. They may wander, but they will come back again: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

In His high priestly prayer in the seventeenth of John, when He was giving an account, may I reverently say, of His stewardship, and, so to speak, was about to resign His earthly commission, ere He departed hence when the care of His sheep was to be taken up by the Comforter Whom He would send, He said, "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled."

There is another beautiful figure that I wish I had time to carry through with you. Believers are the bride, and Jesus Christ is the Bridegroom. I read in the end of the Book about a great day when it shall be said, "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." I have never seen it, but I have read of marriage occasions when one of the parties failed to appear. It must be very distressing. But when all the universe is assembled to witness the marriage of the Lamb, to witness the union of those who have been bought with blood, with Him Who is the Prince of glory, I am positive there will be no dis-

appointment on that occasion. I am certain that Heaven will make such provision for it that the bride will be there. The wedding will be furnished with guests; the house will be filled; and every provision of grace will be utilized; and our sovereign Saviour, this glorious Lover of our souls, will not be thwarted in His eternal purpose, but He will present us to His Father with exceeding joy, when we shall be without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but shall be holy and without blame before Him in love. There is a great day coming, my friends, there is a glorious event in the future. It is that one far-off, divine, event to which the whole creation moves ("Hallelujah!").

• • III

But that I may leave unbelief no standing place at all, and make the place where faith must stand still more clear, let me say to you that it is evident salvation is eternal when you consider **THE TERMS UPON WHICH IT IS RECEIVED**. What price do you pay for it? Just this,—

"Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling."

You are bankrupt, and you cannot pay five cents on the dollar, nor one cent on the dollar—nor even a fraction of one per cent. There is a world of theology in the story of the prodigal—in fact, all theology is in it. He who had had so much when he went away, before he turned his steps homeward had "spent all", and had nothing left. Salvation then, in its beginning, is of grace. I have been speaking of salvation, in part, in its objective aspect, as something prepared for us; and I have tried to tell you what it is when we receive it, that it is a life, a new creation, a new fellowship, a new relationship, but upon what terms are we to receive it? Is there any point between that provision and our reception of it where you and I can claim a little bit of credit, where we can say, "I am saved because I did so and so"? No, my friends, the terms of salvation are of grace.

Somebody says, "Stick to your text, Mr. Preacher. Your text says, 'Being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.' Is not our salvation conditioned upon our obedience?" Most certainly; and yet paradoxical as it may seem, obedience is included in your salvation, for that is but another name for faith. "This is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ." We obey God when we believe Jesus Christ, when we yield ourselves in whole-hearted surrender to Him, confessing our destitution, our nothingness, our worse-than-nothingness, our inherent sinfulness, and the record of a sinful life—when we bring it all to Him and tell Him that we have nothing to offer for salvation, and that everything short of hell is mercy—will you remember that? For every man of woman born, everything short of hell is mercy, for that is what we deserved. And yet, instead of that, he offers us eternal salvation on condition that we acknowledge our emptiness, our nothingness, our utter bankruptcy, and receive that which He has provided for us.

Inasmuch as salvation is of grace in its beginning, *it is of grace in its continuance*, for He Who made us

His own will keep us. I was half-minded to preach to you from another text this evening, but on the same subject, for I could find a thousand texts in this old Book that tell us of eternal salvation. This was the other text—which I have already quoted to you—"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." We are His sheep. Nurse that figure for a minute, will you? Poor, silly, stupid, things we are, whose only ability is that which enables us to wander away from Him. But we become His sheep by the purchase of His precious blood. He bought us, He paid for us. Hold fast to that word, "redemption". Do not miss the music of it. This is what it means,—

"Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

We began in grace, and we shall continue in grace.

I love that story of David when he said before Saul, when Saul asked, "What qualification have you to go and meet the Philistine?"—he said, "Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard; and smote him, and slew him." At the end of the day he was able to say to his father, "I have lost nothing; I had to fight for it, but I kept my father's sheep." On that ground he went out and laid the giant low, the champion of the hosts of the Philistines.

Our glorious Lord is not only equal to lions, to our adversary the devil, who as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour, but He is the Head of all principalities and powers. I revel in that word—hear it: "And ye are complete in him"—who is He? "The head of all principality and power"; and there is not an enemy on earth, nor an enemy in hell, nor all the devils in the pit, equal to my glorious Lord. He Who saved me will keep me to the end.

IV.

Someone says, "That is all very well, sir, but all the time you have been speaking I have been thinking of some things I have observed which seem flatly to contradict your contention, for I am old enough to have seen many people profess religion and fall away." Alas! Alas! I have known ministers who preached the gospel to turn away from the truth and utterly to lapse from its standards of life. What shall I say in the face of these apparent contradictions of this doctrine? I admit that we are frail creatures, and I remember that in the Old Testament so great a man as David had to write his penitential Psalm and cry, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me." And God's children may have to do that sometimes, for God's children do get into the mire and soil their garments, and must needs come back home again.

In the New Testament there are two very notable instances, one was that of Judas, and the other was that of Peter. Remember that for three years nobody knew that Judas was the son of perdition. He was numbered among the apostles, he was treasurer of the company, he had the bag and bore what was put therein; yet for thirty pieces of silver he sold the Master. Our Lord said, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" He knew it from the beginning.

As for Peter: he was bold in his profession of loyalty, and said, "Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny thee"—but he did, as his Lord had said. That is a very touching word which the Lord uttered after His resurrection, "Go your way, tell his disciples and Peter", for you remember in the hour of his temptation, when someone said to Peter, "Surely thou art one of them", he said, "I know not this man of whom ye speak". The Lord knew all about it, and of his later sorrow. He said, "Should I send him a message, inviting him with the disciples?" Peter would have said, "That is not for me," so He said, "Go tell his disciples—and Peter." Peter said he was not a disciple, but the Lord knew better, for He said on the other side of the cross, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. I shall not lose you"—and Peter became the preacher of Pentecost.

But saith one, "I can understand that, sir; I have seen many people wander away and come home again, and I am not troubled so much with the case of the backslider who lapses from his profession for a while and then returns. What troubles me is those who turn their back upon the gospel, upon Christ, and trample the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified under their feet, and never come back, and die as they have lived—what will you say of them?" It was with design I read the parable of the sower this evening. Our Lord knew there would be many classes of hearers. "Some fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up." They hear the word and understand it not; it is caught away by the birds of the air. But there was another class: those who hear the word and understand it; and still another class who hear the word and with joy receive it. The first is described as having no root in themselves; they understand it, but with a mere intellectual apprehension of the truth. One may be as orthodox as Paul intellectually, he may be able to write the most admirable treatise on some aspect of gospel truth, and yet not have "the root of the matter" in him, for it is "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness". The word must go deeper than the understanding: it must grip the heart and life, and become part of the man, or he is not saved. There were others who received the word imparted "with joy"; it entered into their emotional nature, they received it and said, Hallelujah, but their natures were not changed, and so by and by, out of the innate corruption of their hearts the thorns and thistles began to grow—they were not new creatures in Christ—and smothered the word, and they became unfruitful. But there were some others who received the word in good ground, in ground that was prepared for its reception, "and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold."

I insist on this, that the only proof of our election is that we keep on. I may know that I am saved, and rejoice in it, but I cannot prove it to you by telling you so. The only way I can prove to you that I am a Christian is by living as a Christian should live all along through life. That is what James is speaking about in his epistle. He is not speaking of the soul's justification before God, but before men. Faith will justify me before God, for He knows my heart; but only a life that is abundantly fruitful, characterized by good works, can justify me before men: "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved."

And what a blessing that such a salvation is offered to everyone of us "without money and without price"! How many of you have received it? Do you receive it this evening? Can you say, "I thank God that I have this eternal salvation"? If any have hesitated to receive Christ because they thought it was part of works and part of grace, God in the beginning, ourselves in the middle, and perhaps a little bit of ourselves and a little bit of God in the end—and because of that you were afraid?—I do not wonder. Faith is stepping out of self into Jesus, ceasing to trust ourselves and trusting Jesus only.

Let us sing for our invitation hymn,—

"Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

WEEK END IN JARVIS STREET.

In common with the rest of the Continent, Toronto has suffered for some days from the heat wave that has been most trying. Saturday was hot, but the attendance at prayer meeting was undiminished, the room being full. Sunday was hotter. The Sunday School was down considerably, the attendance being 855. This amid stifling heat, in the midst of a holiday season, and the day before a public holiday, was perhaps not so bad. There was a great congregation at the morning service, which was followed by the Monthly Communion Service with an attendance of a little less than six hundred. (The Communion attendance is reckoned by the number of individual cups used.) But what a sweltering day! Would anybody go to church in the evening? They came! filling the downstairs and about two-thirds of the gallery. The entire service was broadcast as usual, and following the service the Pastor preached again to a great crowd out of doors. The presence of God was with us at all services. The aggregate at all services could not have been less than four thousand. Five were baptized in the evening, and a good number responded to the invitation to confess Christ.

REMEMBER
THE RADIO FUND
THE GOSPEL WITNESS FUND
THE SEMINARY FUND

Three thirsty children
Who always want a "djink".

The Union Baptist Witness

These pages (13, 14 and 15) are the official organ of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches in Ontario and Quebec.
337 Jarvis Street, Toronto, Canada.

W. GORDON BROWN, Editor.

THE GOD OF THE WHOLE YEAR ROUND.

Is your God the God of the whole year round? Do you believe that Elijah's God is the God of the summer-time as well as of every other season of the year? We hear of so many churches these days where certain doors of service are "closed for the summer". If you are of those who believe that God's Holy Spirit is always more ready to send the blessing than we are to receive it, and if He has blessed you during these summer days, won't you write and tell us about it, that we with you may praise the God of the whole year round.

F.B.Y.P.A. CAMP.

"The Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad."

On Monday, August 4th, the first summer camp of our new Convention was brought to a close. Thirty-two churches had been represented with an approximate final attendance of 130. Old and young alike had enjoyed together ten glorious days of spiritual and physical refreshment. It was indeed "a little bit of Heaven" to all who attended and as someone expressed it, it was "better felt than 'telt'".

Shut away from the busy world in the midst of the enchanting natural beauty of Fisher's Glen, the campers were brought very close to the Lord and to each other as the carefully-planned programme of camp activities was carried out. The inspiring talks on "Soul-Winning" by Dr. Clark, the searching and stimulating messages of the visiting pastors, the joyful times of the family sing-song, and the quiet periods of fellowship, lifted each one to glorious heights of fresh communion with God.

The Camp text, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men," the Camp chorus, "I will make you fishers of men", and the Camp paper, "The Fishers' Net", gave a three-fold emphasis to the stirring challenge to personal work which continually was being presented. It is hoped that it may be possible for the three editions of our Camp paper to be distributed throughout the Convention in order that others may catch a glimpse of the joy and blessing that our first Camp brought to those who were privileged to attend.

Nor was the physical side neglected, as it was proved once again that it is entirely possible for our Christian enjoyment to be in harmony with this principle: "Whatsoever ye do, . . . do all to the glory of God" (I Corinthians 10:31). Joyous competition on land and in the water resulted from the unique programme of interesting camp sports. Happy faces around the camp-fire revealed to all that weary bodies were finding new strength to fit them for a fuller consecration to the glorious service

of being fishers of men to bring others to Him.

Endorsed in the highest terms of appreciation by the twenty or more visiting ministers who were present from all parts of the Convention; enjoyed to the full by those who attended; and above all, sealed by the Holy Spirit of God with the conversion of at least one soul, the restoration of a backslider and the full consecration of many young people to the service of Christ, our first Camp stands before our people as an unqualified success, with the brightest of prospects for the greatest possible service in the future.

We cannot speak too highly of the splendid service rendered by our Camp Directors, all of whom gave of their very best that our first Camp might be wonderfully blessed above all that we could ask or even think, and "that in all things He might have the pre-eminence" (Colossians 1: 18).

FAREWELL TO OUR MISSIONARIES AT OWEN SOUND.

On Wednesday evening, July 30th, the South End Baptist Church was well filled with members and friends, gathered to bid farewell to Rev. and Mrs. Hancox, missionaries-elect to Liberia. Rev. W. E. Atkinson, himself a returned missionary from Nigeria, gave an intensely interesting missionary address, telling of the many difficulties the out-going missionaries would encounter, especially in the study of the language. Mrs. Hancox displayed numerous articles which she had received in visiting the churches, which will be of invaluable service in the work in Liberia, and which also were full of very valuable suggestions to those holding the ropes at home. Mr. Hancox then gave a short address on Romans 10:14, especially dwelling on the thought "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" A number of the young people responded to the invitation fully to consecrate their all to the service of Christ. Some of these are entering the Seminary this Fall to commence their preparation for the ministry. Mr. and Mrs. Hancox sang with feeling "I will travel all the way to Calvary." The church clerk was then called upon to convey the farewell message from the church and Deacon Stewart presented Mr. and Mrs. Hancox with a generous purse (One Hundred Dollars). Rev. W. E. Smalley of Tiverton led in prayer. The following is the farewell letter from the church:

"Dear Mr. and Mrs. Hancox:

"The officers and members of this church have gathered to-night to bid you farewell for a time and to wish you God-speed as you go forth to Liberia into wider service for Him whom you love to serve so well. We wish publicly to express our gratitude to God for sending us a pastor and his wife, who not

only are strong in the faith themselves, but who are continually upholding the fundamental doctrines of His Word and the faith once for all delivered to the saints. During the two years you have laboured with us, we as a church and as individuals have been greatly blessed by your consistent Christian life, your faithful ministry of the Word, your untiring efforts with the young people, your visitation in the homes, and also by Mrs. Hancox's work in the Bible School, Missionary Auxiliary and other activities of the church. Our spiritual lives have been greatly strengthened and we have been blessed in our fellowship together and also in the number of those accepting Christ as their Saviour and following Him in the ordinance of baptism; and this we believe is truly a real evidence of the Spirit's seal upon your ministry here. Words fail to express the thoughts and wishes we desire to convey to you to-night; as a more tangible expression of our love to you and our appreciation of your faithful services amongst us, we ask you to accept this purse, realizing that with it go our earnest prayers that God may guide and protect you, and that He may at all times be your strength and joy. Our prayers shall continue to ascend to our God on your behalf while we are absent one from another.

"Signed on behalf of the church,
"Mrs. H. E. Treleaven, Clerk."

BLESSING AT WALSH.

The friends of Faith Regular Baptist Church of Walsh were greatly blessed by the visit of an Instrumental Quartette from Jarvis Street for the week end of July 19 and 20. The Saturday evening open-air meeting was much enjoyed, except by one man who paid his compliments by getting angry. At the Sunday evening service held in the open-air, the usual attendance was easily doubled.

On Sunday evening, July 27th, six young men were baptized in the stream near the village, and at a well-attended communion service were welcomed into the fellowship of the church. A visit from Rev. C. H. Leggett, of Verdun, was much appreciated by the people.

CALVIN, TORONTO.

The people of Calvin Church have been greatly encouraged recently by many answers to prayer and by the help of the Lord against the mighty. Greater strength and greater boldness have been given to many, enabling them to testify more strongly to the love and saving power of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Two new workers have been added to the fellowship of the church and last Sunday one sister followed her Lord in baptism. The Bible School shows an increased attendance and the open-air meetings held every Saturday evening, are a source of great encouragement

and strength. Pray for God's continued blessing on this work.

* * * * *

HARTFORD.

The great interest taken by the young people in the work of the Hartford Church brings great joy to the hearts of our members. On Sunday evening, July 20th, the evening service was made a Seminary night. Three young men of the neighbourhood—Messrs. J. W. Armstrong, V. Pennanen, and A. Morgan—brought inspiring messages, and interest in our educational work was awakened by a presentation from a practical standpoint of the work of the Seminary. A young people's choir gave a bright Gospel testimony in song. In spite of the exceedingly hot weather, over one hundred were present at this service. A few weeks previously another young people's night was marked by similar blessing to all. On Sunday, July 27th, Rev. M. Doherty, of Buckingham, Quebec, was present, in the morning assisting the pastor, and in the evening bringing an inspiring message from Genesis 4. In the afternoon of the same Sunday the pastor conducted the funeral service of a young Indian who had lost his life in rescuing two others from drowning. This young man was a relative of Rev. Melchie Henry, pastor of the Medina Indian Church. The church was crowded to capacity for the impressive service. Let us be much in prayer for the salvation of many souls even through this touching incident.

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HUGHSON STAEET HAMILTON.

The regular services have been fairly well attended and the prayer meetings are keeping up well. A Children's Meeting held every Wednesday afternoon has had as many as ninety-four in attendance. There is promise of a great work among the boys and girls and we covet your prayers for this. Sisters Cole and Gadsby, who have been conducting the Hess Street Mission, are also helping in this work. The work on the Guelph Highway has been specially encouraging and nineteen souls have been saved. An open-air meeting is held every Sunday evening and from three hundred to four hundred passers-by hear the Gospel proclaimed. The new Canadians, who are mostly Roman Catholics, are hard to reach, but we pray that we shall see many of them when we meet Him face to face. Satan is very busy, but our God will fight for us. Pray for the salvation of many souls.

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DEDICATION AND OPENING OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH.

Fine weather favoured the unique occasion of the opening of St. Paul's Bi-lingual Baptist Church. The people were greatly interested and excellent singing and speaking made the meetings very profitable to all. Fellow-workers from Dalesville and Sawyerville were present to encourage and assist by prayer and singing. The Thursday night messages, given by Pastor C. J. Loney, proved an inspiration and delight to all who were present. On Saturday night a two-hour prayer meeting was held by the Intercession Circle, to thank God for the wonders of His grace.

On the Lord's Day Pastor St. James gave an interesting account of the way in which this church had experienced the "fellowship of His sufferings". But the church has also experienced the glory of His grace and blessing. Twenty-five Hundred Dollars has been paid on the new building, Eighteen Hundred Dollars coming from the Union and the churches. The lots are clear and during the opening services Five Hundred Dollars was received on the Three Thousand Dollar indebtedness which remained. Pray that the Lord may touch hearts to help with this work. The Sunday services were blessed by God to all hearts. Pastor St. James preached on "Why a Frenchman Believes the Bible", and Rev. J. Danutheny of the Beneficent Church, gave a helpful message on "Conversion". The people of his church were present at the services and two of his congregation were baptized. Five Catholics were present, one of whom said, "I may be the next." Pray for them. In the words of Philippians 3:13,14, the people of St. Paul's Church are pressing on "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus". Let us have fellowship with them in giving and in prayer.

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SHOWERS OF BLESSING IN JAMAICA.

We have received encouraging word of the work in Jamaica, from both Rev. J. W. Knight and Rev. G. W. Smith. We hear glad news of God's continued blessing on our work in Jamaica. We ask that our readers will pray that as now they are receiving the showers, so in the near future the very flood-gates of God's blessing may be opened.

"A Streamlet of Souls"

Sometime ago two souls came to the Lord at the Mount Moriah appointment, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon at a meeting held in an out-station. Two weeks ago two men came out boldly at Aeon Town. One had been a backslider for many years while the other was a stranger to Christ. On a recent Sunday two more came out at Mount Moriah, one of whom had been a backslider for some time. We thank God for this little streamlet of souls coming to Christ and we pray that it may grow into a river. Mr. Knight reports that the devil is very busy and bidding high for the lives of the young people and that moral conditions are indescribable in many of the interior districts. Brother Knight was pleased to have Rev. O. T. Johnston with him for a few days and reports encouraging news from him also.

Baptisms at 6.30 a.m.

Rev. Wilfrid Smith reports a blessed time at such a service at Hewitt's View. A crowd of about one hundred and fifty people had gathered even at that early hour to view the ordinance and to hear from the Pastor a brief Gospel message from the conversion of the Philippian jailer. As the audience sang "I'm Not Ashamed to Own My Lord", one woman and four men followed their Lord in the waters of baptism. On the same Sunday many were present at Sunday School at Hewitt's View, and a capacity audience of two hundred and fifty or

more heard the former acting pastor, Rev. W. J. Mornan, give a Sunday evening message on John 15:5. Afterwards forty-eight immersed believers gathered to observe the Lord's Supper and the new converts were received into church fellowship.

The Enquirer's Class needs the prayers of our readers for the conversion of a man and his wife and three young girls who are seeking the Lord.

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FISHER'S GLEN

About one hundred and thirty Regular Baptists from thirty-two different churches, attended the Summer Bible Conference of the F.B.Y.P.A. of Ontario and Quebec. Jarvis Street, Annette Street, and Fairbank, of Toronto, and Central Church, London, sent the largest delegations. Churches as far East as Ottawa and Montreal were well represented on the registration list.

A warm spiritual atmosphere was the outstanding characteristic of the camp, and those who attended will long remember the sing-songs on the beach and round the piano. Some who came to stay for a day found the fellowship so delightful that they remained much longer than they had intended.

Among the speakers at the Conference were Rev. W. J. H. Brown, Rev. C. H. Leggett, Rev. T. Summers, Rev. Matthew Doherty, Rev. Sydney Lawrence, Rev. J. Lewis, Rev. J. F. Holliday, Rev. A. J. Loveday, Rev. E. and Mrs. Hancox. Beside the inspirational messages delivered by these leaders, there were two morning classes in Bible study which were most valuable contributions to the life of the camp. Dr. Olive Clark led a class in personal soul-winning, and Rev. Alexander Thomson conducted a series of studies in the Old Testament Feasts.

The Lord set His seal upon the whole undertaking. God's children were refreshed both spiritually and physically; two professed conversion; and the financial obligations, amounting to nearly seventeen hundred dollars, were all met before the campers left the Glen.

The directors wish to express their appreciation to the churches and pastors of the Convention for their cooperation and prayer, and it is their belief that the young people who attended the Conference will return to their churches better fitted to carry on the work of the Lord.

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EDMONTON, ALBERTA.

On July 9th a special service was held to consider the organization of the Norwood Regular Baptist Church, Edmonton, Alberta. Rev. Morley Hall, of the Westbourne Baptist Church, Calgary, and Mr. Phillips, of Benalto, were the speakers. On the following evening the church was organized, with Mr. Hall acting as Moderator. The church officers were appointed and Mr. Gordon W. Searle was given a unanimous call to become pastor. At the time of organization the constitution of the Regular Baptist Missionary Society of Alberta was not yet off the press. So members were received through the testimony of their experience on condition that they must subscribe to the articles of faith

in the constitution. These articles, when they arrived, were unanimously accepted by the members.

Since the organization of the church, splendid progress in the work is reported. Mr. Searle has all the members working hard and they are enjoying it. The prayer meetings are well attended and bring real inspiration for the Sunday services. After the church services an open-air meeting is held on the street corner with Mr. Searle leading the singing. The Sunday School has an average attendance of fifty and it is expected that this will increase when the schools re-open in the Fall. Our readers are asked to pray that countless souls will be brought to Jesus through the ministry of this new church.

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A LETTER OF APPRECIATION FROM H. L. DAVEY.

Dear Friends:

Your wonderful gift of \$300.00 for a motorcycle came safely to hand some days ago.* I would have written at once to thank you but had I done so it would have been impossible for me to tell you anything about the machine I had purchased, so I purposely refrained from writing until I had purchased and tested out the cycle.

First of all my wife and I desire to thank everyone of those who made the gift possible and so readily responded to our need. We know how many, many calls you have in your various activities

and deeply appreciate this love-gift. You can picture our getting around this part of the country to many more villages than heretofore was possible, taking with us the Bread of Heaven for lost, hungry, dying souls, thus you share with us in the ministry of the Gospel with its message of Life in the Risen Lord.

The gift came as a real birthday present, for my wife's birthday and mine are both in the month of May, so that we certainly had a beautiful as well as useful present.

I have purchased an English-made machine as I believe they are the best suited for this country. The roads as they are, and bad as they are, can be used to some advantage with a motorcycle, in fact, I believe it is the most satisfactory way of getting around in this district. The machine is an Ariel, a 250 c.c. De Luxe Model, O.V.H. electric lights, all the latest improvements, a special pillion seat with air cushion and foot rests—just ideal for Mrs. Davey—and the machine does not weigh over two hundred and fifty pounds. It will, therefore, be easy for me to get it over the so-called bridges and crossing rivers will not be so hard as they would be with a heavier machine. I can negotiate any hill in the district in second gear with my wife on the pillion seat so that it is just the machine needed for the work here. The total cost was \$250.00 and I paid another \$25.00 to have the machine assembled by a competent me-

chanic. He has agreed also to attend to any necessary adjustments that may be needed as the machine is used. The remainder of the money will be used as follows—licence about \$12.00; \$13.00 for incidental expenses and gasoline and oil. Just as soon as possible I shall forward a picture of your missionary representative with the only white lady pillion rider in Bassa County, Republic of Liberia.

We do appreciate so much everything the people of the Union are doing to push this work and to make the workers more effective by proper support and necessary equipment, and we know that you will never regret doing this, for in that day, you will see that it has been worth while to bring the message of Redemption through His blood to the Bassa tribe for even now there are those who can really sing His praises from redeemed hearts, and if He tarry who can tell how many more will swell His praises?

We rejoice to hear that Rev. and Mrs. Hancox have been accepted by the Board rival with eagerness and joy and we know that they will be used much in the work. Until they come it is our joy and privilege to seep the gate and try to fill the gap. His strength is our safeguard, His presence our joy, your prayers our desire.

With greetings to our much beloved President and our fellow-workers,

Yours in His ever joyful service,

HORACE L. DAVEY.

* Letter dated May 29th.

"HE SHALL SEPARATE THEM."

Often, in the Tyrol, we saw sheep and goats mingled in the same flock, and sometimes we held a controversy as to whether some of the animals were sheep or goats, for they were so like to either. Never did this occur without our thinking of the last great separating day, when the Shepherd shall divide the motley multitude of professors. The Great Shepherd alone can do it infallibly, and it is well that the division is not in the hands of poor erring mortals like ourselves. The less we do of judging the better, for here below it is far from easy for the most practised eye to know the sheep from the goats.—From C. H. Spurgeon's *Note Book of My Travels*.

"LOOKING UNTO JESUS".

In every enjoyment, O Christian, look unto Jesus; receive it as proceeding from His love, and purchased by His agonies. In every tribulation look unto Jesus; mark His gracious hand managing the scourge, or mingling the bitter cup; attempering its severity; adjusting the time of its continuance; and making it productive of real good. In very infirmity and failing, look unto Jesus, thy merciful High Priest, pleading His atoning blood, and making intercession for transgressors. In every prayer, look unto Jesus, thy prevailing Advocate, recommending thy devotions, and "bearing the iniquity of thy holy things." In every temptation, look unto Jesus, the Captain of thy salvation, who alone is able to lift up the hands which

hang down, to invigorate the enfeebled knees, and make thee more than conqueror over all thy enemies. But especially when the hour of thy departure approaches, when thy flesh and thy heart fail, when all the springs of life are irreparably breaking—then look unto Jesus with a believing eye. Like expiring Stephen, behold Him standing at the right hand of God, on purpose to succour His people in their last extremity. Yes, when thou art launching out into the invisible world, and all before thee is vast eternity—then, oh then, look unto Jesus, and view Him as the only "way" to the everlasting mansions.—*James Harvey*.

WOULD LIKE NOTHING TO DO.

In the *Victorian Freeman* we find the following:—The children were discussing what they would like to be and do, and most of them wished for a position with little work and big pay. One of them said, "Well, I should like to sit on the roof all my days, and have nothing to do, just like Joseph in Egypt." Very naturally the attention of the family was excited by the remark, and the boy was asked to explain himself. He at once quoted the passage, "And Pharaoh put Joseph over his house." "There", he said, "that's what I should like,—to sit on the roof and have a large salary."

This urchin had never known the sweets of active life. A French general once asked, "What did Alphonse die of?" "He died, Sir, of having nothing to do." "That", said the general, "is enough to kill the strongest man among us." And so it is.—From *Sword and Trowel*, 1881.

Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

Vol. 5.

No. 3.

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR.

Lesson 34 August 24th, 1930.
Third Quarter.

GOD REMEMBERED NOAH.

Lesson Text: Genesis, chapter 8.

Golden Text: "And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged." Genesis, chapter 8:1.

I. THE SUBSIDENCE OF THE FLOOD (vs. 1-14).

The waters asswaged (vs. 1-15).

The statement that "God remembered Noah and every living thing" implies that measures were taken by Him to assuage the flood and dry up the earth. These measures are described. God "made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged. The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained". As a result of these measures, "the waters returned from off the earth continually", and "after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated". It was within the power of God to have disposed of the waters in a sudden miraculous manner, but this it was not His will to do. He used means to this end, as He did in the care of Israel at the Red Sea (Ex. 14:21). It is of interest to note this also in relation to other miracles (Isa. 38:21; John 9:6). The subsidence of the waters was gradual, at the end of an hundred and fifty days they were abated, the ark rested in the seventh month upon the mountains of Ararat, and at the beginning of the tenth month the tops of the mountains were seen. This is a simple record of fact, no description is given of the scene, or of the feelings of Noah and his family. It is of interest and significance to note the resting place of the ark in Armenia, at the source of the rivers which watered the garden of Eden, man's first abode, therefore connected with the place of his first development and admirably located as the scene of his second development.

The earth dried (vs. 6-14).

The resting of the ark on the mountains of Ararat assured Noah that the water had subsided somewhat, and he must have known that it was still subsiding, but he could not be sure of its entire disappearance without looking upon the scene. He refrained from doing this for some time, probably in accordance with the will of God, but he sought information of the waters' progress through the instrumentality of the birds. At the end of forty days he sent forth a raven. The number forty has a relation to the time of the flood (Ch. 7:12), and is also significant in its use in other parts of scripture (Ex. 24:18; 1 Kings 19:8; Mark 1:13), implying full testing. The raven was the first bird sent forth, "which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the

earth." (Such a bird could feed on carrion, and would not require to return to the ark for food. After the raven the dove was sent forth, and, being a clean bird, it found no rest for the sole of its foot and returned to the ark, and was taken in by Noah. After seven days he again sent forth the dove, which this time returned with an olive leaf in its mouth, and Noah knew that the waters were down considerably. After another seven days, the dove was again sent forth and returned unto him no more—a sure proof that the earth was nearly if not quite dry. After waiting some time longer, Noah "removed the covering of the ark and looked, and behold the face of the ground was dry", the exact time in Noah's life being stated, showing that the flood had lasted one year and ten days (ch. 7:11; 8:10, 14). This was quite a long time for the patriarch and his company to be in the ark, and as intimated in a former lesson, it undoubtedly constituted a test of faith. The earth was dry, but Noah made no move to leave the ark. He awaited God's command before doing so, manifesting thus his complete obedience unto the divine will. Sometimes we retard the work of God by our haste, and we learn to our cost that there is a possibility of running before Him. It has been said, and with truth, that God is never in a hurry; and it is equally true that He is never late. We need patience just to walk with Him. Noah waited for God, then he delayed not to do His bidding. May we act similarly in all the events of life and gain blessing not only for ourselves, but for others; working in full co-operation with our Lord and Master. (1 Cor. 3:9).

II. LEAVING THE ARK (vs. 15-22):

The command (vs. 15-19).

"And God spake unto Noah saying, Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee", etc. Thus was Noah commanded to leave the ark, and in obedience thereto he and his company came forth. This implies God's remembrance of the ark's inmates. He never forgets His own, and although it may seem at times as if we are left to our own resources, He never leaves us or forsakes us (Heb. 13:5), and this we discover to our joy sooner or later. May we learn to trust Him wholly, in spite of circumstances, like the prophet Habakkuk (Hab. 3:17, 18) and many others, and find Him wholly true.

The command meant the complete evacuation of the ark, constituting another test of faith for Noah, as well as a reason for thanksgiving. In the ark there was safety; outside, in case of another flood, there was none. Doubtless he was not in any way troubled by the thought of another flood, his faith in God would sustain him; but under such circumstances only faith in God could keep him in perfect peace. The statement of God concerning the future would set his mind completely at rest (v. 21).

The command meant also a new beginning for the human family. Adam and Eve were the progenitors of the race, and lamentably failed in their responsibility. Now unto Noah and his family is the opportunity given of doing better.

It takes little reflection to bring to mind the wonderful possibilities of their situation, in life and service, such as holiness of character, fellowship with God, and obedience to His will, etc. But such betterment did not manifest itself. Noah himself failed sadly (ch. 9:21), and his descendants also showed the downward tendency of their natures. In each of them there is evident the sinful disposition which seeks not God and desires only the gratification of the flesh and its lusts. In this there is proof that in himself man is not good (Rom. 3:10); he needs a new life before he can please God, and that comes from above (John 3:7).

The promise (vs. 20-22).

The first thing recorded of Noah's actions after leaving the ark was his erection of the altar. He "built an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar". This manifested his remembrance of God, the Lord was first in thought and action. This is the proper place for God in every life. There is implied also Noah's sense of dependence upon God and his expression of thanksgiving for His goodness. The spirit of thanksgiving is only too often very weakly manifested by the Lord's people, if indeed at times it is not conspicuous by its absence. We cease not to ask, and when we receive, thanksgiving is not always as evident as it might be. Our blessings warrant it, and duty calls for it. In the offering there is an acknowledgment of sinfulness and an example of the proper manner in which to approach God. Sin has caused death, and only through death do we have access into God's presence in this case the death of the lower creatures, in our case the death of our Lord of whom these were a type.

The offerings were acceptable unto God, and He "smelled a sweet savour". God is pleased with sincere worship, and entering His presence in the right way each person is assured of a warm reception. Christ is the way (John 14:6), and the invitation is to come boldly in Him (Heb. 4:16). The sweet savour of the early time was not alone on account of the animal sacrifices but of that which they typified. A threefold promise is then given to Noah. The Lord states first, "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake: for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth". The ground had been cursed on Adam's account (ch. 3:17), and it was made to refuse to yield to the efforts of Cain (ch. 4:11, 12), but it never again was to be affected in this manner. In the second place, the Lord promised never again to "smite any more everything living" as He had done; implying that never again would there be a universal flood. Local floods have occurred, and lives have been lost, but the world as such has never been inundated since that time. The third part of the promise is that "while the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease". The faithfulness of God stands out clearly in this lesson and throughout the ages.