

The Gospel Witness

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

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

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Concerning Spiritual Gifts

It is a common complaint in churches of all sizes and in all places that the work is generally left to a few. Beyond question the complaint is justified by the facts. No business concern in the world could long survive the treatment meted out to the church. Imagine a great manufacturing concern, a great railroad corporation, or some commercial establishment, with only five per cent. of those who are on the payroll doing any work. Such a condition would rapidly result in bankruptcy. But how is this condition of affairs to be remedied? How are we to get everybody in the church doing something? Is it pertinent in this connection to enquire, What is God's plan? What has the Word of the Lord to say on this subject?

In the twelfth chapter of first Corinthians we are taught that the church is not an organization but an organism, a body in which there are no superfluous members. The figure itself is most instructive. A body is so knit together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, that it is impossible to dispense with any member without a loss to the body as a whole. So we believe there is a providential completeness about every local assembly of believers, within which are all the gifts necessary to the effective accomplishment of the work of the Lord in that particular place.

We learn, also, that every member has a particular function. They are different from each other, but not independent of each other. So we should remember that every converted man and woman has a special place in the Church of Christ, and a peculiar service to perform. These, we know, are mere commonplaces. The question still remains, How are we to find work for all the members of the church?

If we hold that figure of the body in mind, we shall instantly see that it is not possible for any man or company of men to find spiritual employment for the

members of Christ's body. The teaching of the chapter referred to is, that the Holy Spirit is the Administrator; He bestows upon each some peculiar gift, and leads each in His own way to the exercise of the gift He has bestowed. It is obvious, therefore, that we shall not meet the Church's need by devising organizations into which the membership of the church may be built. The truth is, only the really working church is a vital church—a church that is throbbing with spiritual life. Life organizes itself according to its nature; it finds its own natural expression. Thus, too, a vital church composed of vital members will be a working church in the sense of a fruit-bearing church. Every member will come naturally to understand his particular function. The Spirit of God will teach him even to the minutest detail of his service exactly what he ought to do. Nothing is more interesting than to observe the Spirit's discovery of the gifted members of Christ's body. In the most unexpected quarters, men and women are found who were manifestly ordained from the beginning for a peculiar and a particular service. Thus, therefore, our most urgent need is, that the spiritual health of the church should be built up; and we shall be wise if we turn aside from all attempts to effect God's purposes by other means than through a vitally fruitful church.

The Spirit of God is the breath of the church. She lives only as He dwells in His fulness in her midst. We, therefore, say once again to all pastors and others who will read these words, that if our churches are to prosper, all their members must be set to work; and if they are thus to be set to work, only the Spirit of God can do it. He "divideth to every man severally as he will." And this condition will obtain only where there is unceasing prayer. The prosperous church is the working church; the working church is the vital church; and the spiritually vital church is the praying church. What sort of church is yours?

IS A GREAT REVIVAL COMING?

Notwithstanding the dense spiritual darkness of the hour, and the prevailing famine of hearing the Word of the Lord, there seems to be everywhere among true believers an expectation of a great spiritual awakening. It reminds one of the voices of the morning which make themselves heard just before the break of day. Christian workers in all parts of the world seem to be on the tiptoe of expectation. Moreover, there are many signs of the coming of such a revival. From Scotland and from some parts of the Continent, we hear of times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Do not such tidings constitute to the ear of faith the "sound of abundance of rain" and "the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees"? Was there ever a time when the Church collectively and believers individually needed more earnestly to betake themselves to prayer?

These words will be read by many a pastor who is mourning the spiritual dearth with which he is surrounded; and perhaps by some who sadly wonder why they do not see more fruit from their own labour. In a residence of nearly twenty-one years in Toronto, we have witnessed not a few so-called evangelistic movements. Some of them have been preceded by much advertising and by elaborate organization; but they have yielded, so far as we have observed, but little fruit. Is not the Church itself God's chosen instrument for the doing of His work in the world? and is not the divine method clearly revealed in Scripture as consisting of prayer and preaching, or witnessing for Christ? Why should we go down into Egypt for help? Why should we imitate the ways of the world in these matters? Why should we bewail our languishing fields, and complain that we have neither money nor other means to provide for artificial irrigation? There is no substitute for the dew and rain from Heaven. Our God is still sovereign in His world. All authority is given to Him Whom we worship in heaven and in your church. He can warm the hearts and quicken the consciences, and enfranchise the wills of feeble saints. We wish we might be privileged to lead some weary and heavy-laden pastor, whose spirit has been well-nigh crushed with multiplying disappointments, to cease from all attempts to better spiritual conditions by means of some new sort of ecclesiastical machine. May we without the semblance of boasting, and in a spirit of profound gratitude to God, and with an earnest desire to witness for Him say, that when a Christian church will get upon its knees before God, there is no power on earth or in hell that can stay its progress.

Let us join the great company in all parts of the world who are praying for a revival. But it is too much to expect that men will pray for a spiritual awakening in India or in China who are careless of the spiritual condition of their own church, of their own home, of their own heart. However small your church, however limited you may feel your opportunity to be, if you are in the place where God has put you, you are face to face with what to you is the greatest opportunity in the world to show what God can do for those who put their trust in Him.

If we may be permitted a word of exhortation to brother pastors, we venture to suggest that each might

well resolve that, in spite of all difficulties, he will in his present church put God to the proof and determine that he will himself begin to pray, and to pray that others may pray, and then still continue to pray, and never cease to pray, until the revival comes.

A GOOD STORY FROM IRELAND.

The Gospel Witness office received a request from one of the members of the church to send a dozen copies of the paper containing the sermon, "How I know the Bible to be the Word of God," to a certain address in Ireland. The lady to whom these dozen copies were to be sent gets a copy of *The Witness* every week, and we are told that no less than one hundred and thirty people have been reading that one copy weekly. She is an elderly lady, who invites people into her house on Saturdays and Sundays, and reads *The Witness* to about twenty in this way. We are writing this lady in Ireland saying that we shall send her ten copies every week for distribution.

This particular lady says that a minister of a certain denomination has come to the place where she lives, who is an out-and-out Modernist, and that he is taking everybody by storm, so that she wants *The Gospel Witness* to circulate among the people to try to check the spread of the poison of Modernism. This letter, incidentally, illustrates somewhat the widespread character of this paper's ministry.

The lady who thus uses *The Witness* cannot afford to pay for it, and we are sending her ten copies without charge, each week; but in doing so, we confidently expect that someone will come forward and send us a contribution of \$20.00 or \$25.00 as a missionary offering, so that this paper may go as a missionary to this part of Ireland every week.

The case we have cited is but one of scores—indeed, we may safely say, hundreds—in which *The Gospel Witness* is being used as an antidote for the poison of Modernism. If any of our readers would do real missionary work we can promise them that they can do it in a very effective way by supporting *The Gospel Witness* fund so as to enable us to respond to such cases as we have referred to here.

Who will send us that \$25.00 to begin with?

A Vancouver Letter.

The following letter will serve further to emphasize the foregoing note about the ministry of *The Gospel Witness* in Ireland. The writer of the letter is a deacon of the Mount Pleasant Church. A single example is worth volumes of exhortation.

Vancouver, B.C.

"Rev. T. T. Shields,
Toronto, Ont.

"Dear Brother Shields:

"I enclose cheque for \$16.00 covering eight one-year subscriptions to *The Gospel Witness* as per enclosed list.

"I heard two or three people say they ought to be taking *The Gospel Witness*, and so I thought I would try to get a few others, and without very much trouble secured the enclosed list.

"I found a ready response when I mentioned the matter, and although some felt that they could not spare the money, there was a kindly and sympathetic feeling everywhere, and it seems to me that if some one was appointed agent in every Regular Baptist church in Canada, who would be

(Continued on page 12.)

"Within the Veil"

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

"*Within the veil*". This suggestive phrase indicates at once the drift of our thought. It is not our intention to speak of the ministry of our great High Priest, Who is "within the veil": nor of the firm anchorage of the Christian hope which is cast "within the veil": we want, rather, to take a glimpse of the life of the blessed dead, and see what light the Word of God sheds on this great and tender theme.

Death is doing its work continually. Our dear ones are passing from us into the Great Beyond. And such questions as the following will frequently arise: "Where have our departed Christian friends gone?" "Can we know anything at all of the life of those who have passed 'within the veil'?" "Is there any certain light in regard to the *unseen*?" "What kind of life do the godly live on the other side of death?" There is one source only to which we can turn for any clear and certain answers to these questions, and that is to the Holy Word of God. It is our privilege to study this sure guide, and we shall not search the divine Word in vain.

Our first remark concerning the holy dead is THAT THEY LIVE A CONSCIOUS LIFE. We can say this with absolute confidence. We are fully aware that there are some who speak of the state of the dead as one of sleep, or unconsciousness, forgetting that the term "sleep" in the Scripture refers to the condition of the body, and not to that of the spirit. The striking thing is that there is not a single word in the New Testament to lead us to infer that the state of the departed is one of unconsciousness. Beside the familiar words of the Apostle Paul:—"Absent from the body . . . present (or at home) with the Lord", and, "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better",—we have the very clear teaching of our Lord Himself. It is true that He did not speak very largely on this theme; but all that He did say is startlingly definite and clear. Notice our Lord's reference to the *burning bush*. He quotes the familiar words, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Then He is especially emphatic in His testimony when He adds, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living"—words which certainly embrace the life immediately beyond the grave, and which imply consciousness as its portion there.

Then take the *story of the rich man and Lazarus*—I say "story" because this is not a parable, it is a direct statement about the invisible world. Jesus tells us here what happens immediately after death. He gives us a definite glimpse "within the veil". Our Lord here is not referring to the state of the dead after the resurrection, but of the state immediately following death; and while life on this world is running its ordinary rounds. We see that "within the veil" both Dives and Lazarus are conscious, the latter of comfort, and the former of pain. We see that there is no break in memory, while in the case of both the thinking is most keen. This story lifts the veil, and gives us an unmistakable view of the life of those who leave us as being one of clear consciousness, and not a state of coma.

Next, the *story of the transfiguration* gives us further definite teaching. Our Lord was on the "holy mount" where He was transfigured in the presence of Peter, James, and John. Then from the Great Beyond two eminent saints appear, Moses and Elijah. They come from the *unseen* to speak with Jesus on earth. This fact indicates again the consciousness of that life which is hidden from our view, and the deep interest taken there in the great redemptive work of our Saviour. Evidently the life "within the veil" is no deep slumber, but rather a life of vivid consciousness, and of keenest interest. -

One other word of our Lord's calls for our thought: we find it in the *story of the penitent robber*. Look at the scene. Our Lord is dying as our Substitute on Calvary's cross. The penitent robber is dying by His side. The poor, defiled, sinner is about to take the great leap into the dark: he knows not what is before him, but he fears. The solemnity of the occasion is overpowering. Then, turning to Jesus, he cries, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom". How will the lips of Truth and Grace Himself reply to such a dying soul? The tremendous hour is no fitting time for figurative, or parabolic, expressions. So, in clear, and most merciful, speech, our Saviour says, "To-day thou shalt be with me in paradise". "*Thou with me*"! Oh, words of wonderful grace and consolation! "With Me", not in the grave but in Paradise! And so the "gentle presence of Jesus' human Soul,—the Soul of God—in its disembodied state entered Paradise on that evening with the soul of the penitent thief". And Paradise, says Paul, is "the third heaven", to which he was "caught up"; the place where he "heard unspeakable words", and where "abundance of revelations" were given unto him, the place not of death, but where grows the Tree of Life.

Thus it is abundantly clear that when our holy dead leave us, they do not pass into a state of spiritual slumber, but live a fully conscious life.

THE SECOND THOUGHT IS THAT THEY LIVE A PERSONAL LIFE. If our departed loved ones live a conscious life within the veil, of what are they conscious? They are conscious that they are still themselves the same dear personality in each case as before they left us. It was so with Jesus after His resurrection. When He came to His Disciples, after His resurrection, He said, "Handle me and see. It is I myself". It was the Lord Himself, with the same personal ways and characteristics as before His death. There was the same tone of voice, for by it Mary Magdalene recognized Him, and the same style at the table in the house at Emmaus, for He was made known to the wondering two in "the breaking of bread". It is the same with all who pass the gate of death. The holy dead are not other than they were with us. They have a new and most blissful environment, but in personality they are the same. Each one can say, "It is I myself". This is proved from the story of the rich man and Lazarus. There is an unbroken continuity of interest and remembrance in the Great Beyond. Irenaeus, the great theologian of the second century, the friend of

Polycarp, who was in turn a disciple of John, says, "The Lord has taught with very great fulness that souls not only continue to exist, but that they preserve the same form (in the separate state) as the body had to which they were adapted". So when we ask the question, Do they know each other in heaven? there is no difficulty in finding the answer. If our departed ones are the same in person, if their personality is not lost in vaporous mist, or luminous haze, if rather they are made to possess an appearance by which their own proper identity is preserved, then, of course, they know each other there, and there is no doubt that in Paradise hearts that loved on earth still open to each other as spontaneously as the flowers open to the sun; and that souls communicate to each other there as naturally as the dews nourish the white lilies of the wood. Thus it is comforting to us to know that when our companions in the faith are called to pass through the gate of death they do not find themselves in a foreign land, but among choice familiar friends.

Some years since, I was travelling with a missionary who, after a good many years away on the foreign field, returned to England. While there, he went to his native town where he had spent his early years. But as he walked through the streets of his old home town, he saw no one whom he knew. And on the Lord's Day when he went to the church of his early manhood, even there he could not discover one familiar face, or hear one familiar voice. In the Homeland above it will not be so. The holy dead live their own personal life in heaven, and "know as they are known."

Then, thirdly, we can be quite sure that THE DEPARTED CHILDREN OF GOD LIVE A RESTFUL LIFE. When our Lord calls His own to leave this earthly scene of strife, the armour, so often blood-stained, and pierced by the foe, is unlaced, the shield and sword are laid down at the feet of the King, and the soft clothing of peace is put on. The very term "Paradise" which Scripture uses to describe the home of the blessed dead, is delightfully suggestive of lovely peace and rest. It is an Indian or Persian word, and means a park of a forest-like character. It depicts a woodland scene with sequestered glades and bowers, hidden groves, and pleasant fountains. The very picture, which the word suggests, makes one think of peace and quiet contemplation. And how beautiful is this suggestion that the stress and strain and strife of life on earth are all over! The eyes that ache and are weary with earth's toil and suffering will find the gentle glades of Paradise to be beautiful, indeed. It is more lovely than one can describe, to think that the eyes of the soul that lived in strife and struggle will be lighted by the smile of the King of Love, and that the climbing of the weary feet being all over, the pilgrim enters into an untroubled and perpetual rest. Souls who, like Baxter, have sighed, "Oh, for the everlasting rest!" will not be disappointed there.

Then there is the suggestion of home in the land "within the veil", and that carries with it the thought of rest. After the weary sojourn in this foreign land, how restful is the thought of being at home—at home in one's own country! "At home with the Lord!"

Thus we are quite sure that the holy dead live in unbroken peace. The toil and travail of the earthly pilgrim life are over, and the rest of Paradise is all the sweeter after the weary wayfaring. The thorns are all taken

out of the tired feet, and the heart is unburdened of the cross. What delight it is to know that those of the Lord's own, who have gone "within the veil" live a life of sweetest unbroken rest!

(To be Continued next week.)

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTER IN OUR AGE.

An Address Delivered to the Students of Toronto Baptist Seminary, Friday Noon, Nov. 14th, 1930, by Rev. A. G. Johnson, D.D., Detroit.

I approach this subject from the standpoint of a student. What I shall say is, with me, an abiding conviction; the results of an honest endeavour to discover the secrets of success in the Christian ministry in the light of an historical background, my own experience, together with certain privilege of research in this particular field, that has brought me in contact with ministers and representative groups, with numerous conferences and confidential interviews.

The young minister stands upon the threshold of his career buoyant, expectant and enthusiastic, yet withal, entertaining certain fears as to the outcome. He discovers upon settlement that he is confronted with what he might call "Inherited Problems" that demand skill, wisdom and rare patience. His local task stands related to the whole world of thought and conduct of which his is a part, and with an internationally trained mind, looking far afield, he discovers with a stern reality that he is called to preach the gospel in a controversial age.

My whole ministry thus far has been in a period of religious controversy. Controversial periods are not immediately constructive. Controversy may be necessary—a student of Christian history must recognize this fact. There is a sense in which the New Testament is a controversial book—the mighty movements that ushered in spiritual blessedness and moral good in society were often the result of controversy. Controversy has been likened to chemical action, ultimately cleansing the dross from the precious metal of Christian truth and practice; the time element is a mighty factor in a controversial age. We must wear our glasses for distance, and all utterance should be tempered in the light of the ultimate results. I am confident that the consummation of the purpose of the gospel will be glorious, that "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied". Ultimate victory lies ahead.

In John Humpstone's "Man and Message" the first chapter, "Athanasius' Preaching and Controversy", records, "The sincerity and candour of his (Athanasius') conduct in controversy are undeniable. He would have only honest methods; such arguments as he conscientiously felt accorded with truth. Heat there was in his fulminating eloquence, but always light as well, and, at the point of danger, restraint."

The young minister further observes that ours is a materialistic, disjointed and nervous age. We see history repeating itself before our eyes. The identical disintegrating forces that destroyed the proud empires of the past are at work as an insidious foe, threatening the very foundation of our moral structure.

There is a difference between the betterment of an age by advancing civilization, and the betterment of

an age by spiritual and moral power. While on the one hand we observe the perfectly marvellous advance of science and material progress, we are forced to admit withal, that growing materialistic tendencies abound. A man of national repute said in our city the other day that Europe was passing through a "psychic revival". "Her new discovery of her soul-consciousness, together with her prejudices, and hatreds, is expressing itself to-day in preparing for war as a defence measure, growing out of existing suspicions."

Charles Evan Hughes, an apostle of International Peace, said before the newspaper men's convention in Washington, words to this effect, "The world does not want peace; there is no peace in sight".

A nationally known clergyman, recently returning from Europe, says: "Europe is now in a war-like mood; the only thing that prevents war is her lack of funds."

The mighty upheavals in the East are indicative of crises, which are always attended with danger. The world seems to be suffering from some sort of a nervous complex.

The prophecies of the World-War days of the dawn of an Utopian age seem ludicrous in the light of the present setting of the stage before our eyes.

A moral analysis of our age conditions reveals a setting akin to other ages in the history of moral and spiritual declension, which, however, invariably preceded the mighty spiritual movements that held back the tides of iniquity and unbelief, and ushered in the eras of spiritual and moral blessing, saving nations and men. This is no time for dreaming. There is no place for the timid and uncertain. Certainly a false optimism would be dangerous and pessimism defeat.

In the light of these conditions, the minister may well ask, "Who is sufficient for these things?" And in quiet confidence he must hear the still, small voice out of the shouting and tumult of our age, and in the power of the all-conquering and victorious Christ, take his place in the fray until the victory promised is assured.

The One Thing Needful.

There are many things advantageous to the Christian minister. There is, however, one thing needful. In a comparatively recent conference with preachers, this question was raised during a discussion which followed the reading of a paper on the ministry: "What do you consider to be the chief weakness of the ministry of to-day?" Many answers were given, viz.: "Lack of leadership", "Poor administration", "Lack of conviction in the pulpit", "Inadequate preparation for preaching", and many others. My personal answer to the question, and so expressed, was: "I believe the chief weakness of the ministry of our day is our lack of preaching power". We may have inherited certain conditions for which we may not be immediately responsible. However, we cannot shoulder the responsibility entirely upon others, or even upon society.

The aggressive minister of to-day is the victim of a modern pressure that tends to make of him a business manager. The demands laid upon him are legion. The mechanics of modern church life I fear have robbed us of the dynamics of preaching power. Preaching, teaching, prophets are needed in our age, as in

every age. In every age of moral and spiritual declension, it was the pulpit's preaching power that held in check the disintegrating forces of society, and ushered in the new day of saving health. When the pulpit lost her power, society lapsed into indifference and spiritual death. It can be corroborated by history, that the ebb-tide of a nation's moral and spiritual life, was the period of waning pulpit power. If what I have said be true, ours is a responsibility unsurpassed, yes, akin to that of the prophet of old, "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel, therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand."

Sensing the Lack of Power.

Almost frantic efforts are made to acquire preaching power. With some, the emphasis has been placed on adornment, logic, literary skill, niceness, polished expression. Others have fallen into the temptation to follow the fads of the age, and accommodate their preaching to the moods of the people. Others have discovered, and some too late, that the quest for popularity has robbed them of preaching power. The pew will sense this lack of pulpit power, though unable at times to define the need.

Thomas Phillips tells of a brilliant young man, the grandson of a Baptist minister, who came to listen to him preach. He had drifted away from all organized religion and had become a disciple of Rudolph Steiner. Thomas Phillips asked him, "Why?" His reply, he affirms, was challenging: "I attend your churches, and you ministers discuss social questions, and to one who has taken his degree in economics your preaching is crudely amateurish. Or else, you work out Christianity as a problem in algebra with x equal to y , and y equal to z . Scores of us would attend worship again if you only gave us an authentic report from the unseen". That is what the world is hungering for, an authentic report from the unseen, a gospel and a revelation. I want to preach, said he, like the Apostle Paul and bring to my congregation, "clusters of grapes freshly cut from the vines of God".

Comparatively recently I made a test in my congregation; it was with the great evening service. Slips of paper were distributed to everybody present. They were to ask me the most pressing question upon their minds and hearts. I was somewhat fearful of the results, because they were to be classified and answered. Many young people are in regular attendance upon this service. My first discovery was the fact that the questions centred around the vital problems of faith and practice; not one foolish question was asked, very few controversial. The majority were about the spiritual life and the life that is to come.

One evening one of our organized Young Women's classes held a special meeting at which a dinner was served. Mrs. Johnson and I were invited as special guests. I was informed that on this night they expected me to answer an accumulation of questions. I was supposed to have had the questions a day or two in advance, but by some strange circumstance I

did not even see the box until it was opened on the evening in question, after a delightful dinner had been served. About fifty were present, quite a number of whom were teachers, and several Normal students. I prepared myself, as I thought, to meet the moot questions of the day. I read all I could get hold of on Evolution, in particular. Imagine my surprise, when for two solid hours I attempted to answer those questions, and not one question on Evolution. I expressed my surprise to them, to which one for the group responded, "We want those certainties that answer our spiritual yearnings. We're tired of speculations".

Ah, that is our business, after all, to champion the spiritual possibilities of man, and, amid the glittering deceptions of a passing world, press the claims of Jesus Christ to the forefront, pointing "not only to the life that now is, but that which is to come". There are experts in every other field, but we are alone in this. If we fail in this, we fail utterly.

It was Isaac Watts who said: "That is a good sermon which draws my heart nearer to God; which makes the Grace of Christ sweeter to my soul, and the commands of Christ easy and delightful; that is an excellent discourse, indeed, which enables me to mortify some unruly sin, to vanquish some strong temptation, and weans me from the enticements of this lower world, and bears me above all the disquietude of this lower life, which fits me for the hour of death and makes me desirous of appearing before Jesus Christ, my Lord".

What Is Preaching?

Brethren, I speak with the tenderest sympathy for the ministry. I, too, am a minister. Who is there of us who does not want to be able to preach in power; to be in reality "able ministers of the New Testament"?

I heard a prominent Southern minister some time ago speak to a group of ministers. He told of a Pastor who had given himself a martyr to what he thought to be the way of success in the ministry. It was a suburban church. He plunged into everything that was going on in the life of the community. He was a member of several clubs; he had no time to study, and was constantly on the streets raising his hat to every Tom, Dick and Harry that passed. He was known as a "good mixer". He would rush down to the depot to meet every train that came in, irrespective of time or weather conditions. At last, exhausted and disappointed that the church died on his hands, so to speak, he leaned over the pulpit one Sunday morning, after a week of gadding about, and in mournful tones exclaimed, "My dear people, you know how I have tried everything under the sun to make this work go, with so little results". Then he began to enumerate upon his tireless activities, concluding in a wailing tone, "Is there anything else that you know of that I might have done?" A stillness settled over the congregation, which was broken by a remark from one of the men of the church. In low but impressive tones he replied: "I don't know, Pastor, what more you might have done unless you had gone down to meet the freight trains coming in".

I attended as a special guest a conference of ministers. They were discussing the question, What can we do to get people to attend our services? They had another question that they called: "The problem of the Prayer Meeting,—is it worth continuing?"

After a good deal of discussion, one of the leading ministers said something to this effect: "Brethren, we have had a very profitable time together, but I have a conviction that much of the fault lies with us. The fact of the matter is we labour in 'fleshly energy', but lack spiritual power". He cited the results of an inquiry within a representative group of ministers (and included himself) which stunned me. Of that group of thirty pastors, the average daily period of prayer was less than ten minutes; with some, it was a hasty conscience-salving prayer at bedtime, while others had given up praying except in the pulpit.

You may not agree with me, but I really believe that the ministry of to-day is in no small way responsible for the dearth of spiritual power in our churches. I further believe that the only way to a restoration of spiritual power and world evangelism is through the one thing needful in the ministry, viz., a restoration of preaching power.

You will not misunderstand me, will you? I am a conservative; to be more explicit, a fundamentalist. Yet I really believe that the church of Jesus Christ to-day is suffering perhaps as much from a dead evangelicalism, a dead orthodoxy, as she is from heterodoxy. With Paul we say: "Our sufficiency is of God; who hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life".

Let me ask two questions. First: What shall we preach? Second: How shall we preach? These questions are of vital importance. It is imperative that we have a message. It is of equal importance that we know how to preach. Of equal importance, did I say? Yea, perhaps of greater importance is the latter question, How shall I preach? since the man may have the message, and mar it in the preaching.

What shall we preach? There is but one answer. "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God".

Brethren, we are not responsible for the message, we are held responsible for its delivery. The message fits right into the self-confessed needs of our age. Let us preach Jesus Christ in all His redemptive glory. Preach Him in the full-orbed picture of His princely person. Preach the Christ of the gospels, but don't stop there; preach Him risen and ascended. Preach the Christ of the epistles in all His exalted glory. Preach Him until He looms far above Christianity, and with the poet-songster exclaim:

"I'd sing the characters He bears,
And all the forms of love He wears
Exalted on the throne;
In loftiest songs of sweetest praise
I would through everlasting days,
Make all His glories known."

I cannot escape the temptation to quote Balfour's so-called tribute to Jesus Christ as a worshipful expression on our part:

"Christ is a rare jewel, but men know not His value;
A sun which ever shines,
But men perceive not His brightness, nor walk in
His light.

He is a garden full of sweets,
A hive full of honey,
A sun without a spot,
A star ever bright,
A fountain ever full,
A brook which ever flows,
A rose which ever blooms,
A fountain which ever yields.
A guide who never errs.
A friend who never forsakes.

"No mind can fully grasp His glory,
His beauty, His worth, His importance, no tongue
can fully describe.

He is the source of all good,
The fountain of all excellence,
The mirror of perfection,
The life of Heaven,
The wonder of earth,
Time's masterpiece, and eternity's glory,
The sun of bliss, the way of life,
And life's fair way."

For such a privilege and task, young ministers, are we called from among the sons of men to make Him known in all His redemptive glory. Then ours is more than a human task; it is all that, to be sure, and more.

Spiritual Power Needful.

Is it not true that the character, as well as the fortunes, of the gospel is practically committed to the preacher? Some one has aptly said something to this effect: "The preacher either makes or mars the message from God to man. There is a sense in which the preacher is even more than the message."

Preaching is not alone the delivery of a message; it includes that, but it is infinitely more. It is the outflow of a life. The utterances of the preacher are effective only to the degree that his life is effective. It is, after all, the life behind the message that makes it effective. Emerson's philosophy is timely here: "What you are is of more importance than what you say". The apostolic answer to the question of the phenomenon of the mighty accomplishments through preaching power was: "The manner of men we were among you in the power of the Holy Ghost". Everything depends upon the spiritual character of the preacher.

I sat beside a minister in an Evangelistic Conference in one of our large cities, who said to me at the dinner table: "I'd like to see the man who could make a stir among the dry bones of my church". He continued: "That church is so dead there isn't an undertaker in town who would bury it". I said to him quietly, "Perhaps you killed it". He made no reply. I had every reason to believe he did.

Preaching cannot rise in its life-giving force above the man. It has been well said: "Dead men who preach dead sermons kill people; dead sermons kill".

How true, "As the life-giving milk from the mother's bosom is but the mother's life, so all the preacher says is tinctured, impregnated, by what he is". "This treasure is in earthen vessels", and the taste of the vessel impregnates, and may discolour. The whole man lies behind the sermon".

There is a personal force as distinguished from the force of the preacher's logic and his rhetoric, or even the truth that he preaches, even apart from the supernatural in preaching. The Trinity of combination in preaching power is the message, the whole man, and the power of the Holy Spirit of God.

A study of men of preaching power in all the ages since apostolic days will disclose this fact, that in spite of their variety and uniqueness, it is evident that God uses all a man's psychic powers, his quickened intellect, his whole personality, to be but the organ of communication between the Divine and human, but "vessels sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work". While there is, then, so much of importance even in ourselves as instruments in relation to preaching power, that our best is required in preparation and cultivation for this holy act, yet withal, the one thing needful in preaching power is the supernatural element.

The Power of the Holy Spirit.

"Once God has spoken, twice have I heard this, that power is of God."

"Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

I would not infer that we have not good preaching. Is the preaching of our age powerful? It was Thomas Parker who exclaimed, "How can I preach Him, if I do not know Him?" Ah! men and women, the source of power is Christ Himself. His power is ministered to us by the Holy Spirit. He transmits power through transformed men. We are constantly straining for new methods: God is looking for men. We are occupied, I fear, too much with the mechanics, at the possible expense of the dynamics. Since Pentecost God has always had His men upon whom the Spirit's transforming power rests with transmitting force. Christ said, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses of me." Our Lord's own word is "Dunamis," from which we get our English word, "Dynamite." The power of the promise is not power exerted so much as power possessed.

His Pre-Resurrection promise becomes Post-Resurrection power by the presence of the Holy Spirit, through transformed men. Is not this the age of the Holy Spirit's administration? It is His mission to glorify Christ, making the "Word of God" "Quick and Powerful", and the cross of Christ the radiant and focal point of salvation, "the power and wisdom of God" to men.

Our age needs preachers like him who received his commission from the risen Lord, to "open the eyes of men and to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God." Such power cannot be described or analyzed. It is the man in spiritual presence, "endued with power," being "clothed upon by the Holy Ghost." Such power is felt in language,

(Continued on page 12.)

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

RESCUED AT SEA.

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto.

(Stenographically reported.)

"And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

"And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

"But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

"And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

"And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

"But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; It is I; be not afraid.

"And Peter answered and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

"And he said, Come. And when Peter was come out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

"But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

"And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

"And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

"Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God."—Matthew 14: 22-33.

This is a familiar passage; but I think it may yield us much spiritual profit. The figure of the journey of life as a sea-voyage is a very familiar one. It has been a favourite metaphor of the poets from David's day. "He bringeth them unto their desired haven." "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." The sea with its wide expanse, its unfathomable depths, has always been suggestive of the mysteries of life. Some of you sometimes have stood at the dock where a mighty ocean liner was moored; and you have looked to the upper deck as to the top of a great building. You have surveyed its length and breadth, and watched the hundreds of men busy at their task, loading and unloading, and you have felt that such a monster would surely be safe anywhere. But if from another ship in mid-ocean you look upon that leviathan of the deep, you see it tossed by the mighty waves as though it were but a cork. And there are some personalities that seem great; there are men who seem equal to almost every emergency; and yet you have seen even the greatest of them driven with the wind and tossed and exposed to all the fury of the gale.

Well now, this story, which I have read to you this morning, of the coming of the Lord Jesus through the storm to the relief of His much-tried disciples, is illustrative of miracles of grace that are continually wrought in the experiences of God's people. It is no unusual thing to see an individual Christian, or even a group of Christians, tossed with tempest. These men were in the midst of the sea, and the wind was contrary to them, and they were severely tried. I say, that is not at all an uncommon thing. It is one of the problems which young Christians have to face, and which they find most difficult of solution. From the earliest days it has been a matter of open observation that the wicked are not in trouble as other men are, that they have more than heart could wish. Very often the careless soul seems to be permitted to sail over untroubled seas. He has fewer

difficulties than other people, and he sails from place to place with comparative quiet; while many a man, who seems to be desirous of walking in the ways of the Lord and doing the will of the Lord from the heart, finds that his course lies through the storm, and he is continually asking himself why it should be that he should have so much difficulty when he is really sincerely seeking to follow the Lord's direction. Now, I do not for the moment attempt to explain it: I simply remind you of the fact that it is a matter of universal observation that those who follow in the ways of the Lord are very frequently found in the storm.

I.

In this particular case they were there BECAUSE THEY HAD DONE AS THE LORD TOLD THEM TO DO. The Lord Jesus constrained them to get into a ship, and to go unto the other side. There was absolutely no doubt about their being in the way of the divine plan and purpose. They had followed the direction of the Lord Himself. They were just exactly where He wanted them to be. Their ship was headed in the direction He desired them to sail; and it was because of that very fact that they had to row in the teeth of the gale. The wind was contrary to those who were moving in the direction of the Lord's purpose. And so is it, my dear friends, with believers generally: "The carnal mind is enmity against God." All the tides of life in this world run contrary to the life that is set in the divine direction; and because you have difficulty you must not hastily conclude that you have missed your direction. Daniel was in the way of the divine purpose when he found himself in the lions' den; so were the Hebrew children when they found themselves in the burning fiery furnace; so was Joseph when he was despised and rejected of his brethren; so was Jacob when he complained, "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away."

Therefore, I want to bring this simple word to the man or woman who in business or in some other way has been beset during this past week with special and peculiar difficulty; and that is the common lot of those who are the Lord's people. We are not going to sail over summer seas always: we shall have to encounter the contrary wind. However, let me remind you that *sometimes we bring ourselves into the storm*. It was so of those who sailed with Paul. They set sail from the fair havens when the south wind blew softly, when circumstances seemed to be specially favourable. And you remember how Paul stood and warned them: "Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives. Nevertheless, the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship," and refused to hearken to the word of this prisoner in chains. And very often we set out upon some speculative voyage, we embark upon some course that we are warned will be with hurt and much damage; but we refuse to listen to the warning voice because the south winds blow softly. There came a day when this same man stood forth after long abstinence and said, "Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me." Sometimes God comes to men and says, "I told you so. You ought to have hearkened unto Me and you would have saved yourselves a great deal of trouble." But in any case, the Lord does mercifully come to His people and deliver them, even when they have brought themselves into trouble; for in the instance to which I referred, the word of the Lord came to Paul promising that there should be no loss of life. They cast themselves, "some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land."

These are mere commonplaces, and there is not a man or woman here whose life is not touched by these simple observations. We have all been in the deep; we have all been tossed with tempest; we have all asked the question why it should be so, and have wondered why others should have had a pleasanter voyage.

II.

THERE WAS MORE DISCOMFORT THAN DANGER in the instance before us. As a matter of fact, they never were in any real danger; but it was very uncomfortable and very distressing. An ocean voyage often is very uncomfortable for some people. There are some sea captains who never put to sea without being sea-sick. I have, fortunately, escaped that experience myself. But I have often seen sailors sick. I have talked with them about it, and there are some who never get over it, and I believe there are some of the Lord's children, who seem to be so constituted that they are half the time sea-sick. They are greatly troubled. There are some people who cannot stand any kind of tossing. The slightest difficulty disturbs them, and they begin to moan and complain and wonder whether, after all, they are going to be lost. I have dealt with some of the Lord's children until I have been at my wits' end. I could not doubt that they were really in the ways of the Lord; I had not a shadow of a doubt that they were trusting Him; but they seemed never wholly to recover from the habit of getting sea-sick. As soon as the winds blow, as soon as any little difficulty presents itself and they are tossed with tempest, then they are full of distress and discomfort, for they are not made for the storm. I am sorry for you, my brother, if that is true, as I am sorry for people who

are constitutionally disposed to sea-sickness. I have seen them get on the ship, they wave goodbye to their friends, and as soon as the ship begins to move you see the look come upon their faces as though they would say, "I am in for it now." They are prepared for it, they expect it, and they get what they expect. There is a habit of looking upon life in that way; and there are people who are never happy unless they are miserable. They find their chief delight in being full of trouble. I know that is a paradox; but if ever they should find themselves on smooth seas they would hardly know how to behave themselves. My dear friends, I do not think this is wholly necessary. But even if it be so that there is some soul here this morning, tossed about, and saying, "I never seem to get out of the storm; I never have the peace that some people have; I never have the joy that other people experience; and I wonder sometimes whether I am a Christian," perhaps you are just a sea-sick soul on the Lord's ship, sailing in His direction, yet not having fully learned how to put your trust in Him for deliverance from discomfort as from danger. For there are some people who, somehow or another—I cannot understand it—believe that the Lord can save their souls—they never have any doubt about that; they know where the ship is going, and where it will drop anchor at last; they are certain that they are saved—and yet they cannot leave the bread-and-butter question with God: they have not learned to trust Him in the material affairs of life; they have not learned to find rest by casting all their care upon Him.

I wish I might say some word this morning that will cure you of that chronic spiritual sea-sickness. There is the fact, that these disciples were in great discomfort, but they were in no danger. They were distressed in rowing; they laboured hard to bring the ship out of the storm; they dug their oars deeply into the waves; they exerted themselves to the utmost; but *there were powers external to themselves which were not subject to human control*. And with all their rowing, the sea was still boisterous, and the wind was contrary, and they needed a power not their own. Don't you see the simple truth? There are some difficulties from which we cannot possibly extricate ourselves. There are some difficulties beyond human control. All our rowing will not smooth the sea, and our best efforts will not still the tempest. Some things we may be able to order ourselves as God helps us; but there are things that are entirely beyond our control—winds that are contrary, waves that are boisterous—and while that condition of life obtains we shall be just like these disciples on the sea—tossed with tempest.

III.

Now a further simple observation: While these disciples were on the sea, JESUS WAS UP IN THE MOUNTAIN PRAYING: "And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray; and when the evening was come, he was there alone." He was there, and they were in the midst of the sea. And that is still true. Our Lord Jesus has gone into a mountain to pray. Do you remember when He said to His disciples, just as now He constrained them to get into a ship and go to the other side—ere He departed, He said: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations—Go ye into all the world; put to sea and cross the deep; I am going up into the mountain to pray. All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore." And He ascended into the glory, and to the Father's right hand. And while

we are in the midst of the sea, He is at the place of power praying for us.

There is here, therefore, *the suggestion of remembrance*. Jesus did not forget where the disciples were. He did not forget that they were in the very place to which He had sent them. Nor does He ever forget us. I wonder are you sometimes troubled when people ask you to pray—to remember them in prayer! I receive letters from many people who say, "Will you pray for me?" And I try to remember them. Do you ever feel rebuked that you have forgotten to pray for somebody who asked you to pray for him? Do you ever feel somewhat condemned that you have not taken upon your own heart the burden of another life who is looking to you for spiritual help? I think we need to be somewhat careful about saying, "I will pray for you." Do not say it unless you mean it. Do not offer comfort of that sort unless you really mean to take that name upon your heart and to present it before the Lord. Do not mock Him and mock your friends by saying, "I will pray for you," unless you are determined to remember it, and to continue in prayer. But, blessed be God, our Lord Jesus never forgets! He has gone up into the mountain to pray, and He will not forget us in the midst of the storm:

"The names of all His saints He bears
Deep graven on His heart;
Nor shall the meanest Christian say
That He hath lost his part."

He never forgets. We grow out of each other's knowledge. I was in my old church a few weeks ago, and met a great many people. Some of their faces were familiar, but I was unable to associate the face with the name in some few cases; and the young people who had grown up in these last twelve or thirteen years had grown out of my knowledge. They came up to test my memory, and said, "Do you remember me?" In some cases I did—they had not changed greatly; but others had changed altogether. But we never grow out of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, He is up yonder and He remembers us. I wish I could lay that simple truth upon your heart this morning, that whoever else may forget, the great Intercessor will never forget to pray for His own. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." You have not to introduce yourself. When I was down in the South a few weeks ago, I found they had a very happy practice, as I thought. They did not put the preacher's memory to a test; they came up, and said, "How do you do? My name is Jones. What is yours?" They always introduced themselves: "I am Mrs. So-and-so;" or, "I am Miss So-and-so." They did not wait for anybody else to introduce them. We need to do that with each other, but we never need to do it with the Lord: "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and He never forgets. As He went into the mountain to pray, He had every one of those disciples who were in the storm upon His heart. And He has you, my brother. You say, "Nobody cares." You are in this City living your life alone. You are face to face with tremendous problems, and you are bowed beneath great burdens. But there is One Who remembers, and Who is in the mountain at prayer, and He is there in full sympathy with you. I think we do not make enough of that great principle: "He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." He "was in all points tempted like as we are."

Jesus became a man not only that He might die for us and bear in His own body our sins—salvation in one sense

was completed at the cross; that is, atonement was completed there, the price of redemption was paid there—but salvation in the full and complete sense involves presentation of the redeemed soul without fault before the throne of God; and our Lord Jesus carried our human nature into the glory. Hold fast by the truth of the physical resurrection of our Lord Jesus. He appeared in bodily form. He had a real body; it was with a real body he ascended to the Father. The Godman is in the Father's presence to-day; and the One Who prays for you and me is still "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." He is God; but He is still a man. He has not forgotten what it is to be weary and to be hungry, and, mayhap, to be sleepy—to be weary altogether of the burdens of life. And the same Jesus prays for us this morning, and He can enter into perfect sympathy with every one who is tossed with the storm. *And that, my friends, means safety.* It was impossible that anyone should be lost for whom Jesus prayed. You will remember what He said at the grave of Lazarus before He said, "Lazarus, come forth". He said: "I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." Jesus declared that He never prayed in vain. The man for whom Jesus prays is safe. He said: "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat—you will be tossed with tempest; you will be shaken about; you will be terribly tried—but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." And it was answered on the day of Pentecost when that mighty man of God spoke in the fullness of the Holy Ghost. But Jesus said: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." Somebody foolishly wrote me the other day—we have all had such letters, and you will understand me when I say "foolishly"—but somebody wrote to me the other day from a distance saying, "If you will only pray for me, I shall be sure to have the blessing." But there is One Who always prevails in prayer; there is One without Whose prayers we cannot prosper. And I would tell every troubled Christian here this morning that the Lord Jesus is praying for you: "He ever liveth to make intercession for them." And what is the argument? "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Thus the assurance of eternal salvation is found in the fact, not only that Jesus died, not only that He was raised from the dead, but that He still lives and pleads the merit of His own blood, and demands—if I may reverently say so—at the hand of God, that which He has purchased by His own blood. So, if we are saved, even if we are tossed about, the Lord Jesus is praying for us.

IV.

The next thing is that *IN DUE TIME HE CAME*—about the fourth watch of the night. *He did not come at once*; it was past three o'clock in the morning. It was in the evening just as the shadows were lengthening that Jesus sent them over the sea, and He went up into the mountain. He allowed the night to come, and the darkness to fall, and the storm to break and rise to its full height, while He left them to themselves. Jesus does not always come the moment we send for Him. He does not always come in the first watch, nor in the second watch, nor in the third watch; and, perhaps, that element of time is entering into your difficulty. They sent for Jesus when Lazarus was sick, and "when he had heard there-

fore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was." He refused immediately to go to Bethany, and He waited and gave Lazarus time to die. And when at last He came, Martha said unto Jesus, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." They were prepared to write their blessings in the past tense, to speak of what might have been if Jesus had only come when they sent for Him. My friend, He may not come in the first watch, or in the second watch; but He will come in time: that is the main thing: in the fourth watch He came!

But *the disciples did not see how He could come*. They were in the midst of the sea. There was no way by which Jesus could come to them. They canvassed all the possibilities, perhaps; but they could see no way by which the Delivered could come. And that is how we estimate the possibilities of God's answering our prayer. A friend has written to you to say that he will arrive in Toronto on a certain day, and he is coming from a certain place. You go down to the railway office, and ask when trains will arrive from that place—what is the last train? When the last train has come in, and your friend has not arrived, you say, "He cannot come to-night. There is no other way by which he can come." And we have a habit of doing the same way with the Lord. We pray, and immediately we sit down to consult the time-table to discover by what train He will come, by what means He will answer our prayer. And when we have surveyed the whole situation, we decide at last that because we cannot see any way by which He can come, He will not come at all. But He will come in His own way.

"In some way or the other, the Lord will provide;

It may not be my way, it may not be thy way,
But yet in His own way, the Lord will provide.

At some time or other, the Lord will provide;

It may not be my time, it may not be thy time,
But yet in His own time the Lord will provide."

Why then should we try to shut God up to our programme? It is of the very essence of faith that we allow God to be God, and that we expect of Him even the impossible. I remember after the war, just after the Armistice, being in Mons, and having to get to London in about twenty-four hours. There was no railroad, as all the railroads were blown up. All sorts of possibilities were canvassed, and they even talked about getting an aeroplane and sending me back that way. However, I got home at last by motor car and military railway and various means of transportation. But I want to tell you that long before the science of aviation was discovered, it was written in this Book: "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky." You do not know when His aeroplane will come. You do not know how God will answer your prayer. But remember, that He Who has prayed has all power, and somehow, some time, and in some way, He will come to your deliverance.

At last, *He came in a way that was, humanly speaking, impossible*. He came walking upon the very waves which threatened to engulf them. Their difficulties were made by divine grace the stepping stones of their Deliverer. The very waves of the stormy sea was the path of His feet. How many of you Christians have found that to be true? It was true of Jacob, to whom I referred a moment ago. Talk to him, and say, "What is the matter, Jacob?" He will answer, "I am terribly bereaved." "Well, how are you bereaved?" He saith: "Joseph is not, and Simeon

is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me." But if you get God's standpoint, you will say to Jacob, "The very things you describe as your troubles are God's way of bringing you deliverance; for it is through Joseph, and through Simeon, and through Benjamin that your prayer is going to be answered." And that is the true experience of every one of us:

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head."

There are Christians here of experience who, if I were to stop now and turn this into a testimony meeting, would get up and say, "The greatest blessings that have ever come to me, by God's grace, have come on the stormy seas, when the Lord has actually walked upon the waves and brought me deliverance through the difficulties I most feared."

And then as He came to them, *they feared to accept deliverance in God's way*. What an infinitely patient Deliverer we have! They complained because He did not come; they were distressed because He did not come; and then they were terrified when He did come. No wonder Jesus said: "Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like? They are like unto children sitting in the market place, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept. For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!" We seem to be determined not to be satisfied. What a blessing that the Lord is so infinitely patient!

"And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit"; *but they found comfort through His word*. After all, it is the Word of the Lord which always dispels our fears. When Jesus spoke and said, "It is I; be not afraid;" they were, indeed, comforted. My friend, if you are to get comfort, you will have to come to this sure word of prophecy; you will have to hear the Word of the Lord in the midst of the storm.

V.

I want to say this before I close: I think IT WAS A TRUE INSTINCT WHICH LED PETER TO SAY, "LORD, IF IT BE THOU, BID ME COME UNTO THEE ON THE WATER." What did he mean? He said, "I see no reason why the Lord Jesus should not enable me to do what He does. He treads His difficulties triumphantly under His feet, and I ought to be able to do the same." And Jesus said, "Come. I will take you at your word. Come." And I rather fancy He paused in His march toward the ship. You can see Peter climbing down over the side of the ship, and he began to walk on the water to go to Jesus. I do believe that you can walk on anything to go to Jesus. Now, think of that: "He walked on the water, to go to Jesus." If you want to go to Jesus, if you want to get into closer fellowship with Him, keep at His side, be sure of His identity, and you can walk on anything. "But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me." And the Lord stretched forth His hand and saved him, and stepped up over the side of the ship into the ship with him. And as soon as they were in the ship, the winds ceased. Jesus came in the fourth watch of the

night, and He brought the morning with Him, as He always does.

VI.

"Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God." WHY DID HE LEAVE THEM IN THE MIDST OF THE STORM? Why did He try them to the very utmost? For this very purpose, that he might find in their extremity His opportunity, that He might find by means of their difficulties the opportunity to prove His Deity. And it was well worth spending that night on the stormy sea if by means of it their conviction of the Deity of Jesus might be strengthened. You want to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"; and you ask me if I know of any books you may read, any course of study you may take. These are all useful in their place; but if you want really to know the Lord, you will have to go to sea with Him. You cannot learn of Jesus, you cannot come to know Jesus in the quiet places only. It is out on the stormy deep, it is in the lions' den, it is amid the flame, it is out where the battle is raging, it is in the place where all human helpers fail, that you learn Who Jesus is and what He can do. And unless you are willing to go to that college, and master that lesson, then you will not "grow up into him in all things".

I have spoken this word this morning in the hope that some troubled soul here may come to see that the experiences of life are part of the discipline of grace, and God's way of leading you more perfectly to know the Lord. Thus, "grace and peace will be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord."

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTER IN OUR AGE.

(Continued from page 7.)

action, and often reflected in countenance; a radiation of Jesus Christ's spiritual presence through the transformed personality.

Horace Bushnell knelt by the little log fireplace in his room at the University one memorable day; he waited to feel the touch of the Lord upon him. It cost him not a little. From that hour and from that room he went out to preach the gospel; it was preaching in power. You know the results. What a force and influence went out from that transfigured life after the touch divine! It is ever so. It is recorded by a friend of his who accompanied him climbing the White Mountains. It was near the close of the day, and Bushnell looking upon the scene, transfixed by its beauty, said to his friend, "One of us ought to pray here." Said his friend, "We knelt down and prayed; and I was afraid to reach out my hand for fear I would touch the garments of the Almighty."

Oh! That we might receive that touch divine anew, and in the power of the transfigured life, transmit the glories of the gospel of Christ, and go out and preach under the impulse and inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God, wielding the "Word of God which is the sword of the spirit," until under the power of our preaching, we shall see His reincarnation in the lives of those to whom we minister. And in that power preaching to save the lost, and the hastening of that day when the once thorn-crowned Head shall wear the crown of Empires; and the Hands once pierced and bleeding to pay the debt of sin shall sway the sceptre of Righteous-

ness and the "knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the seas."

I crave anew for myself and for my brethren of the ministry, especially the young ministers going out from this Seminary, the Spirit-filled life. I could wish that we all, by the grace of God, could be the manner of men such as Oliver Goldsmith describes in one of his rhymes.

"In his duty prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all;
And as a bird each fond endearment tries,
To tempt its new-pledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reprov'd each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way."

A GOOD STORY FROM IRELAND.

(Continued from page 2.)

willing to give it just a little time to do a little soliciting, there would be considerable increase in the circulation, and they would be doing a fine bit of missionary work at the same time for which I should think they would not expect any remuneration.

"Kindly have all subscriptions begin with the issue containing the report of the London Convention, and oblige,

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) J. S. REEKIE."

What Mr. Reekie has done, hundreds of our readers could do if they would. We can, with good conscience, urge them to do so, because the whole *Gospel Witness* enterprise is a missionary project. The Editor has wrought on this paper now for nearly nine years, and has yet to receive the first cent of remuneration. The books which have been published, which are reprints of sermons appearing in *The Gospel Witness*, have brought him absolutely no financial returns, because they have been used to further the interests of *The Witness*. Over and above all that, it has been necessary to raise year by year some thousands of dollars from interested friends to cover the cost of publication. Our *Gospel Witness* family have recognized that this work is one of the duties of the household of faith, and but for their co-operation the continued publication of this paper would have been an impossibility.

But from all parts of the world we receive news of blessing, and we have come to regard *The Witness* as one of the most important pieces of work, if not the most important, with which we have to do. We wonder if many of our readers who find blessing in these pages will not give some of their time to securing other subscriptions? Of course we need financial help all the time, and are always glad to have it; but we are especially glad to have new subscriptions, because, while they help to meet our financial need, they further extend the ministry of the paper.

Send *The Gospel Witness* a Christmas present of five, ten, or more subscriptions. A little while ago one brother in far-off New South Wales sent us seventy-three subscriptions, with a \$200.00 cheque to cover them. May his tribe increase!

THIS WEEK'S RADIO SERMON.

On account of the Editor's having to go out of the city this week, he had no time to revise last Sunday evening's sermon, but it will be published next week with the sermon of next Sunday.

The Union Baptist Witness

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

W. GORDON BROWN, Editor.

SEMINARY NEWS.

The latest issue of our Toronto Baptist Seminary paper, *The Seminary Advocate* (by the way, if you have not seen this paper it will be well worth your while to obtain a copy, for it is always full of interest) contains an account of some of the practical Christian work which is being done by our students. The following extracts will serve to show that our students' Christianity is by no means merely theoretical:

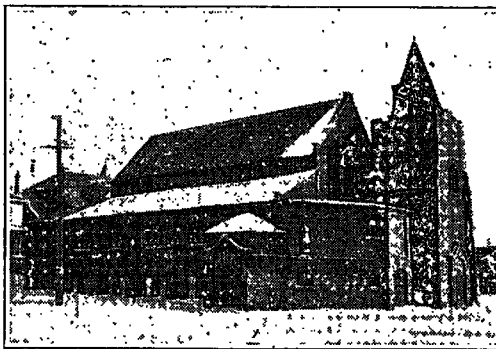
"For several weeks it has been the privilege of three students to teach English two nights a week in the Regular Baptist Mission for the Jews. The Jewish people are extremely anxious to learn our language and it is a delight to help them. They are most courteous and polite, and, with few exceptions, do not fail to thank us warmly after the meetings. Their friendliness is matched only by their interest. Someone might say that in this work we are laying too much stress on education. Don't think it. The teaching of English is only a means to an end, and that end is to lead those Jewish people to a saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. At no time shall we allow secondary matters to supersede or obscure in any way the all-important theme. Your part in this section of the vineyard is to pray for the salvation of these people that glory may be added to His Great Name"

"The meeting held in Parliament St. Mission, Wednesday, November 5th, was in charge of Mr. Garbig. Mr. Dempster was at the piano, and the writer (B. Jeffery) spoke on the Imprisonment of Peter. When those present were asked to raise their hands if they desired prayer, four did so. It is difficult to say just how much in earnest these men were, therefore we must pray the God of the harvest that He will give the increase."

A number of students also are doing supply work on Sundays, and all are heartily enthusiastic about doing all in their power to assist in the spread of our testimony. Pray for our students that the Lord may give them the needed grace for their work, both while they study and while they proclaim the story of redeeming grace.

OAKWOOD, TORONTO.

Sunday and Monday, December 7th and 8th, will be "red letter" days in the history of the above church, when members and friends will meet to celebrate the opening of the reconstructed and renovated church building. Many improvements have been made during the past few months. The main auditorium has been enlarged and bricked, and the interior has been re-decorated. A basement has been added and a new heating



KENORA.

Kenora Baptist Tabernacle is a building, somewhat after the cathedral style, of exceptional beauty and utility. The plant has been much improved through the efforts of Pastor E. E. Hooper. During the three years of his ministry in this church, real blessing has added to its spiritual power. One young man and one young lady from the membership are studying in the Toronto Baptist Seminary. It will be remembered that the Kenora Church is the latest addition to our Union.

system installed. The members of the church now have a building of which they feel they can be justly proud, and they extend to all interested friends a hearty invitation to be present at one or more of these opening services. There will be special speakers on Sunday and Monday evenings, and Rev. C. Rumball and his people are looking forward to a time of great blessing during these days. Oakwood Church is situated in a large and growing district and there are great possibilities for the spread of the Gospel testimony. Pray for this work.

STANLEY AVENUE, HAMILTON.

The great missionary farewell meeting held at Stanley Avenue Baptist Church, on Wednesday evening, November 26th, will be long remembered. The combined congregations of Immanuel, Hughson Street and Stanley Avenue Churches met here to bid God-speed to our out-going missionaries, Rev. Gordon and Mrs. Mellish and Miss Minnie Lane. The occasion was the more marked as Miss Lane is a Stanley Avenue young woman who has devoted herself to the Lord.

Rev. A. Milligan, one of "our old boys," now pastor of Immanuel Church, opened the devotional exercises, while Rev. R. Dodds, one of the members, read the Scripture lesson, and Rev. H. Bowers, of Hughson Street Church, led in the opening prayer. From the very beginning of the service the presence of the Holy Spirit was evidenced by a manifest sense of spiritual uplift.

Rev. C. J. Loney, as chairman, made some very pertinent remarks, then asked

one of the Stanley Avenue "old boys," Rev. W. E. Atkinson, now Secretary-treasurer of the Union, to introduce Mr. and Mrs. Mellish. Both of these spoke fervently of their call to the work, their whole-hearted devotion to the Lord, and their great expectations as they go forward in this service. Pastor Loney presented Miss Lane to the audience, and she outlined her call to the foreign field and told of her whole-hearted surrender to the Lord.

This church will have a special missionary objective, as the members present unanimously decided to stand whole-heartedly behind Miss Lane and to carry the financial burden of her salary. Presentations were made to Miss Lane from Immanuel Church, Hughson Street Church, Mrs. Frid's Bible Class, of which she was a valued member, the Young Women's Auxiliary, the Women's Missionary Auxiliary and a number of individuals.

At the conclusion of the service a young man came forward for salvation. The representatives of the churches and the missionaries formed a circle on the platform, while the congregation sang "Blest Be the Tie That Binds," thus bringing to a close a meeting in which all felt there had been an out-pouring of the Spirit of God.

HERE AND THERE.

An enthusiastic missionary rally was held at Annette Street Baptist Church on Monday, November 24th, when the members of our Toronto Union of Young People's Societies gathered to say farewell to Rev. Gordon and Mrs. Mellish and Miss Minnie Lane. Rev. W. E. Atkinson, the Secretary of our Union, introduced the missionaries; each of whom gave a brief address. These messages of consecration and inspiration made a deep impression upon the hearts of the young people present, and we have no doubt that they will gladly remember our missionaries in their prayers. Special violin music was provided by Mr. Gomme, of the Toronto Baptist Seminary, and Mrs. Campbell, of Annette Street Church. Mrs. Hartley, the mother of Mrs. Mellish, brought an appropriate message in song.

In our last issue we told our readers of the blessing which has accompanied special meetings held recently at Mount Albert, under the ministry of Pastor W. S. Whitcombe. Further blessing was experienced when on Friday, November 14th, and again on Wednesday, the 19th, Rev. A. C. Whitcombe, of Barrie, was present and gave lantern lectures on the Tabernacle. Mr. Whitcombe spoke to a crowded hall each night and on the final night the attendance reached about one hundred and twenty-five. The people who gathered much appreciated these

splendid lectures and we are sure real blessing will result from this effort. Let us continue to pray for Mount Albert, that God's work may prosper greatly in that section of His vineyard.

Alton Baptist Church held anniversary services on Sunday, November, 16th when Rev. David Hackett, pastor of Pape Avenue Baptist Church, was the special speaker. There were good congregations and the Lord's blessing was manifest throughout the services.

Orangeville Baptist Church has received blessing recently under the ministry of the following young men: Mr. William McArthur, of Hespeler, who has just returned from doing mission work in the northern part of Quebec, and who is looking forward to foreign mission service in the near future; Mr. James Forrester, who until recently, held the pastorate of the North Bay Regular Baptist Mission, and who has now begun preparation for medical mission work, and Mr. Kingsley M. Cutler, who has just returned from a period of fruitful service at Wyman, Quebec. All of these preached most acceptably and with great blessing to those who listened. There was a deep sense of Holy Spirit conviction of sin and after one of the evening services a young woman professed conversion.

NEWS FROM LIBERIA.

A letter from Rev. H. L. Davey, dated November 3rd, gives us a new address for our missionaries—c/o Patterson Zochonis & Co., Ltd., Lower Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, Republic of Liberia; West Africa.

Other extracts tell of the erratic arrival of mail during the last month or so and advise of letters received dated anywhere from August 25th to September 26th. Then Mr. Davey writes as follows regarding the cable received announcing the postponement of Mr. and Mrs. Hancox coming, and so forth:—

"Our hearts sank within us when your cable arrived telling of the postponement of sailing of Brother and Sister Hancox. We had so looked forward to their arrival and had made so many tentative plans concerning what we would do and just how the work would be carried on, and had so looked forward to the joy of fellowship in the things of the Lord, then the cable—Mrs. Davey and I were stunned. Then our hearts were overjoyed when, on Saturday last, November 1st, we received your cable telling of the wonderful Convention, and the good news that despite all things, we could look forward to the Mellishes and Miss Lane coming out in the near future to strengthen our hands in the work of the Lord. How thankful we are that they are coming is hard to say on paper, but we were like a couple of school children who have been granted a holiday, we were so happy we did not know how to show it. We are busy preparing places for their arrival, and we shall spare no effort to make them feel how glad we are to have their fellowship in this great and needy work. You may be sure Mrs. Davey is just getting all fussed up for the great welcome day, and I, too, am as happy as can be to think that another man is coming. Goodness only knows, with three ladies on the station,

I shall certainly need his assistance to keep them all in order. You might have tried to send me another man to even things up. However, joking aside, we do praise God for these reinforcements.

"We are planning to build a nice little house for Miss Lane—a two-roomed house should meet her need for the time being and we propose building this on a little bluff about two minutes' walk from our house, so she will not feel nervous or be too far away when some of the nice Liberian winds do blow-ow-ow-ow. We are wondering what church Miss Lane comes from, as we do not remember having heard of the young lady before.

"The young man, Charles Deans, is very pleased with his books; he is a keen young student and I believe we have found a jewel. Of course it never does to boast too loudly of young converts in Africa, but if sincerity of life and a desire to learn the Word and humbleness of character mean anything, then he has a good future. Certain it is that he has had some severe temptations since coming here, but he has remained steadfast and his life and cheery manner are an encouragement to us and an example to the native Christians. The enquirers' class is keeping up, we are having some good times and the men are so delighted to hear that others are coming to help, and I think some of them began to wonder if this work was going to amount to anything after Bro. Lewis left; then waiting so long for the Hancox and then the news of their not coming, but yesterday I read the cable to them and explained about the size of the Convention and told them that you had all sent your Christian love and greetings to them, well, they were so excited and got up and thanked me so much for being so frank with them and said that they were so glad I hid nothing from them and that they were just going to go on and believe and tell the good news all over the country.

"I am keeping on the young man I engaged for Brother Hancox, the one who is to be an interpreter. He is saved and soon will be ready for church membership. He is keen to preach and goes around in his spare time telling the Gospel story. He is also delighted to think another white man is coming, and I feel sure Brother Mellish will enjoy his fellowship and help.

"Our school work is keeping our hands busy. We have fifty-four in school and they are certainly the life of the station. We are beginning to see them interested in the Word; we have commenced a weekly Bible class and ten have come to this of their own free-will. They are keen to learn and their questions and answers would surprise some of the folk at home. I have this class every Thursday evening. It would be a good thing to ask special prayer for us at this time. The site is beginning to look lovely. I have spent much time with the boys in getting it cleared, then hoed, all the ant hills removed, some of them have taken weeks of work to remove. Then in front of our house I have built up two terraces with flower beds. Formerly the hill sloped off at a rather alarming angle. I was always more or less frightened either my wife or I

might roll down one day. It has really improved the look of the hill one hundred per cent. Property values have increased over night! Then we have been stump-cutting. Believe me, this is some job. This hill was a mass of vegetation, trees of every kind but very few good for anything, and useless as shade trees. These have all been cut down and we are busy removing the fibrous stumps which seem to be a feature of Liberian trees. This keeps me busy all afternoon, for without my gentle voice encouraging the boys, it is surprising how little they can accomplish in an afternoon."

MICHIGAN NOTES.

By C. R. Peterson.

ST. LOUIS.

Readers of *The Gospel Witness* will probably recall the efforts of this church to re-possess itself of its property. Two and a half years ago, by irregular, illegal and un-Baptistic methods, the property was deeded over to the Michigan Baptist Convention. The assurance was made that the convention would assist the church when necessary. No attention was paid by the convention to the St. Louis Church until your correspondent came to the field about a year ago. In answer to prayer, God gave the church a real revival, and full time services were resumed. At once the spirit of the ecclesiastical machine manifested itself. Through the convention attorney, Chas. F. Haight (the name is significant) the church was ordered to vacate the property at a given date. The church secured an injunction restraining the convention men from disturbing them, which injunction Secretary Ralph T. Andem and Lawyer Chas. F. Haight promptly violated. They then asked the courts to eject the church. Public sentiment among Baptists of Michigan protested against the high-handed piracy of the convention, and the convention officials finally consented to arbitrate. As a result, the convention finally gave the church a Quit Claim Deed to its own property. We are convinced that the knowledge that they were in contempt of court had something to do with the convention officials yielding. That they had no disposition to do so, is evidenced by the fact that several months ago they paid off a note that the church had owed at a local, and promised to pay off several other outstanding obligations. The note was for something like \$115.00. We wonder if this was paid out of the missionary funds of the convention. The church is celebrating the victory by a Bible Conference and Re-Dedicatory Service, a report of which will be given later.

* * * *

DETROIT

Bro. F. R. Vine, formerly pastor of the First Church, Albion, Mich., but more recently pastor at Madison, W. Va., accepted the unanimous call of Trinity Church of Detroit, and began his ministry in the metropolis, Sunday, November 2nd. We welcome him back to Michigan, and wish for him a richly blessed ministry in his new field.

Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

Vol. V.

No. 4.

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR.

Lesson 51. December 21st, 1930.
Fourth Quarter.**COVENANT CONFIRMED TO ISAAC.**
Lesson Text: Genesis, chapter 26.

Golden Text: "And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Gen. 26:4.

I. THE COVENANT CONFIRMED, (vs 1-5).

There is a similarity between the experience depicted in this chapter and that recorded concerning Abraham, (20). Such a marked similarity has aroused questioning in some minds as to whether this might not be simply another version of the same affair; but it is quite clear from the account that Abraham's experiences is in the mind of the writer (v. 1), and that he is recording a matter affecting another person. And besides, in the unchanging east of that time we need not wonder at an experience similar in most respects happening to two individuals. There is no confusion in the mind of the writer, guided by the Holy Spirit. Let there be none in ours.

Several things are recorded in these opening verses. First, the famine, then the going down to Gerar in Philistia (v. 1). A famine was a most serious matter for man and beast, and necessitated removal to a place where pasture was possible. Isaac had lived a somewhat settled life for many years, but now being forced to leave his part of the country, it was his intention evidently to go down into Egypt, the granary of the world in those early days. But God intervened and commanded him to sojourn in Gerar (vs. 2, 5). He there renewed the covenant with him. Such intercourse with God, and the receipt of such a promise no doubt was encouraging to the patriarch, as all similar intercourse is in these days to the children of God. Note the conditions and blessedness of divine intercourse.

The terms of the covenant are stated clearly in the promise of God to be with Isaac, to bless him, to give the land unto him and to his seed, to multiply his descendants, and make them a blessing unto all nations. And God said He would do this "because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes and my laws." God blesses the one who obeys His commandments, and conforms to His will. Note the blessings of obedience here and hereafter and the significance of this covenant then and now.

II. ISAAC'S MISTAKE, (vs. 6-11).

In the same manner in which Abraham failed, the son also made a mistake in the denial of his wife, the same motive actuating both. As in the case of his father, Isaac believed his life would be endangered if he acknowledged his relationship to his wife, therefore he said she was his sister. But his deception was discovered by Abimelech, and he received reproof from this heathen king. In this Isaac failed through fear of man;

such fear bringing a snare, (Prov. 29:25); he failed to trust in God, thereby treating Him unworthily; he carried out a scheme of the flesh, instead of walking in the Spirit; he sought to deceive, instead of being straightforward; he ran grave risk of dishonour, (v. 10), and of the loss of his wife entirely; and he reaped the reward of his deceptive attitude in being humiliated at the hands of a heathen monarch. His lack of testimony for God might also be noted and emphasis may be laid upon the necessity for truthful words and actions at all times, leaving the consequences with God, knowing that He always looks after those who trust Him.

III. ISAAC'S WEALTH, (vs. 12-16).

It is not an unusual thing in the east for a person to move into a locality, cultivate a certain portion of it, and then due to the envy of his neighbours have to move away again. Such was the experience which befell Isaac. He "served in that land and received in the same year an hundredfold; and the Lord blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great; for he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants" with the result that the Philistines "envied him," (vs. 12-14). He was not perfect before God, he made mistakes, but in his heart he desired to glorify God, and he was blessed in consequence. Such blessing and the increasing greatness which it brought, aroused the envy and possibly also the fear of Abimelech and his people, and Isaac was requested to move on. Note the evil nature of envy, its deadly consequences, and the way to meet it on the part of God's children.

IV. ISAAC AND THE WELLS, (vs. 17-22).

The wells which the servants of Abraham had made had been stopped with earth, (v. 15), not an unusual occurrence in that land; and Isaac in order to get water had them opened. He was not allowed to enjoy the fruit of his labours in peace, however, for strife arose among the herdmen on account of the wells. Isaac's "servants digged in the valley and found there a well of springing water. And the herdman of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours; and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him," (vs. 19, 20). His servants "digged another well," and strife arising also on account of that, Isaac termed it Sitnah implying "hatred"; and removed from thence and "digged another well." This one he named Rehoboth, signifying "room" because for it there was no strife. "For now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land," (v. 22.) In this Isaac is depicted as a man of peace; he does not fight over the wells but simply moves on until there is room for him and his flocks. We are exhorted to live peaceably with all men, as far as it is possible to do so, (Rom. 12:18). Sometimes it is not possible; for while we may desire peace, they may be for war, (Ps. 120:7), but we should seek peace consistent with righteousness, and pursue it, (I Pet. 3:11). The spiritual significance of the stopped wells and their opening by Isaac is worthy of attention. The

wells were for the purpose of supplying life-giving water for man and beast, and remind us of the places, such as pulpits, platforms and literature, from whence men used to receive the water of life, but which now are stopped by the earthly teaching of modernism. Enemies of God have done this, and it is the duty of every spiritual descendant of Abraham again to dig these wells, and cast out the earth which prevents the water being used by the people. Note the spiritual significance of the water, the necessity for keeping the wells open and clean, and the duty of dispensing the water freely and continuously.

V. ISAAC AT BEERSHEBA, (vs. 23-25).

Isaac evidently returned to the place of his original sojourn, "And he went up from thence to Beersheba," (v. 23) "And the Lord appeared unto him the same night," (v. 24). These appearances of the Lord were very gracious manifestations of His presence for the purpose of giving encouragement and direction to His servant, just as the times of His special nearness these days give to His people similar blessings. God is ever mindful of His own, and looks after their needs on their wilderness journey. "And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants digged a well," (v. 25). The erection of the altar implies worship, and this always accompanies such appearances of God. Note the blessedness of fellowship with God, the basis of that fellowship in Christ, and the nature and fruit of true worship.

VI. THE VISIT OF ABIMELECH, (vs. 26-35).

The visit of Abimelech and two of his friends to Isaac gives an interesting sidelight on human nature, and also bears testimony to the high character of Isaac, and the evidence of God's presence with him. Isaac had suffered at the hands of the people of Gerar without retaliating; he had simply moved on peaceably, and now is his opportunity in a quiet manner to reprove those who had treated him discourteously. On their approach to him he said, "Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?" It was a gentle reproof, nevertheless effective. The reply is a testimony to the fact of God's presence with Isaac. They realize his strength, and desire to benefit from his power. A covenant is suggested between them, and agreed to, and a feast is partaken of as a sign of friendship. Isaac thus manifests his good spirit. He holds no ill-will against those who had treated him badly. The Christian should be animated by the same spirit. Note also the fact that the blessing of God upon Isaac was recognized by others. The marriage of Esau may be made the basis for instruction on the most important subject of marriage. The wives of Esau were "a grief of mind unto Isaac, and to Rebekah," (v. 35). They were heathen women, whom he had married, and he was the son of believing parents. It cannot be too often stressed that believers should marry only believers. If one is in the Lord he should marry only in the Lord. To do otherwise means disobedience to God's will, (2 Cor. 6:14), and trouble in after life.

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We will send *The Gospel Witness*, and a copy of one of the books listed below, personally autographed by the author, to any address in the world for one year for \$2.00.

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