

# The Gospel Witness

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

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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

HOW TO GET READY FOR THE GREAT TRIBULATION.

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, May 3rd, 1931.

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(Stenographically Reported)

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—Matthew 11:28.

That is one of the texts that was intended to be quoted. It bears its meaning on its surface. The very music of it is refreshing, like the music of a rippling brook to a thirsty soul. I have feared for years to attempt an exposition of it, and I have no confidence that I shall be able this evening to succeed; but I can at least call your attention to a never-failing spring.

I spoke to you last Sunday evening about the Great Tribulation, and we observed from the Word of God that such a time is predicted. There are, of course, many tribulations. We are in the midst of tribulation now. Indeed, through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God. It is well for us to cast our eyes toward the future, and to consider what the future holds for us. We have a proverb to the effect that it is a good thing to lay up in store for a rainy day. That is especially true if it be possible that such rain as destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah may yet again fall upon the sons of men.

There are some people who spend their time, chiefly, trying to anticipate the future. I think it is necessary that we should study the Word of God proportionately, that we should know the whole Book. I have read of a preacher who was accustomed occasionally to review his own ministry, in order that He might see whether there was any portion of Scripture which he had neglected, whether there were any of the great doctrines of grace which he had failed to expound; because he wanted to present to his hearers a well-rounded, symmetrical view of the truth. He desired to declare to them the whole counsel of God. He was wise so to do.

There is a way of being prepared for the future, for the Great Tribulation—or any other tribulation. The fact is, Christianity finds its proof in the emergencies of life. You remember when Paul set sail on a certain ship he travelled as a prisoner in chains. He offered his counsel to the master of the ship, and to the centurion, but no heed was given to his advice. He was only a poor prisoner, a religious fanatic! He was being taken to Rome to be tried for his folly! But when the storm broke, when the winds howled, and the billows swept over the ship, and when for many days neither sun nor star appeared, and all hope that they should be saved was taken away, then this poor preacher shone forth for what he really was, and appeared as a hero in the storm.

Many other men have had trials, trials almost equal to those of Job; but few have been able to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

If some fell disease were to become epidemic in Toronto, I think I could tell you how to fortify yourselves against it, even though I am not a physician. I would venture to advise that nothing is likely to prove a better protection against disease than to maintain the body in exuberant general health. On this principle, I am convinced it is important that we should keep always to the front these great central verities of our holy faith. I am supremely concerned that men should become Christians, genuinely saved, regenerated by the power of the Holy Ghost through the precious blood, resting in Christ for everything. The one whose spiritual health is

thus in good condition will be ready for whatever the providence of God may permit to come to him.

I am rather inclined to fear that some who do treasure the Bible as the word of God, who do believe that herein is revealed the way of life, are too often given to an examination of it for their own comfort, for their own entertainment, instead of using it for the salvation of men. If you are in error at some point in respect to the doctrine of last things (which theologians describe with that expressive word, *eschatology*)—if at some point you should fail in an adequate understanding of it, it will be less injurious to you than if you should fail to understand the great fundamentals of the faith. Therefore I call you in the name of the Lord this evening once again to the Saviour's feet; in the hope that those of us as are saved may be enabled more completely to trust Him, and that any who have not yet made choice of Christ may be led of God's Spirit so to do.

What shall we say about such a word as this? I remember hearing Dr. Dinsdale T. Young a couple of years ago in Old London preach from a verse in John's first epistle. He used several times a very common word, but he used it in rather an uncommon way. He seemed to fondle these gems of Scripture almost like a jeweller opening a casket of priceless gems, taking out one after another and holding it to the light, saying, "Is not that glorious?" Dr. Young read one of the chapters in the epistle, and the words were too much for him: occasionally he would stop and say, "Is not this a lovely word?" Then, skipping a few verses, he would say "We have another lovely word here."

Well, is not this a "lovely word"? Did you ever hear anything sweeter than this: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"?

#### I.

It is a word addressed to A PARTICULAR CLASS. It is sometimes assumed that the gospel is for everybody, but the invitations of the gospel are always restricted. They are directed to particular persons. The gospel is designed to meet the special needs of men. This word is directed to those who "labour and are heavy-laden". Do you know of anyone accustomed to labour, and to bear burdens? Is that an unusual thing? Do you need any special discernment to discover and to identify the persons to whom this sweet word is addressed?

*Even on the natural plane we find men busy labouring.* Everybody labours who has an opportunity to labour. Indeed, the Bible says: "If any would not work, neither should he eat." Labour is a necessity of life, and men everywhere labour to live.

So, indeed, do the creatures about us. You remember how the wise man, addressing the sluggard, said, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise." There is no unemployment in the ant-hill. They are always busy. All God's creatures are busy. I love to watch the squirrels about. They seem to find plenty to do! They seem to manage to keep themselves occupied all the time.

What a pleasure, what a delight, under ordinary circumstances, legitimate employment is! Was there ever a time in the world's history when on a larger scale the world has witnessed the great tragedy of unemployment? Millions and millions of men who fain would labour if they could, can find no work to do. They are filled with

a desire to labour, with a longing for some kind of labour in order that they may live.

How interesting it is to go forth in the early morning hours and to see the great army of workers setting forth to their day's task!—all sorts of men and women, all of them having something to do; some of them belonging to what is sometimes called the "white collar brigade", and some of them engaged in other forms of service where it is difficult for them so to array themselves, but all of them setting forth to the doing of the day's task, whatever it is. I have sometimes wondered what they all do. I have asked myself, Why should all these thousands of people go forth to labour? What do they expect to get out of it? Many of them, just a bare living. They labour for "the meat that perisheth," and hope for little more than enough to maintain life, to provide some shelter, to keep themselves decently clothed, and to educate the children. But it is one long grind of labour from beginning to end.

Our Lord borrowed His illustrations from the common things of life, because He would have us understand, He would have everybody understand what He came to do for us. When He addresses Himself to labourers, He addresses Himself to us all, for we are all workmen—or we ought to be, if there is work to do.

How many there are who are heavy-laden also, on the purely natural plane! Go down to the railway station and see the redcaps! I have often marvelled at the strength of some of those little fellows. There seems to be no end to the number of bags they can carry—band-boxes, bags, and golf sticks without number. They pile them up until they are heavy-laden.

That is a picture of many people going through life carrying all kinds of burdens. The burdens that are not visible, the burdens that press upon parents, upon employer, as well as upon employee, are the heaviest to bear. I said to a man recently, "How are you to-day?" "Fairly well," he replied, "but not very happy. I have had the task of telling a number of our men that we have not enough work to go around, and that hurts me." What burdens rest upon the men of our day on the purely natural plane. How heavy-laden men are everywhere.

Is the religion of Jesus Christ designed in any real sense to lessen the weariness of life? to minister somewhat to its comfort? to make life easier, even here, for any of us?

Let me remind you that what we see about us in respect to the labour in which men engage for the meat that perisheth, after all, is *but a parable of things that are deeper: for* "man cannot live by bread alone". There is a preparation for life, and hence men live. A man said to me some years ago when I was going away for a vacation—in the days when I used to take a vacation, though I had much less than a quarter of the work I now have—but this friend said to me, "One of the pleasures I experience when I am travelling is to look for jobs I should not like to do, and being thankful that I have not to spend my life doing the things that some people do."

It is not difficult to observe others doing jobs that we do not covet. I have seen men down in the hold of a great liner. I did not know whether they were white or black. It was as hot as the Black Hole of Calcutta. I have said to myself, I wonder why these men have chosen to be stokers? Of all the jobs on earth, why did they choose that particular task?

One can find men doing many unpleasant things, but, after all, behind it is the desire to live and to provide somehow the means of living. But when we have done that, how true it is that "man cannot live by bread alone"! I read to you deliberately, and with design, this evening, the story of a man who had been so favourably situated that he was able to command all the sources of earth's pleasure. Nothing was withheld from him: he had silver and gold, men-servants and women-servants, men-singers and women-singers, musical instruments, houses and lands and cattle, flowers and trees, pools and fountains—he had everything that a man could desire. Yet when he had laboured, and when he had laboured even with wisdom for the acquisition of all these pleasures, his final judgment was, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit."

No matter what our task, no matter what our earthly reward, there is a life that is not nourished at the springs of earth. These spiritual natures of ours require a food that cannot be bought at earth's markets; *there is a labour in which men engage for the satisfaction of the soul.* There are burdens incident to that labour which men bear, and it is to that deeper spiritual necessity our Lord addresses Himself when He bids those who labour and are heavy-laden to come to Him.

I have heard it said of some people that *they put all they earn upon their backs.* I have heard of people who spend nearly all they earn in dress, in order to the adornment of their persons, in order to make themselves attractive, that their neighbours may speak well and favourably of them. And how they labour for a new dress, or a new hat, or some other new adornment!

Thus, dear friends, there are people who labour to cover their soul's nakedness, to array themselves in garments that will fit them to stand in the Divine Presence. What a labourous life they live! Their work is never done; they are always trying to make themselves fit. How much of the product of men's labour is spent to provide merely food to eat! Ask your wife about it. Ask her if this earth would not seem to her to be a paradise if only the men of the house could live without eating. What a burden they do become! What labour is involved in simply providing daily food.

Thus, I think, our Lord intended to suggest that there are people who spend their lives labouring for the soul's satisfaction, *to find something that will satisfy the hunger and thirst of the soul.* And how busily they work! With what devotion they apply themselves to their task! But their work is never done! The soul is never satisfied. Very often they are surfeited with the things which their labour has produced, and they ever hunger still.

A man came to me late last night, rather a well-dressed man, who said, "I have nowhere to go. Can you send me anywhere for the night?" He could do in the day, but the night had come, and it was cold. He had no shelter, and no means of providing it. What pains we take to get ready for the night, to put a shelter above our heads, to have a door that we can shut against the storm, and be safe and comfortable within!

The night cometh, my friends, upon this day of life. The night will some day fall, and we shall all need a shelter, some place of hiding, oh, yes, some shelter from the fearful storm that must some day break upon this world. How men labour, I say, to provide that shelter! I refer now to religious labourers, to the

people who labour at all kinds of religion, and never find rest, never find satisfaction for the soul. They are still hungry, and still thirsty, never comfortable, never happy, never safe.

Some men labour at the mere business of keeping themselves decent,—fighting some lion within them, endeavouring to fight off the wolves that would devour them from without, trying to protect themselves against a hundred moral evils without, conscious that there is a strange affinity within them to all the evils that are without. They live in daily and hourly terror lest the castle gate should be opened, and the enemy should come in like a flood. What a task it is! What a labour just to live an honest, straightforward, truthful, decently moral life! Young men and young women, what a labour it is to keep one's self morally fit, even the outward life, to say nothing of the inner life and motive.

How people *labour at prayer!*—saying their prayers sometimes with beads, and sometimes with books, praying in a hundred ways. Labouring! Their work never done, always at it.

The Labour Unions are working for shorter hours all the time. I do not blame them for wanting reasonably short hours. But there are no short hours religiously. The world is full of people who are labouring—not only in India with their prayer-wheels, not only under pagan forms of religion, but even in the name of Christianity itself there are people who are living a treadmill existence, labouring all the time, getting no rest, observing ordinances of all sorts.

I read an article recently, which I would not dare quote to you it is so perfectly shocking, on the question of baptism. It was inspired, beyond all peradventure, of the devil himself. It said that nobody, by any possibility, could get to heaven unless he or she had been baptized—even the infant of but a moment's life on earth; and that even the unborn infant somehow or another must be baptized in order to the salvation of the soul. What a libel on God! What a misrepresentation of Christianity that is!—as though man could by any kind of labour get right with God.

There are those who give of their alms. There are people who give money, and build churches—and some of them are Baptist churches. But Protestantism has ceased to be protestant. In very many instances there is no evangelical note at all, while in multitudes of cases the great doctrines of grace are never mentioned from the pulpit. Instead of bidding men who labour to come to Christ for rest, they are being exhorted to find salvation by their own labour. So they rear their temples, and just in the measure in which spirituality declines, ritualism becomes regnant. When the preacher is out of touch with God himself, when he is not on terms of familiar converse with the King, he will be likely to read a prayer: he has none in his heart.

I do not mean to say that all who read their prayers are out of fellowship, but when in our evangelical churches you find a growth of formalism it is always a substitution for real, genuine, spiritual, religion; and it is an infallible evidence that the Spirit of God has departed when men labour themselves, and fail to

rejoice in the rest that comes through believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I could tell you of many forms of labour, but you know what I am talking about. There are men and women here who say, "I agree with all that, and I intend to be a Christian some time, but I must do so-and-so and so-and-so first." You are going to labour, and keep on labouring, in order to possess that which may be yours without that labour, and by the labour of Another.

What heavy burdens men bear! One cannot see them always, but they are there. I remember years ago, when I was a boy, going from Bristol, England, to a place called Frome, going in what we called a carrier's cart, out into a little country village to spend my holidays. When the holiday was over we went back again, and on the return journey that carrier stopped, it seemed to me, at almost every house along the road and picked up a parcel. The farther we went, the heavier we were laden, and by the time we got to our destination poor old dobbin was completely loaded down.

Life is like that. The burdens do not become lighter: they become heavier, and especially in moral and spiritual matters. The accumulated guilt of a lifetime oppresses the soul, and the man, laden with a consciousness of his burdens, labours and only becomes more weary.

What shall be done for such an one as he? The promise of the text is that to all such there is One Who will give rest.

## II.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY REST? *Rest is not a negative thing.* Some people imagine that it would be a luxury to have nothing to do, to sit and sing ourselves away to everlasting bliss. I have known men who have lived industriously and faithfully for a long time, and have at last been retired, apparently in good health; but as soon as they ceased to labour and to do the duties of the day, the old tabernacle broke up, and they were soon gone. I am not so sure that it is a good thing to pension people. There are some people who can survive it; but some of us would not live long if we were out of work.

Rest is not merely cessation from labour, it is not mere idleness. Ask the man who has no work today—and hundreds of them will tell you, "I have been far more weary looking for work than I ever was from work itself." To be unemployed, to have nothing at all to do, is not rest. That is but an annoyance, an irritation. There is no comfort for the soul in that. There is more in the promise of the text than that.

I may go farther and say that *there can be no rest for the souls of men that does not provide for all the requirements of our complex natures.* A man is more than a body. I quoted a moment ago the words of Christ, "Man shall not live by bread alone." He has a moral nature as well as a physical nature; an affectional nature as well as a mental; he has a conscience as well as a stomach. You cannot satisfy the whole man by the bread that perisheth. No man can enter into rest unless provision is made for the whole man. You cannot soothe the wounds of a soul by showing the man a picture. You cannot permanently remove

one's anxiety by giving him an engrossing story to read. I know that music has charms to soothe the savage breast, but you cannot charm the devil out of a man by any kind of music. Some churches try it,—and judging from the trouble they have with the choir they do not succeed very well. Of course, ours is an exception!

But we shall never have rest of soul by ignoring that which is deepest in man's nature, and by failing to supply the requirements of the whole man. There are burdens that are not strapped on the shoulders: there are burdens that inhere in a man's very constitution. Yonder you may observe a man travelling wearily along, and you ask him what is the matter. He says, "I am not in good health." "Well," you enquire, "what is your ailment?" He replies: "I do not know, but I have lost my vigour. It seems to be in the blood. Somehow or another, I feel burdened all the time." We have heard such an one say, "Life itself has become a burden, an almost intolerable burden."

You cannot relieve burdens like that by any kind of machinery: they are part of the man himself, and you can never give such an one rest without taking cognizance of all these multifarious requirements, and from resources of infinite wisdom and power supply the needs of the whole man.

## III.

Very well, then, WHO SHALL INVITE ANY SUCH WHO LABOUR AND ARE HEAVY-LADEN TO FIND REST? Who can do it? There is nothing this world needs so much as rest. I remember after the war, when Mr. Bonar Law went to the country in a general British election, he said, "What Britain, and all other countries, need, is tranquility." Many of you would cross the sea if you could have that! Yes, this world needs rest. The nation needs rest; every individual man and woman needs rest.

Have you not grown almost tired of living, apart from these spiritual considerations? Who is it, then, that presumes to issue an invitation like this? Think a minute. I know the words are simple, but here it stands for all time, for all people, of all colours, of all races, of all ages, of all conditions of life, this simple invitation: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Who dares to say that? Who dares to make a proclamation like that? Who is it that will inspire in the human breast, in the breast of all men everywhere, no matter what their condition, the daring hope that by coming to Him they may obtain rest? I say to you that *that invitation is, in itself, an implicit claim to Deity. No one but God could speak like that!* It would be absurd to an infinite degree for anyone other than God to promise everybody rest.

Look at *the personal* side of it. Why should I need to say these things over and over again? I have been here twenty-one years, and in some form or another I am always saying it. Inviting you to come to the church? No! To come to the ordinances? No! To baptism or to the sacramental table? No! Come to the Bible? I honour the Bible as the inspired and infallible word, and as the only means of knowing

who Jesus is; but alas! one may come to the Bible, and stop there. That is not the invitation of the text, important as the Bible is.

This is a personal matter, and *rest is to be found in a Person*. It is a Person Who will give rest. Salvation consists in a personal knowledge of a Person. We find it not in a church, not even in a system of doctrines, not in any ordinance, but in one sovereign, infinite, almighty, all-gracious Person. No one but God could give rest.

Who is it that offers rest? *It is offered by the chief Workman*, the One Who knows what labour is, the One Who said, "My father worketh hitherto, and I work." "Every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God." He is the Builder of this world—and of all worlds. He is the Employer of all men, and of all angels. He is the Upholder of all things. He is the Heir of all things. He is none other than the Creator Himself. No one else can give you rest, my friend.

Let us see that clearly, that only Incarnate Deity, only the eternal Son of the eternal Father, the One Who is, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, can possibly supply the needs of men, for He is Himself the Maker of our constitution, and He knows what we need. He knows why Solomon in all his glory, with all his possessions, exclaimed, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." We were not made for earth alone, but for earth and heaven. We were made for God, and we shall never be happy until we find Him—or, rather, until we are found of Him. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

#### IV.

HOW SHALL WE COME? What does it mean to come? It means to accept the substitution of Another's labour for our own. All that you hope to accomplish by your incessant religious industry, by your laborious efforts to make yourself right with God, all that the holiest man has ever hoped to win of merit, has been provided by the personal labour of the personal Son of God. He has fulfilled your life's day for you. He has paid all your debts for you. He has accomplished salvation for you, and it is yours by merely receiving it.

Have you read this?—"He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." What does it mean to come to Christ? It means to cease from my own works, from my own efforts, from any dependence upon any merit that I might by any means acquire, and to cast myself entirely upon Him Who has laboured in my behalf: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

In a little while the forests will be covered with their verdure, and the earth will bring forth its fruit; and beauty, fragrance, and fruitfulness, will be everywhere. But there will be no effort about it, there will be no noise, there will be no apparent labour. The vital principles that are in the vine and in the plants and trees, and from which they derive their nourishment, will begin to operate, and "all the trees on all the hills will open their thousand leaves." What a beautiful world it will be in but a few weeks when that mighty tide of life that is irresistible, shall manifest itself in nature about us! You will not sympathize with the growing plants. You will not say to that proud giant of the forest, "You must be carrying a

heavy burden." It would laugh at you and say, "It is no burden to me. It is the manifestation of the life that is in me."

Yonder man was dragging around a little while ago, and you say to him, "You look like a new man." He replies, "I am. A little while ago I came home at night, scarcely able to drag one foot after the other, burdened and heavy-laden, unable to do a good day's work. Now when I return to my home in the evening I feel as bright and sprightly as I was at the break of day." "What is the secret?" "I had some trouble within that has been removed. I have a new life-stream within me. The doctor says my blood-stream is now pure. I feel like a young man again. The burdens of life have lost their weight for me."

By no mechanical means does our Lord give rest. He comes to live within us. He teaches us to live life His way. When He has paid our debts, He comes to fulfill the righteousness of the law in us. Did you ever try to do what you saw a carpenter do? Did you ever try to do what you saw a skilled farmer do? Did you ever see a farmer, with that muscular arm of him, pick up a great forkful of hay and toss it on the wagon, as though it were but a toy? You say, "That is easy to do." You did it—or tried to do it—and well, you have scarcely got over it yet! Oh, the burden of it! Why? You did not know how.

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. If you will open your heart's door to Me, I will teach you the divine art of living. You shall carry your burdens by My yoke, you shall execute your labour by My power, then you will live fruitfully, bountifully, and gloriously, by the divine might that is in you."

Hallelujah, what a Saviour! I offer Him to you. Will you trust Him? Will you come to Him in faith? Come, "cast your burden at His feet, and bear a song away!"

## SEMINARY GRADUATION EXERCISES

A service in connection with the graduation of the Fourth Class of Students of Toronto Baptist Seminary will be held in JARVIS ST. BAPTIST CHURCH

Thursday, May 14th, 8 p.m.

The principal address will be delivered by Dr. T. I. Stockley. Diplomas will be presented by the President, who will also speak briefly.

All friends of the Seminary within reach of Toronto are heartily invited to attend.

## The Perseverance of the Saints

(Objections Considered).

A Bible Lecture by Dr. T. T. Shields.

Fourteenth in a Series of Week-Evening Lectures on the Doctrines of Grace.

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Thursday Evening, April 23rd, 1931.

(Stenographically Reported.)

Lesson Read: Matthew 13:18-23.

I have been speaking to you for some weeks on the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, the believer's eternal security in Christ. There is very much, I am aware, within the circle of our own observation which seems to suggest the opposite of this great truth. We have all known people who have professed faith in Christ, and who for a while have seemed to be very zealous in His service, who have later grown cold, and some of them, at least, have cast away their confidence and ceased even to hold fast the profession of their faith.

We have known some professed followers of Christ who have gone into open sin, and have brought reproach upon the Name they professed, and then have entirely abandoned their profession, and, in some instances, have become antagonistic toward the gospel which they once professed to believe.

This evening we are to bring these things into the light of Scripture, we are to measure them all by the word of God. That principle I cannot emphasize too strongly. No matter how long, how wide, how varied, our own experience and observation may be, let us learn increasingly to distrust our own judgment, never to depend upon our own intuitions, and always to recognize that even the wisest men may play the fool, and the holiest men may fall into sin. Let us bring everything to this touchstone. There is no other standard, there is no other norm. Our appeal must always be "to the law and to the testimony".

We may be betrayed into false judgments, into erroneous opinions, into taking unwise and even evil courses. One of the outstanding examples of this in Scripture is Hezekiah, a man who for a long time walked with God, living a life that was almost blameless, and which, at some points, typified the life of our Lord Himself, yet the moment the Lord left him "to try what was in his heart", he proved to be a demonstration that he was just as foolish as anybody. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." If you could live to be as old as Methuselah, you could never become so wise as not to need the instruction of the Word of God. No matter what our own personal experience may be, nor how wide soever may be the field of our observation, the final court of appeal is always the Word of God.

Someone will say, "Have we not the Holy Spirit?" Yes, we have; but the Holy Spirit is always in agreement with the Word of God, because the Book from beginning to end is the word of the Holy Ghost. It is divinely inspired, and the Lord never says one thing in the Book and another thing in your life. And wherein you differ from the Word of God, or wherein your opinions, or your feelings, or your intuitions, may be at variance with the Scripture, then so much the worse for these things; for the Word of the Lord and the Spirit of the Lord are always of one mind.

In this day we need more than ever to lay our emphasis there, for many who profess orthodoxy are tripped up, and led into all sorts of vagaries and extravagances, because, for a while, they trust their own judgment.

### I.

Let us look at THIS PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

Is it not, first of all, *true to life*? We have seen these different types of hearers. There is the one who heard the word, and understood it not. The word was sown in his heart, but it found no place in his understanding. It is, of course, possible to exaggerate the importance of a clear intellectual apprehension of the truth, but I would remind you that the religion of Christ is for the whole man, for every faculty of the mind. It is designed to engage all the powers of the mind, as well as all the powers of the body; and here is an instance of the word entering into the heart, touching most superficially the emotional nature, and yet never finding a place in the understanding: "Then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart."

Speaking of a service, one may remark, "How did you like that?" And he receives the answer: "I enjoyed that service very much." The man walks down the aisle, and out the door, and hears someone else say, "I would not listen to that preacher again." "Why?" "Oh, he was too serious; he did not use sufficient illustrations." "I had not thought of that"—and the word is gone. The man did not understand, his mind was not at all engaged with the thought of God.

I remember some years ago a preacher preaching for me. He was a very intellectual man, but he had no emotional appeal at all. He was as cold as ice, but as orthodox as he could be, and intellectually as keen as a razor. As he preached one Sunday morning I sat in the pulpit. Looking over the congregation I saw many people with a rather quizzical look on their countenances, as though they were saying: "What is the dear brother trying to say?" Some felt it was beyond them, and took advantage of the opportunity to spend the morning sleeping. But there was one woman there whom I thought was a very intelligent woman. She listened to the preacher with rapt attention throughout the service. I said to myself, Mr. So-and-So has one appreciative hearer this morning. I supposed that she had had a feast. The next week I met that lady and said, "By the way, how did you enjoy Mr. So-and-So Sunday morning?" "Enjoy him? I did not understand a thing he said!" She had looked interested, but it had not entered into her understanding.

Then there is another class of hearers. In the case we have considered there was not even a profession; there was no outward appearance of growth. The seed had no chance to germinate. It had fallen only by the wayside until the birds carried it away. There was no fruit—nor promise of fruit.

Then there are the stony place hearers. There are certain people who are described as "receiving the word with joy". I have known many people who do that. "Amen!" "Hallelujah!"—what about? "I do not know, but it sounds well." Their emotions are stirred, and especially if you have a bright song-service beforehand. The singers and players upon instruments are supposed to prepare the way for the preacher, and when people have been wrought up to a proper pitch of excitement; it is supposed to be appropriate for the preacher to preach. "And with joy they received the word." Their emotions are stirred, but the work is not quite so superficial as in the case where the seed falls on the wayside, on the hard beaten soil. It enters in, and springs up; it shows a green growth, and it is reported, "We had fifty conversions to-night"; "A hundred professed to-night." But where will they be to-morrow morning?

I remember a certain evangelistic meeting in which were many stony place hearers; there was the promise of fruit. I recall talking with a man on the platform about his soul's salvation when a prominent business man who had professed conversion in the meetings, came up, and proposed that he assist me in dealing with this enquirer (Let me give you some advice: when you see someone else talking to an enquirer, you had better stay away. One is enough, as a rule). I can see this man now, with his waxed moustache. He knew the man to whom I was talking was a little lower in his position in life than himself. He was an important business man! And he said to the enquirer, "If I, a man in *my* position, can accept Christ, surely you can." I turned to him and said, "I fear you are a little in error. You can have no position before God but that of a sinner, save that which is given you by sovereign grace in Christ. God cares nothing for your position." He had got up proudly to say that he had accepted Christ. He was a stony place hearer.

A cheap type of evangelism,—*"Come to Jesus! Come to Jesus"*; with no exposition of the Word, with no appeal to the understanding, but to the emotions only, has done inestimable damage to the cause of Christ.

I repeat, the salvation of Christ is for the whole man. People may be stirred emotionally, without being quickened by the Spirit of God and made new creatures in Christ. In such cases they sing the hymns of Zion, and make a loud profession. The evangelist says, "We had a great meeting," the newspapers reported it in large headlines,—but the meeting was not reported in heaven! The angels of God rejoice only when sinners really repent. The seed was good, the message was sound, but there was no preparation of the soil. The man had no root in himself; the seed had not laid hold of that which was central to the man: its contact with him was purely superficial.

Consider a further principle: "When tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." In the first part of the parable it is said that when the sun is up the green blade withers away. Here the Lord interprets the parable in the verses I have read, "Tribulation ariseth." The man finds it is not as popular to be a Christian as he thought it would be. He is not complimented on the wisdom of his choice, but laughed at for what men call his folly. Hence he is soon offended, and he falls away.

Have we not seen people fall away here in Jarvis Street

when persecution arose because of the word? By and by they are offended, and they wither away.

"He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful." The word found entrance in this case, but there was something else in the soil, a super-abundance of alien seed: "The care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word." The word had not a chance to breathe.

The gospel is especially accommodated, even in orthodox circles sometimes, to the thorny ground. It is expected that it will grow side by side with the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches. But it does not. There are no half way measures that can bring satisfaction. What is the defect of our preaching in many cases? What was the defect in this soil? It had not been sufficiently worked. It ought to have been broken up. These alien roots ought to have been taken out, and the soil worked until it was good ground. The soil was so corrupt that the seed had no chance to grow there.

We need to lay a new emphasis upon the doctrine of repentance toward God; to show what sin is, and that the acceptance of Christ involves turning away from sin, that the acceptance of Christ involves turning away from the world and from all the things of the world. The seed here was choked. We have that type of hearer still; we have known many. They have no depth; they are superficial. The surface of the man's nature was broken up, but the deep-rooted evils of his life were not disturbed. There was no deep ploughing, no real repentance. The good seed sprang up and promised much; but presently the underlying evil seed, the thorns and briars, pushed their way up among the wheat and choked it.

"But he that receiveth seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." In a word, what is the difference between those wayside hearers, the stony place hearers, the thorny ground hearers, and the three classes of fruitful hearers? The seed was the same in each case. Wherein was the difference? In the quality of the ground. The ground was richer in one place than in another. Some bore only thirty, some sixty, and some an hundredfold; but in every case the word did actually become fruitful. And all because there had been a preparation of the soil for its reception. That was the cardinal difference.

"The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Why did Lydia receive the word at Paul's lips?—"Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures",—that was the Husbandman breaking up the soil, preparing it for the reception of the seed, so that when it was cast into it, it germinated, and the roots went down deeply: "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." Let us remember that unless the hearts of men are prepared by the direct operation of the Spirit of God there will be no conversions.

One may say of a certain sermon, "I cannot see how people could be converted under that message." Yet they have been. At another time one may say, "I do not see

how anyone could resist the appeal of that sermon." But they did and there were no conversions. The truth proclaimed was the same in both instances, and yet in the one case, because the Spirit of God laid hold of men and quickened heart and conscience, they began to bear fruit. Other "converts" withered away because their hearts were not broken of the Lord. Let us remember that however faithfully the gospel is preached, however searchingly,—if you will not apply it to the present preacher I will say, however ably it may be done, there is no fruit at all unless the ground is made good ground by the work of the Holy Spirit. So that you see, where there is genuine conversion, all that the preacher, the Sunday School teacher, or personal worker, can do, is to sow the seed. What makes it fruitful? That is a work that only God can do. The preparation of the heart is His work.

That is why we meet for prayer, to ask that God will prepare the soil, so that the seed may fall into good ground. When it does, the corn may be of varying stature, but it will all have life, and some will bear thirty, some sixty, and some an hundredfold.

Hence we conclude, that, properly understood, there is nothing in the parable of the sower to lend support to those who object to the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints.

## II.

Let us look briefly at A PASSAGE IN THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS, chapter two. In this chapter Paul speaks of the condescension of Christ: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. . . . Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

I have often heard that text quoted by people who objected to the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints. On the contrary, there are few texts in Scripture that lend it more support. In the first place, we are told that *our salvation is our own*. I do not know that the Apostle Paul elsewhere allows the believer the right of proprietorship in anything. He says, "Ye are not your own. Ye are the chattels of Jesus Christ. Ye are the slaves of Jesus Christ. Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and spirit, which are his." We belong to Him, and own nothing but our own salvation. *That* is ours. That is the one bit of real estate to which we have an unquestioned title—real estate in the sense that is so real that we can never lose it. Your *own* salvation.

Then *we are told to work it out*. What does that mean? I think it means this: a father gives his boy a farm and says, "It is yours. It is all paid for, and registered yonder in the registry office. The deed is yours; there is no incumbrance; it is yours. Now see how good a farm you can make of it. Work it out. See how much you can make it produce."

You may have a farm that is very productive, or one that is very unfruitful; but in any case it is yours. Salvation is ours. It is bought, and paid for: it belongs to us. But we may grow up into Christ, we may cultivate our spiritual life, we may go to school spiritually, so that we may learn more and more of the things of God. We

may become, so to speak, educated Christians in the spiritual sense, leaving the first principles, and going on to that which is higher; or we may be dunces, and instead of studying the Word of God, and cultivating our souls, we may play with worldly things so that we do not grow.

I have watched some Christians grow. What a delight it is to see things growing just now! A poor bare bush that has been dead all winter is now becoming beautiful. We have seen some Christians grow like the cedars in Lebanon. I wish we could cultivate the faculty of observation, and give God thanks when we see believers growing. You remember how the Bridegroom saith, "I have come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice." Do you ever go into your garden and see your pomegranates growing? Do you ever see if everything is alive and hardy and healthy? Do you ever picture the Lord Jesus in His garden, looking to see whether there is any growth there?

"Work out your own salvation". Be diligent in the cultivation of your own spiritual life. It means that *nobody else can do it for you*. You must do it yourself. You will never become a strong Christian by hearing sermons. There are people who love to go on a religious drunk. They are religious gourmands. They want to be eating, eating, eating all the time. A preacher told me some years ago about going to a certain church, succeeding a man who was reputed to be a "Bible teacher", where the people had acquired an appetite for the Word of God. This friend told me that he found them so fat they could hardly waddle. They had been so long feeding, feeding, feeding, and doing nothing.

You cannot become really useful by the hearing of sermons, or the reading of books which other people have written. You must go to the Word for yourself, and work out your own salvation.

A woman told me one day, who was a member of a church whose pastor was a very popular preacher, "In the last seven years I have learned that a pastor is a kind of luxury. We may be thankful to God for a real pastor; but a pastor is not a necessity. I have learned in these years that my Bible is a necessity. I prize it more than my necessary food." She was loyal to her pastor, but she said, "He is not my pastor: he is my preacher. He preaches interestingly, and many people think it is wonderful; but there is no solid meat for a hungry soul to feed upon. When I come home from church, I have to go to the cupboard and feed myself."

That is what Paul means: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence. When I was with you I observed that you listened to what I had to say", and I think he would have said as he did of the Bereans, "Ye received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Now that I am absent, be still more diligent, and work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

Not lest we lose it. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it"; "There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared"; "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling"; "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge"—"with fear and trembling", lest, having had a salvation given to me which was purchased with blood, I should fall short



of becoming a strong Christian. God forgive us if we are poor, stunted, midgets! Let us fear lest that bit of the field which God has given us to cultivate should be unfruitful.

And the reason you are to work out your own salvation is that "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure". When Sir Adam Beck was alive I read an address of his in which he dreamed of a day when the water powers of this great province would be so harnessed that power would be at the disposal of the humblest citizen, so that the housewife in her kitchen could do her work by power, and the farmer could do away with his oil-lamps and equip his farm electrically, and light his barns and do all his work with power. That would be a great day if power could be produced so cheaply as to take all the drudgery out of life.

That is what this text means: "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." We have the electric power, we have the divine energy, energizing our will, enlightening our understanding. Therefore, seeing the Lord has not only given us a great estate, but an estate equipped with divine power, let us lay hold of it and work it out, as becometh those who are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. There is nothing in that text that suggests that we may lose our eternal life.

### III.

Now, hastily, IN HEBREWS, chapter six: "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit." What he says there is, "Do not go back into the kindergarten class. Do not take the same course over and over again, but aim to make progress. Leave the first principles, and go on to perfection."

We do not abandon the alphabet when we learn Shakespeare: we use it. We do not discard the multiplication table when we learn Einstein's relativity: we use it—at least, I suppose they do who understand it. When we go on to higher mathematics we do not abandon the elementary principles on which it is founded. So in the Christian life: we do not do away with these principles: they have been incorporated in our very beings, and have so become a part of us now that we use them without thinking. The doing of them has become automatic. What we used to do from the obedience of the external has now become internal; those principles have become part of our life. We absorb them, and thus go on until by and by we shall matriculate and get to the university up there—and then still go on for ever.

Then these verses follow: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers it is re-

jected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned."

What does he mean? He says, in effect, Do not go back, but forward. Do not go back to those first principles, for it is impossible if one fall away to be renewed to repentance. To whom is the word addressed? It is addressed to Christian people. Let me prove it.

It is addressed to people who have been enlightened, spiritually enlightened. That means they have been touched by the Holy Ghost, they have been enlightened, they have tasted of the heavenly gift, and "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord". They have actually tasted that the Lord is gracious, and have been partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the power of the world to come,—if the man of whom that is said is not a Christian, who is? "Enlightened"! "Tasted of the heavenly gift"! "Made partaker of the Holy Ghost"! Tasted the good word of God! "And the powers of the world to come"! Do you not think that man is a Christian? If he is not, I do not know who is.

Let us see what is said about him,—"If he shall fall away." What does it mean to "fall away"? It cannot mean to fall. Go back over the long list. Noah fell; Abraham fell; Isaac fell; Jacob fell; Moses fell; David fell; Hezekiah fell; Elijah fell—they all fell. Peter, who had companied with our Lord, fell terribly. And so have we! Have you not? Since you became a Christian, have you not fallen at some point or another? It is like learning to walk. It is so long since I learned to walk that I do not quite remember! But I have no doubt that in the process of learning to walk I had a good many tumbles. We cannot afford to fall so often since we have grown up! I have often seen children running as though to overtake an express train—when, down they went. I have said, "There will be a broken nose"—only to discover it was but a torn stocking.

You have seen children at the end of the day black and soiled and torn from many a fall. They fell, but they fell in the family and not out of it. In the process of learning to walk before God we fall, but there is a great difference between "falling" and "falling away".

If you look into the Scripture you will find that it explains itself. Shall I tell you the best commentary on the Bible that was ever written? The Bible itself. It is self-explanatory. Some people have self-pronouncing Bibles, but every Bible is a self-interpreting Bible, if only you study it enough, and let the Bible teach you. "You do not mean to say that I could understand the Bible without the help of the preacher?" Of course, you can. I remember a man I had in my congregation, at a certain place which I will not name. He was a fine man, a noble character. He had a way of speaking so that you could understand what he said. I have heard him many times stand up in a meeting (he was a layman) and say, "I have been reading a scripture to-day", then he would quote a text and say a few words. He never spoke long, perhaps a minute or a minute and a half, but he was like a jeweller displaying precious stones. When he sat down people seemed to say, "I did not know that was in the Book. Who taught him?" The Spirit of God. Therefore, study the Book!

This text, properly understood, is like all other scripture properly understood, it explains itself. "If they should fall away." What does "falling away" mean?

That is the point. It means not an occasional sin,—I mean, not the sin that a man or woman commits when surprised into some wrong-doing, as when one mourns: "I said this morning, I will keep my tongue—but I have spoken ill-advisedly with my lips. I promised I would never let my tongue run away with me again—but I have once more failed to keep my tongue with a bridle." Falling away is more than that: it is a real crucifixion of Jesus Christ: "They crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

Very well, what was involved in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ? The utter repudiation of all that Christ claimed to be. They that crucified Him said, "He is not the Christ. He is not the Son of God. He is not the Saviour of the world. Away with Him; crucify Him. We do not want Him." That is what the crucifixion of Jesus Christ involves. If anybody falls away after that order, utterly to reject and repudiate Jesus Christ as the Saviour of men, then surely he would commit the "sin unto death." That is what it means. "If"—"if" a Christian could do that, it would be impossible to renew him again to repentance.

Mark these two things well: first of all, *that text teaches that a man cannot be converted twice*. It means that if after he has been regenerated, made partaker of the Holy Ghost, if by any possibility at all he should fall away in the sense that he would repudiate Christ, and crucify Him again, there would be no hope for him, no chance of repentance for him. That rings the death knell of Arminianism, this mixture of works and grace, this experimentation in religion.

*That passage alone puts an end to the theory of a second probation, a probation after death*. If such an one should fall away it would be impossible to renew him again to repentance, for his doom would be sealed and settled here. He would be damned here before he dies, if thus he could repudiate Jesus Christ.

Why would it be impossible to renew him again? Why? What was done for him the first time? "Enlightened!" Is there is bright Light that shines from heaven? After he has rejected that Light, is there any chance that any other light could enlighten him? He has received the heavenly gift: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." He had only one Son: He has no other to give. If, after being enlightened, and receiving the heavenly Gift, he should fall away, even God Himself has nothing more to give to him. To become partaker of the Holy Ghost, his nature renewed, a new creature, yet a second time to die to God and repudiate all the means of grace—if that were possible, there is no other Holy Ghost. If a man quench the Spirit of God, there is no chance for him. But no truly regenerated soul would or could ever do so.

And even "the powers of the world to come". Mark that: he has not only received an earnest of all that God has to give here, but of all that God has to give hereafter. Now then, if he fall away? Can you not see that even the resources of Deity have been exhausted, if I may reverently say so, in the salvation of the soul through the death of Christ, and if that be rejected, even heaven has nothing more to give. If he should fall away it is impossible to renew him to repentance.

He may fall away, may he? Do you think it is possible? Do you think that is what the text means? Surely

not! Did you ever stand looking at Niagara closely enough to see the tumbling waters? Did you ever say "If"?—"If I should go over, what would happen?" Are you going to fall over because you said that? No! Oh, what possibilities! "If"! Oh yes, if the sun were somehow to slip out of its orbit, could all earth's astronomers throw it back again? or could it recover its lost position? Of course it could not. But do not be alarmed, it has not done so—and it will not do so.

This text, so far from teaching what some would make it teach, teaches the opposite. The Holy Ghost says you may be sure because you have on your side all the powers of this world and of that world which is to come.

I must hurry, but let us look at this other verse in Hebrews ten and twenty-six: "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."

*To whom is it spoken?* To those who have received a knowledge of the truth. What does that mean? An intellectual knowledge? Perhaps. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Surely it is addressed to those who have received the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. They are not like the princes of this world who crucified the Lord not knowing that He was the Lord of glory. The case is supposed of those who know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that have received the Lord Jesus.

What is that sin? If we sin wilfully. Again I say, not that sudden lapse which is the result of the enemy's surprise, a slip of the tongue, or even some serious wrong. God forbid that I should say anything to make light of sin at any point. I am seeking rather to magnify God's grace. What is this wilful sin? It is not these lesser things: it is some deeper, cardinal, transgression, that goes to the heart of things.

How can we find out what it is? It is *a rejection of the sacrifice for sin*. What does the man do who thus sins wilfully? He treads under foot the Son of God. He counts the blood of the covenant an unholy thing. He does despite to the Spirit of grace. It is parallel to the other passage, but stated in other words: it is an apostacy. When I hear men mocking at the blood of Christ, when I hear men reject His virgin birth, I tremble. If we sin wilfully, there remains no more sacrifice for sins. Certainly! There can be no other. Whoever rejects the only Sacrifice God has provided, or that can be provided anywhere in the universe, chooses his own damnation. *This wilful sin involves a deliberate and complete rejection of the salvation that is in Christ*. In such a case there remains nothing but a "fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries".

The principle of the thirty-eighth verse of the same chapter is the same: "The just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." In every case those who thus reject the divine Sacrifice for salvation are to be found among those whom our Lord described as thorny-ground hearers, or stony-ground hearers, for when the seed falls into good ground which the Lord Himself has prepared it always brings

forth fruit, some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundredfold.

I have tried to gallop through these passages, so that I might conclude that particular aspect of this matter in one message, and when you get your copy of *The Gospel Witness* and have the passages before you, take your Book, and study them, so that you may be grounded in the Word of God for yourself, and be able to say, Hallelujah, the grace of God will not permit me thus to reject Jesus Christ.

I cannot understand how anybody who has ever seen Jesus Christ, who has really seen Him, could forget Him, and utterly reject Him, and trample Him under foot, can you?

"For, ah, the Master is so fair,  
So sweet His smile on banished men,  
That they who meet Him unaware  
Can never rest on earth again!

"And they who see Him risen, afar,—  
On God's right hand to welcome them,  
Forgetful stand of home and land,  
Desiring fair Jerusalem."

#### A NEW BEGINNING—HOW CAN IT BE?

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

Following our word of last week concerning the necessity for the new birth, in THE SECOND PLACE OUR LORD ILLUSTRATES ITS MYSTERY. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Perhaps the wind swept through the trees around them as Jesus talked with Nicodemus, and thus gave special vividness to the illustration. Now that illustration indicates the secrecy of the process of the Holy Spirit's work. The breathing atmosphere fans the cheek, whispers in the grass, rushes through the trees, and lashes the ocean into fury; but we cannot see it. It is quite an invisible wave, or current, in the ocean of air. We cannot tell where the wave began, or where it will sink into repose again. "So is every one that is born of the Spirit". The process is a mystery: it is a divine work; but as man receives the life of God he is made alive unto God. Yes; the man who was dead to God yesterday is now alive to Him, he trusts Him, knows Him, loves Him, is bent on pleasing Him, and delights in Him. A new life has come; but he gladly owns that the process of impartation is a mystery. To some it comes as gently as the zephyrs of a summer evening, to others like a devastating tornado; but none can explain the mystery of the holy work. A man may know when the wind of God manifestly swayed him, but he does not know whence and how it came on its holy path, nor how the touch of God gave him the life which finds its delight in God. Yes, the processes of this life are secret.

Further, there is also independence of action in the movement of the wind. The streams of vast atmospheric ocean do not obey the will of man. He cannot originate or steer the broad current of the breeze. So the movement of the Spirit is free and independent. Reference is made to this more than once in our Lord's teaching. He speaks of two men in a bed, two women grinding to-

gether, and two men in one field. And in each case "one is taken, the other is left". Persons brought up in the same social surroundings, the same occupation, and even in the same family, are yet poles apart in spiritual thought and sympathies. A gracious spiritual revival touches one part of the country and not another, sweeps like a mighty tide of life over a district, seizing the unlikely, and passing by those whom we had expected to see quickened. Reprobates become saints, while those near to the kingdom still remain outside. This great truth of the sovereign independence of the Spirit is never meant to discourage, or to repel, or to bewilder, for it is the sovereignty of Love, a glorious independence, which will not be fettered by the will of man. He is the free Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. He works in the soul secretly; and He works as He pleases, and none can say "What doest thou?"

From the divine side this matter of regeneration, then, is a profound mystery. All life is invisible, and the entrance of this life of the Spirit into the soul of man is invisible and secret.

Then, THIRDLY, OUR LORD TESTIFIES OF ITS REALITY. When Nicodemus said, "How can these things be?" Jesus said, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen." He was speaking of a matter of fact. So to-day the Church of Christ is not theorizing, but witnessing to the facts of human experience when she speaks of the new birth. It is utterly useless to tell us that the drunkard cannot be reformed, when we see men who have been slaves to the vice, set free from its power, and made new creatures in Christ Jesus through His gospel. In the days of His flesh, men argued and quibbled about our Lord giving sight to a blind man. But all quibbling soon broke down under the bold retort of the man himself: "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."

Our Lord knew the power of the great principle He was laying down; and He knew the facts of experience. He says, "We know". And we ought to speak with the same certainty. *We know*. The history of the Church of Christ is decked with the stars of its triumph over sin and evil. The facts abound on every hand. They are constantly coming under our own observation. Listen to this:

A good many years ago in England a man lost his wife, forsook his family, and left them utterly. He lost all sight and knowledge of them, and they of him. Just a few years since he was taken to the Croydon poorhouse. After a time he was placed in "The Shanties" with the aged men. Here he heard the gospel message as our friends tell it in the bright little service which they conduct there every Sunday afternoon. The old man eagerly drank in the message, and soon became a new man in Christ Jesus. Receiving the new life, the life of God, he was soon led to think once again of his family; and, making enquiries, he discovered that some of his children were still living not many miles away from Croydon. The result was that he was restored to the bosom of his family, happy beyond measure in the discovery of his long neglected children; and they were delighted indeed to have found their long-lost father, and to have found him a regenerated and forgiven man. "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen."

Here is another case: A letter came to us from a man who attended one of our services. He went away after that service, but was obliged to return, and to yield himself to God. His letter tells of his new birth. He says he had been "a bad lot", having been imprisoned six times for drunkenness and theft, and his home was "like a hell". But now his letter declares, "It is like a heaven". And within two or three weeks of his new birth he had induced thirteen of his old pals to sign the total abstinence pledge. "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen."

A leading congregational minister in London tells of an experience of his. Some of the cultured young men in his congregation felt led to go out into the slums of the district, and make an effort to save the lost. Their efforts were richly blessed; and some men and women with an evil record came to the services, and, with streaming eyes, asked, "What shall we do to be saved?" They became the recipients of the new life, and their changed characters soon told the reality of the work. "This", says the minister, "has revolutionized my ministry. The wonders wrought by the Spirit of God compel me to preach as I have never preached before." Such stories of transformed lives could easily be multiplied. "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen."

In these days of unbelief it is encouraging to receive tidings of glorious facts of remarkable conversions from Africa, and China, and South America, and the Islands of the Seas. Men are being born again, and made new creatures in Christ Jesus.

Yes; it is possible to make a new beginning. Such a beginning is necessary; it is mysterious, but it is a solid reality.

FOURTHLY, OUR LORD UNFOLDS THE AGENCY BY WHICH THE WORK IS WROUGHT. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Nicodemus had asked, "How can these things be?" Our Lord now shows the "How" on the human side. He points him back to a scene of deep significance in the history of Israel. The people were bitten by serpents, and were perishing in thousands. At the word of God Moses lifted up a brazen serpent, the symbol of the cause of their death, and whosoever obeyed the word and looked to the symbol, lived. The poison was soon swept out of their veins, and they received new life and health. "Even so must the Son of man be lifted up." Yes; our Saviour Himself, in His deep love for us men, so sinful and defiled, took upon His holy Soul the burden of our sin, and gave up His life unto death upon the cross, as the Lamb of God to bear away the sin of the world. Now "Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." The new life comes through the look of faith. The vision of the wondrous love of God in Christ renews the soul. To look at that cross, that death of shame and suffering on our behalf, even though we only faintly understand its meaning, is to live. The sight of that love transforms the soul. The sinful man is born again: "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

Yes; this is the answer to the question, "How can a man be born when he is old?" Let him look, with the look of his soul, to the matchless love of God, expressed

in the cross of Calvary, and the man receives new life, the heavenly eternal life. The mighty agency is the cross of Christ.

"Brethren", said a North American Indian, "I have been a heathen, and I know how heathens think. Once a preacher came, and began to expound to us that there is a God. But we told him to return to the place whence he came. Another came and told us not to lie, nor steal, nor drink; and we did not heed him. At last one came, and told us of God's love for us, and how He became man, and gave His life a ransom, and shed His blood for sinners. I could not forget his words, and a gracious spiritual awakening began among us."

Our Lord declares that this faith in His wondrous death is the means of the new life to men; and certainly *He* ought to know: Here, then, is the answer to the question, "How can a man be born when he is old?" Such a new birth is an absolute necessity for all men; such a birth is a great mystery on the divine side, yet it is a glorious reality, for our Lord speaks what He knows.

And here is the divine agency: the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. This new life may be yours:

"There is life in a look at the Crucified One,  
There is life at this moment for thee;  
Then look, sinner, look unto Him and be saved,  
Unto Him Who was nailed to the tree."

#### AN IRRATIONAL "NATIONAL" SOCIETY.

We recently met with a statement to this effect: That which is essentially irrational cannot be disproved by reason. That simple sentence throws a flood of light upon the Women's Missionary Society of Regular Baptists of Canada. Its Constitution, its programme, the conduct of its Board, are all utterly irrational. But its irrationality cannot be proved to its devotees by any process of reason. The fact that they approve it in the light of recent events proves conclusively their insensibility to reason's approach. We do not write, therefore, with any hope of changing the mind of any apologist for this extraordinary organization.

The sentence with which we opened this article occurred in an article which discussed the irrationality of certain modern cults such as Christian Science and Theosophy. We could not help feeling, when reading it, that the principle applied with equal force to the Women's Missionary Society under review, in respect to its irrationality.

Apparently the Women's Missionary Society is as irrational as ever, for in the last issue of its organ, *The Regular Baptist Call*, readers are informed "that the Women's Missionary Society of Regular Baptists of Canada was formed as a NATIONAL society" etc. It is further stated that "being organized as a National society, it cannot be made a part of any PROVINCIAL organization of churches".

Certain people will read that and say, "Of course many people do not understand that." We expect this "national society" slogan will become about as popular as the familiar phrase, "Over and above". We write this brief comment on the matter for the information of those who are not blinded by feminine sentimentality.

What is the cardinal principle of Baptist church polity? Is it not that each local church is autonomous and self-governing, and recognizes no authority outside of itself, save the will of its Head, as expressed in the sacred

Scriptures? In all truly Baptist organizations the local church is the unit of organization, and no such organization exercises authority over the church, but derives its authority from the church. But this so-called "Regular Baptist" Society has no relation to any church. There is not a single local church of any sort which can, by any means, as a church, register its will in respect to any of the affairs of the Society.

There may be some reason—doubtless there is—for such a society as the China Inland Mission, to be organized independently of any and every church, for the reason that it is an interdenominational society. But this Women's Society is said to exist "to do Regular Baptist work, sending out only Regular Baptist missionaries to teach Regular Baptist principles, establish Regular Baptist Churches and Missions, and maintain Regular Baptist practices." It is so thoroughly "Regular Baptist" that the Society "gives no money knowingly to any cause or missionary who does not stand on these principles. Should we by any chance make an error in this regard it would immediately be corrected when called to our attention."

So there you have it. The Society exists to do Baptist work, and will not knowingly do any other kind of work; and yet it has no relation whatever to any local Baptist church, or group of local Baptist churches, under the shining sun. Are Baptist churches, then, throughout the Dominion of Canada—in British Columbia, the great West, Ontario and Quebec, the Maritime Provinces—so utterly devoid of "Regular" Baptist principles that not even one church in the entire Dominion can be trusted to have any part in this Regular Baptist Missionary Society?

On the contrary, a group of women, appointed by no church, responsible to no church, implicitly repudiating the authority of all churches, in fact abjectly submissive to one person, must constitute themselves a "National" "Regular" Baptist Missionary Society.

This Society exists "to establish Regular Baptist Churches", but it has not yet established one of any sort anywhere. This great "national" Society supports three missions in the whole Dominion, missions which have no independence, but which are wholly subject to this so-called "national" society.

If this Society "cannot be made a part of any Provincial organization of churches", why should it have so organized itself as to depend wholly for its support upon Auxiliaries organized within, but independent of, a Provincial organization? This "national society" plea is on a par with the "over and above" phrase. It is what a salesman would call a "talking point", and is sheer, unmitigated humbug.

We rebuke ourselves that we should so long have permitted the subtle and pernicious influence of *The Regular Baptist Call* to pass without protest. In principle, it is destructive of the peace of the home. It always assumes feminine superiority, and would put woman in a place that is altogether contrary to the position the Bible assigns her. It is destructive of the peace of the church, and can work little but mischief where its admonitions are heeded.

Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of women—we do not know what the total membership of all its Auxiliaries was—joined the local Auxiliaries, but the overwhelming majority of them did not know what they were joining.

There are thousands of women who are just as reasonable as men, and just as susceptible to rational appeals. Rational women are rapidly coming to see that the genius of this Society is utterly unscriptural, and are severing all connection with it. Sentimentalists, emotionalists, and intuitionists, cannot be moved by any evidence, and they will blindly go on in their course.

In any group of women—or of men either for that matter—there will be found some belonging to this latter category. Reason can do nothing for them. And this type represents the dominant company in this Women's Society. And in every instance, notwithstanding their boasted loyalty to their respective churches, where a discussion has arisen, these sentimental, emotional, intuitionists have put the Women's Society before their church, before their Pastor and before the general welfare of the churches of Christ. In other words, to them this "national" Society is more than any church or all churches, more than any pastor, or all pastors. It is composed of a group of Heaven's favourites who have a private wire to heaven, who assume they monopolize the mind of the Spirit, and are above all scripture, or reason, or ordinary common sense.

The Editor of *The Gospel Witness* desires it to be known that he has absolutely no fellowship with this Society. It may accomplish some good here and there, for God sovereignly overrules the unwisdom of men, and even of women, too; but we are convinced that the principles of its constitution and the whole genius of its organization, are inimical to the best interests of any and every church that would be loyal to New Testament principles. However sound the Women's Missionary Society may be theologically, there can be no doubt that ecclesiologically it is utterly unscriptural.

## RADIO LETTERS.

Alliston, Ont., April 14th.

"Dear Dr. Shields:

Just a few lines in appreciation of your inspiring message on the twelfth. As it is impossible for me to get out twice to our church services, it is a wonderful opportunity to hear your heart-reaching messages of the gospel."

Cobourg, Ont., April 13th.

"Dear Sir:

Please send me a copy of the address given by you on Sunday last. I have been in Canada nearly two years, and have heard you preach occasionally.

Your address last Sunday was very inspiring, and I praise God with you for the trophies won last Sunday."

Scranton, Pa., April 13th.

"Dear Doctor:

I had the pleasure of listening to a talk given by you last evening over the radio, against vices and pleasures of the present age. Thank the Lord that we still have a few daring men like yourself who are fearless. . . .

Am enclosing one dollar for copies of papers which I hope to send out. Probably will wish to order more later on. I am a semi-invalid, but still hoping the dear Father may use me for service while He tarries."

Toronto, Canada, April 16th.

"Dear Dr. Shields:

I would like very much a copy of your sermon last Sunday night, which we enjoyed very much. I feel there are not enough ministers preaching like that. Our young people are indulging in these worldly pleasures for lack of leadership. God bless you in your work.

**Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf**

Vol. 6

No. 2

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR.

Lesson 21. May 24th, 1931.  
Second Quarter.**THE CALL OF MOSES.**

Lesson Text: Exodus, chapter three.

Golden Text: "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto thee." (v. 14.)

**I. THE BURNING BUSH, (vs. 1-3).**

In the last chapter we left Moses in the land of Midian. Forty years have intervened, and we find him still in the same land. These have been years of quiet retirement, but years also of most precious and necessary training. His sojourn in Egypt with its privileges was no doubt of great value to him; but the acquisition of worldly knowledge and accomplishments was insufficient for the work which God intended him to do. The Egyptian training bred self-confidence; the desert training was necessary in order to inculcate humility and reliance upon God: the former affected the intellectual, the latter, the spiritual.

Times of quiet communion with God, away from the distractions of men are necessary for God's servants. Note Elijah at the brook Cherith, (I Kings 17:5), Ezekiel at the river Chebar (Ezek. 1:1), Paul in Arabia, (Gal. 1:17, 18), John in the Isle of Patmos, (Rev. 1:9), and our Lord in Nazareth in His various retirements. Note also the nature of Moses' training, the contrast with the Egyptian period, its purpose, its necessity, and its equivalent these days. The time spent by Moses in the desert was long, peaceful, profitable, restful.

The nature of Moses' occupation denotes his humility. In Egypt he was a resident of the palace, in Midian a keeper of sheep, (v. 1). This gives manifestation of a change in his character, further evidenced in his attitude toward the call of God. Previously self confident, now distrusting self. He had come to know himself, although he had not yet come to the full experience of complete trust in God. He had yet to learn that God could do through him what he, of himself, could not do. He had failed lamentably in his attempt to assume the leadership of Israel because he had made the endeavour in his own strength. He was going to be taught to do the work in God's way, and by the help of divine power.

Note the circumstances of the call. It came while he was engaged in his usual occupation. God's servants need not sit

and wait for any special call; they should do the duty nearest to them, and leave the rest to God. He chooses the busy people for further service, not the idlers. Note further the place of the call, the significant appearance of the angel; His identity, the Lord Jesus; the miraculous features attending His appearance, (v. 3); the purpose of the same; and the effect on Moses, (v. 3).

**II. THE VOICE OF THE LORD, (vs. 4-6).**

The attraction of the burning bush effected its purpose, and Moses turned aside to see it, and heard God's voice from its midst, (v. 4). Having answered the call Moses received directions concerning the attitude which he should adopt in the divine presence. God said, "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground", (v. 5). This implies the holy character of God, the sanctifying influence of His presence upon His dwelling place, and the proper attitude of man in approaching Him. He is holy; man must be reverent in His presence. God further addresses Moses in explanation of His identity, (v. 6), graciously linking with His name the founders of the nation of Israel. He was the God of Abraham, and his descendants, in a very special manner, by revelation. "And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God." This was a solemn moment for Moses: he was face to face with the supernatural, with the divine; and, realizing the greatness and holiness of God, he was afraid in His presence.

Godly fear is much lacking in these days, and therefore requires to be emphasized whenever possible. Note its beneficial nature. There is manifested in this incident the reality of God, the fact of His communicating with men, and His interest in His creatures.

**III. THE PURPOSE OF GOD, (vs. 7-10).**

In these verses God declares His knowledge of that which was occurring in Egypt. He had seen the affliction of His people. He had heard their cry, and He knew their sorrows, (v. 7). He was therefore not indifferent to their condition. He took note of that which was occurring, and He knew all about their state. He then declares His purpose, first in reference to Israel, (v. 8), then concerning Moses, (v. 10). His declared intention was to deliver the Israelites from bondage, and to bring them into a land flowing with milk and honey. This was in fulfilment of His prophetic word, (Gen. 15:14), and manifests His faithfulness, and His care for His people, (I Peter 5:7).

In the carrying out of this great deliverance God purposed to use Moses as leader. It was a high honour accorded this man, and a work for which he had been long and carefully trained. When the need arises, God has His man ready to perform His will, even though the man himself may not understand his destiny, and may even at first decline the honour extended to him, as Moses, (v. 11), Jeremiah, (Jer. 1:6), John Knox, and others. Note the need for patient waiting upon God, that He may work in His own time.

**IV. THE ATTITUDE OF MOSES, (vs. 11, 12).**

Moses realized the high honour being offered him, but felt his unworthiness to accept it, and carry out the duties attached thereto. He said unto God, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" (v. 11). This is in contrast with his attitude in Egypt, (Acts 7:25), and is a manifestation of his humble spirit. The answer of God is most gracious and encouraging. He said, "Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee that I have sent thee; When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain", (v. 12). God always goes with His servants when He sends them on His business, (Matt. 28:20). He never leaves His own, (Heb. 13:5). Note the fulfilment of God's word, and the evidence of the divine nature of the Mosaic call, (17:6), also the evidence attendant upon the divine call of leaders in the present day, and in relation to all God's servants; for if He has called us into His service he will manifest His approval in some manner in the work we are doing.

**V. THE DIRECTIONS OF GOD, (vs. 13-22).**

Having received the assurance of God's presence with him in his mission to Egypt, Moses asks a question relating to the conduct of that mission. When he informed the Israelites that the God of their fathers had sent him, and they asked His name, what should he say unto them? (v. 13). "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you", (v. 14). This title denotes the self-existent One, the Absolute God, the name by which He had made Himself known to Abraham, (Gen. 15), and, therefore, peculiarly associated with His relationship to His people. Note the significance of the various titles used by Him, and the fact that this includes them all. In reference to this name God adds, "This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations", (v. 15).

Further directions are given Moses in relation to his mission. He is told to "Go and gather the elders of Israel together", (v. 16). The leaders of Israel were first to be informed of God's purpose, then they were to enter the presence of Pharaoh and say unto him, "The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God", (v. 18). The result of this request would be refusal on the part of Pharaoh to let the people go, (v. 19). This would lead to judgment on the part of God, (v. 20), and deliverance for His people; direction being given that they should not depart empty, (v. 21), but ask presents from the Egyptians, (v. 22), not in the sense of borrowing in order to return, but with the intention of retaining—the favour of God disposing the Egyptians to comply with the request. This would mean a return in some measure for the years of labour given the Egyptians, while under bondage. Note the omniscience, justice, and power, of God.

# The Union Baptist Witness

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## "AFRIC'S SUNNY FOUNTAINS"?

That part of Africa, known as the Republic of Liberia, situated on the West Coast, knows nothing of "Sunny Fountains", but its jungle-like interior; its pathless bush and its many hills, have not been unsurmountable barriers to our missionaries.

In recent issues of the "Union Baptist Witness" some reports have been given of the exploration trip taken by Rev. and Mrs. Davey and Rev. Gordon Mellish, and the readers will be interested in further news culled from other letters.

### Twenty-five Miles in One Day.

Because of threatening rain and a desire to know just how many hours would separate the new station from the one located at New Cess, the scouting party pressed on the last day of their journey and covered some twenty-five miles in one day. In commenting on this, Mrs. Mellish writes: "Imagine, Mrs. Davey walking every step of the way. Just think of those long miles, through Liberia's backwoods, where often there is no path and streams have to be crossed in some way or other. She came back smiling, however, and after a few hours' rest was as good as ever. She said, 'Better' because she had lost a few pounds."

### Moving Day.

When the new lady missionaries saw the native house where Mr. Lewis and Mr. Davey lived for a while and where Mrs. Davey took up housekeeping on her arrival in Liberia, they wondered how she stood it. As you know, it was located in a dirty village and was most unsuitable, and yet what an entrance was gained through that contact with native life! And now, Mr. and Mrs. Mellish are moving to a native house—a house that cannot boast of even mud walls and located in one of the interior villages of the group they wish to reach. There are twenty-one towns under the one Chief and much courtesy has been shown the missionaries. Pray that the Lord will give Mr. and Mrs. Mellish much encouragement and fruit as they labor among these people, the only ambassadors of the Cross in all that heathen district and isolated from the fellowship of the other missionaries.

It will require the hiring of some seventy carriers to take the necessary equipment over the many miles which separate the two stations, and these carriers will need much supervision. Again the request of our missionaries is passed on, "Pray without ceasing".

### Plans For Occupation.

When Mr. and Mrs. Mellish have taken up residence on the new station and while living in the native house, they will proceed to build a country type of house, that is a mud house, with mud floor and thatch roof. The material will be at hand and this type of house it is expected will offer some degree of com-

fort. Indeed, it may be hailed as the last word in modern architecture after the taste of life in the temporary hut during its erection.

### Mr Davey Covets Privilege.

A letter from Mr. Davey states the following—"I envy Mr. and Mrs. Mellish the privilege that lies before them and am just aching to go with them, but it seems best for the time being that we remain here. The new work will be hard work, but both Brother and Sister Mellish are keen to take it up and their opportunities in such a field cannot be estimated. They will not be building on another's foundations and we are sure that they will do a wonderful work there."

### The Bassa People.

"The Bassa tribe extends from the place marked Marshall, just below Monrovia, to the point marked Sino, that is coastwise, then north and south-east for two or three days inland. After this, there is a gap representing two days' journey with no people, and then you meet the Gio and Mano tribes. We have advanced due east and are opening a route for future development of untold possibilities. We hope to have young men, Bassa young men, who will some day be placed in between, in charge of out-schools, thus linking up the whole of the Bassa tribe and systematically its people with the Gospel."

### PERSONAL WORK.

In conversation with one of our Pastors a day or so ago, he registered his conviction that the greatest sin of the day was indifference, not only the indifference which sinners manifest toward the claims of Christ, but the indifference of Christians as to the need of their fellow-men. It is too true that those who have the assurance of salvation and are rejoicing in the Blessed Hope, neglect many opportunities of witnessing and are often too afraid of rebuffs to make clear the plan of salvation even when the Lord has opened the way.

For the encouragement of those who are doing, or desire to do, personal work, the following story as related by the Rev. R. D. Guthrie, of Courtland, at a recent Jarvis Street Baptist Church after meeting, is given.

Some five years ago, when Pastor Guthrie was visiting the Toronto General Hospital, on a Sunday afternoon, he was attracted to one of the first beds in the ward, where a young man, apparently very ill, was lying. Mr. Guthrie engaged him in conversation and found that he did not know the Lord Jesus Christ. He also heard his long and interesting story, the gist of which was that he had run away from the police force in Ireland, because of some trouble, had worked his way to Quebec and from there to Montreal, had travelled by freight train to Toronto, where

for want of food, he collapsed on the streets. Mr. Guthrie tried to show him the goodness of God during all his long journey and his need of salvation, and while he seemed impressed, he did not accept the Lord Jesus Christ. The next Sunday afternoon he was again visited and for an hour Mr. Guthrie labored with him in an endeavor to make the Way clear. The young man was very weak from illness, but would not yield himself to Christ. The next week Mr. Guthrie found he had left the hospital and all trace of him was lost.

Just a few weeks ago Mr. Guthrie was asked to speak at the Pastors' and People's Conference held in Oxford St. Baptist Church, Woodstock, and after delivering his message he was approached by a lady who requested an interview, saying that she had come to the meeting especially to see him. She stated that she had seen his name in the paper and thought that perhaps he was the young man she had been looking for during a number of years. This lady asked Mr. Guthrie if he remembered talking to a young man in the Toronto General Hospital, and on being assured that he remembered quite well, she stated that she had been commissioned by him, her nephew, to give a message to a preacher, named Guthrie. She further stated that she was the last one to talk to the young man before he passed away and that his last message was, "If you ever run across a little Irish preacher by the name of Guthrie, tell him that because of his testimony I have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ and will meet him in Heaven."

Not always are the ambassadors of Christ permitted to know how the Lord has used His Word to accomplish that whereunto it is sent, but "He is faithful that promised."

### BETHEL, ORILLIA.

Attendance at the Sunday Services of Bethel Regular Baptist Church, Orillia, have been most encouraging during the winter months and a series of messages delivered by Pastor John Byers relating to the Second Coming of Christ and the End Times, have aroused much interest. Regular prayer meetings have been held on Wednesday and Friday evenings and the attendance has registered as high as forty. One of the church's young men has conducted a cottage prayer meeting on the outskirts of the town with splendid success.

A reorganization of the Sunday School has greatly increased the interest in that department of the work as well as the attendance.

During the winter, the church has enjoyed the messages of visiting Pastors, Rev. W. J. H. Brown, who spoke on the Home Mission work of our Union; Rev. Arthur Glass, who told of work among the Jewish people, and others, whose ministry the Lord honored. The church is looking forward to visits from Dr. T. T. Shields and Rev. Alfred J. Lewis.

**OWEN SOUND.**

A time of real blessing has been experienced by the South End Regular Baptist Church, Owen Sound, of which Rev. John Dodds is Pastor. The attendance has been splendid and during recent evangelistic services many came to the Lord.

The Church is purchasing the Savoy Theatre, splendidly located and offering many advantages as a permanent church home. It is reported that nearly one hundred will shortly come into the church's membership and that prospects are very bright for the future of the work. May the Lord abundantly bless His people of the South End Church and nourish the babes in Christ which He has given to them, with the "sincere milk of the Word", that they may grow in grace and knowledge.

Rev. W. J. H. Brown, Pastor of Annette Street Baptist Church, Toronto, recently assisted Mr. Dodds and was greatly impressed with the revival spirit manifest in Owen Sound.

**ORANGEVILLE.**

Again last Sunday night the Grace of God was seen in the Orangeville Baptist Church, when a father, who professed to accept Christ some months ago, made his profession public. The Orange-

ville Sunday School have purchased a piano, which will be used for the children's meetings. The first of this series of meetings, held last week, proved a good start for this special effort to reach the young life of the town with the Gospel.

**OUR INDIAN WORK.**

Rev. Melchie Henry, the Pastor of the Medina Regular Baptist Church, himself a member of the Six Nation Indians and ministering to his own people, told of his work to interested gatherings in Toronto last week. On Tuesday evening, he spoke at the Jarvis Street Missionary Prayer Meeting and on Wednesday evening at the Runnymede Road Church Prayer Meeting. Both churches gave liberal offerings for the support of the work.

Any churches desiring to have Mr. Henry visit them should communicate with the Union Office.

**BOBCAYGEON.**

Rev. W. E. Atkinson visited the Bobcaygeon Regular Baptist Church last week-end visiting Galway Road on Friday evening and giving a Missionary talk with the lantern slides in the Bobcaygeon Church on Saturday evening. On the Lord's day, Mr. Atkinson took five services for the Pastor, Mr. M. B. Gil-

lion, who ministers to groups at Quigley Settlement and Galway Road in addition to Bobcaygeon.

During the Winter months, because there were no transportation facilities, it was necessary for Mr. Gillion to walk eight miles each Sunday to take his services.

The church at Bobcaygeon is growing steadily. It will be remembered that when Mr. Gillion took charge as Student-Pastor, there were but ten members. Now there are thirty, although only three of the original number are now in membership. An addition to the church building has been completed during the past year.

**CENTRAL, LONDON.**

It is hard indeed to get the Pastor of Central Regular Baptist Church, London, Rev. James McGinlay, to report on the activities of the Church, but we have learned that during the past year one hundred and seventy-seven have been added to the membership, one hundred and seven of these by baptism. Twenty-two have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and followed Him in baptism since Easter and at the Bible Study meeting held each Thursday evening, there are some five hundred in regular attendance. Two prayer meetings are maintained weekly and the Lord continues to bless every department of the work.

# All Aboard for Woodstock

## F. B. Y. P. A. CONVENTION

# MAY 25th

MEETINGS IN KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SPECIAL TRAIN FROM TORONTO, \$3.00 RETURN FARE

We urge every member of every Church in the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec to endeavour to be present to make this the greatest Young People's Convention we have ever had.

Full particulars next week.