

The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF EVANGELICAL PRINCIPLES AND
IN DEFENSE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS
\$2.00 Per Year, Postpaid, to any address. 5c. Per Single Copy.

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

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Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada.

Vol. 10. No. 38

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 4, 1932

Whole No. 507

"Beholding as in a Glass."

A Bible Lecture by the Pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields.

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Thursday Evening, January 28th, 1932.

Lecture Text, I Corinthians, chapter 13.
(Stenographically Reported.)

We shall turn this evening to the first epistle to the Corinthians, the thirteenth chapter. It is much easier to make a show of what we do—or, by what we do—than to render visible an increase, a development of what we are. An exhortation to do is likely to be much more popular than an admonition to be. And yet the quality of what we do will be determined, very largely, by what we are. A man may survive the loss of reputation: he cannot survive the loss of character. It does not make very much difference, it makes some—what men think we are; but what we are in ourselves essentially, is all-important.

There are scriptures whose chief value is that they are good food. I do not know much about calories and vitamins and all the rest of it. When occasionally I go to a restaurant I do not pay half as much attention to the scientific formula set out opposite each article of diet as to the price. I can only assume that it is all good. There are scriptures which exhort us, which command us, to do; and they are, of course, of great importance. There are other scriptures whose chief value is that, when they are received, and the truth of them becomes, by divine grace, incorporated in our very being, they change the character—or, the nature, to use a stronger word, of what we really are.

It is well that we should thus feed the soul, that we may grow. There are people who are too impatient to grow. They want to be doing—doing—doing; or, rather, to talk about doing. The best way to do that which is right is to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"; because the virtues of the Christian life are really fruits. They are but an outward manifestation of an inward grace.

If you were to cut a branch of a peach tree in the spring-time, when the blossoms are coming out, and another from a cherry tree, and another from an apple tree—however

skilled as a horticulturist you might be, if then you were to extract the vital principle from those differing several branches, which we call the sap, and subject it to microscopical examination, analysing its ingredients, I venture to say that neither you nor anyone else could discover why the sap in one branch turns out to be a peach, and in another an apple, and in another a cherry. There is a difference of nature, and when that life finds a perfectly natural expression, it becomes the fruit of that particular tree.

Nowadays it is popular religiously to dress up Christmas trees—and even the trees are manufactured; there are all kinds of glass and wax imitation fruits tied on which have no relation to the life of the tree. That is not Christianity. We are to be "planted in Christ", and we are to "grow up into Christ", and in Christ. We are to grow, not into grace, but in grace: we must be in grace first. The seed that fell by the wayside did not grow into good ground, but that which was in good ground did take root and grow up and bear fruit. If we are Christians, we are in grace, and we are to grow in it, and, growing in it, grow into a larger knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

That is a comparatively slow process. I have heard it said that it is possible, by means of a moving-picture machine, so to speed up the process of growth that one can actually see things grow. I do not know whether that is true or not, but it is said that it is possible so to accelerate the speed of things that you can detect a perceptible growth. But natural growth is a slow process, yet it is a process that is of worth, and that counts in the end of the day.

This passage which I have announced, but which we have not read, is a passage which I fear has often been misused. It has been used as a stick with which to beat people. Those who contend for the faith in any degree are not exhorted, nor even admonished, but are—how shall I put it—driven

into a reading of the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians. Yet the whole genius of the chapter, the principle of every verse, properly understood, shows that it is something, not to do, but something to be absorbed, taken into our spiritual beings, that we may be vitalized and energized by the truth therein contained.

There is a great distinction between the law and the gospel. They are in harmony with each other in one sense, but one is external and the other inherent. One has to do with the outward form, the other with the essential nature of a thing. The law, the ten commandments, are taken from the tables of stone, and, by a divine miracle, are made part of the very fabric of our natures. Nobody but God can do that. And the only way by which that objective law can become subjective is for us to take the Word and eat it. "Thy words were found", said the prophet, "and I did eat them."

I shall not expound the chapter. Volumes have been written upon it. But if we can get past the flowers which bloom beside the road which leads up to the Mansion within this enclosure, there is a phrase to which I had intended to call to your attention.

There are some passages of scripture that are like pictures in an art gallery. I remember some years ago being in the Louvre in Paris, trying to study a few of the great pictures of which I had read, but which before that time, I had never seen. While standing before one of them, trying to get into its atmosphere, to breathe it, to come to an understanding of the spirit of the artist who produced it, a company of Cook's tourists came along, a dozen or so who were making the usual hurried trip. They had a professional lecturer with them, and as they stood before that picture for a minute, he rattled off something like an auctioneer. I wanted to throw something at him—but the attendants had taken away even my walking-stick! Of course, I do not mean that literally, but he disturbed my study, and I felt I could understand that picture a great deal better without his attempted exposition, if they had just left me alone with it.

You do not need to be an art critic to understand a good picture. What you need is something within that has an affinity for that which the artist has portrayed. Thus as we come to these great picture-galleries in the holy Book we do not need to be great scholars to understand: what we need is to have the same Spirit within as produced the Book, and if we sit down with the Book, we shall find that it will grow upon us, and grow into us, until by and by we shall feel that any attempt at exposition is little short of an impertinence. You will say, "Let me alone with the Word of God, and I shall understand it."

I told you, did I, of a Dr. Brown who published an edition of Pilgrim's Progress with explanatory notes. One day he went out visiting his parishioners. He called upon a woman in a very humble station in life, and found her with a copy of Bunyan's Pilgrim—and it was his edition with explanatory notes. "I am glad," said he, "to see you reading Mr. Bunyan. Do you enjoy it?" "Very much, Pastor, very much", she replied. "And you understand him?" "Yes; I understand Mr. Bunyan very well—and I hope some day I may have learning enough to be able to understand your notes!"

You have heard of the coloured preacher who, having announced his text and indulged in a prolonged exordium, said, "And now, my brethren, I shall proceed to confound de text." And confound it he did!

I shall try this evening only to introduce you to this picture gallery, a gallery of pictures before which we may sit and analyze their beauty. Did you ever look at a fixed object upon which the light was shining, a picture or other object, and then close your eyes? You found that the shape of that object was stamped upon your eyes; you could see it with your eyes shut. So we are to take time to meditate upon the things of God, to live with them until they become part of us, until we absorb them. Then, in due time, they will find expression in a changed life.

"Though I speak with the tongue of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." You do not need anyone to explain what that means, do you? Eloquence is a poor substitute for real love at any time.

I have in my mind now a man who was one of the most eloquent men I ever heard, a man with a marvellous command of the English language, who had a gift of fluency

which was very rare. His addresses were like a veritable verbal Niagara. He simply poured forth a volume of words—and they were not without thought. I do not mean that he was verbose: he had something to say. But his speech never reached me.

I have seen them in the banks in England ring down the money upon the counter to see whether the coin had the true ring or not.

I have heard testimonies—dare I say that? I do not want to be critical—but I have heard testimonies sometimes which were marvellously suggestive of a tinkling cymbal. They were well phrased, well expressed; it may have been a fine speech, but there was a rattle about the thing that did not impress one that it was an expression of a soul that was desperately in love with Christ, and was giving expression to that devotion. Eloquence is a poor substitute, I say, for real love.

"And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge"—love is something more than a mere intellectual theory: "Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." One may be thoroughly versed in the Bible, and "have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge", and yet have no love. Do you know what I mean? I am constantly warning you against being contented with the theory of things, against talking about Scripture as though it were something apart from ourselves,—arguing about this, and that, and the other thing. We may understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and have no real love in our hearts.

"And though I have all faith"—faith is an exercise of the soul, an attitude of the soul—"so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing"—there is much *doing*, you see—"love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not."

When a boy or girl has excelled in his or her studies, and has carried off the honours of the school, and father and mother come to the great occasion to witness the reward bestowed, though they may have had but little educational advantage themselves, they do not envy that boy or girl his or her pre-eminence on that occasion. They rejoice in it. But there is another one who almost got it, but did not—just missed it. Now there is a test of character: can that one rejoice in somebody else's success on this occasion? Too often they find it impossible to do so.

I know of a minister—I am regretfully sure I do him no injustice—who has suffered his ministry to be crippled, and almost destroyed, all for the want of that charity which envieth not. Had he had grace to rejoice in a neighbour's success, in the blessing attending another's ministry, it might have reacted in profit to his own soul; but because, instead of having the love of God shed abroad in his heart, which would enable him to rejoice with those who do rejoice, admitting that cancerous thing, envy, to his heart, it all but destroyed him—as it will destroy anybody.

That is a fine test of Christian character, when you are able to be happy vicariously, to rejoice in the blessing that has come to somebody else, though you have not shared it yourself. We can all weep with those who weep. We have any amount of tears to shed—and sometimes, alas! a certain unexpressed and unacknowledged satisfaction that somebody else has to do a bit of weeping. But it requires real grace to rejoice with those who do rejoice; to shout, Hallelujah, for the man who is on the mountain top when you are away down in the valley. That is a test of Christian character, that is an evidence of our being possessed of that real love that envieth not.

"Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up",—how we should like to dwell upon each, but there is a verse I want to get at if I can—"doth not behave itself unseemly."

By the way, did it ever occur to you that true love will teach us good manners? will make gentlemen of us if we are men, or ladies if we are women? I have referred to a woman whom I met once in a church where I went to preach for the summer. She had a poor apology for a husband. I do not know what he did, or who he was; but somehow or another as you came into the presence of that woman you were impressed that she had a bearing, a graciousness, a dignity in the proper sense, and a culture, that were entirely unusual. She was a woman of distinction, whom you could

not meet without feeling that she was "to the manner born". One might have supposed that she was a woman of what they call "good breeding" and fine education.

She was very poorly clad. She wore a little old bonnet that looked as though it might have come out of the ark—if, indeed, they wore bonnets in those days; or as if it had been a family heirloom handed down through many generations. It was certainly not up to the fashion. She wore a shawl, gathered about her like a woman of the market-place. There was nothing about her dress to attract attention, unless it were its exceeding shabbiness.

But I remember the first time I met that woman: as she came up and shook hands, almost instantly one forgot all about her shabbiness, and felt one's self to be in the presence of an unusual personality who could go anywhere. One could imagine her walking into the presence of the king without embarrassment. I made enquiry about the woman, and learned that she had always been poor; she had not fallen upon evil days, for she never had had what people call the advantages of this world. But she had had one great advantage: for many years she had kept company with the first Authority on manners, with the supreme Exemplar of the Proprieties: she had lived in the presence of the King. She belonged to the royal court, and the love that filled her heart, and manifested itself in every act, so dominated her that she never behaved herself unseemly. She knew instinctively what to do. Really to love the Lord would save us from a world of trouble. That, by the way.

"Seeketh not her own." I used to think it was politicians who did all the axe-grinding. I supposed that the political field was the favourite hunting-ground of men who wanted to profit at other people's expense, and receive something for nothing. I did not suppose that I should ever find place-seekers, position-hunters, and would-be power monopolists, among religious people. We grow wiser with a few years of experience, and come to understand what Paul meant when he said, "I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state"—nobody who is thinking of other people, and of the Lord's work—"All seek their own", said he, "not the things which are Jesus Christ's."

How much of that we see in our day among religious people! And even the church itself is often "to place and power the door". But true charity seeketh not her own, and is not easily provoked.

Have you ever noticed that if you really love anybody it is very difficult for that person to offend you? They may hurt you, hurt you to the very quick, but if you really love them you will not be very easily provoked. How infinitely patient Love is!

"Thinketh no evil." There are people—and we are all disposed toward it—who impute constantly wrong motives to people. When somebody does a commendable act, such people ask the question "What did he do that for?" They cannot believe it is because he loves to do good. Hence they attribute some ulterior motive.

Do you know what is paralyzing the world to-day? I verily believe that the root cause of the world's present distress is just here: I think the Prince of Wales spoke a volume in that speech to ten thousand children yesterday. Thank God for a man who may some day be king, who knows how to think, and who speaks his own thoughts very often, not what somebody else has given him to speak. Even in a business way, the world is not destitute. Apparently in Canada some people must have a great deal of money. I do not know who they are, but the one hundred and fifty million Dominion loan was oversubscribed to the tune of two hundred million. I suppose it is partly the banks, the insurance companies, and so on. Then the Province floated a loan of twenty-five millions, and it is subscribed twice over.

Somebody must have money. Why do you suppose they subscribe for the Dominion loan? They say, "That will be the last thing to go to pieces. If there is anything safe in Canada, surely it must be the credit of the country itself. Having a little money, I am going to invest in that." The same principle holds in the Province.

But there are people who have a great deal of money, and there are many more who have not much money, but they have some—and they keep it. It is not in circulation. Why? Because nobody trusts anybody. It is a universal want of faith that is paralyzing the world,—doubt, and uncertainty, and suspicion. It will bring distress anywhere.

The habit of thinking evil, imputing evil motives to people who are trying to do good, imagining all kinds of evil about everybody, is all too common. You could blacken the character of an archangel by that means.

Were you ever deceived in anyone? When I had little experience, I foolishly supposed that the understanding of men resolved itself into a diligent study of psychology. Do you know what that is? That is the science of the mind. When you have mastered every text-book that ever was written on the subject, you will not know what is in your own mind—to say nothing of what is in anybody else's. You do not know what your wife is going to do—nor has she the remotest idea what you will do under given circumstances. We do not know anything about each other. But the habit of thinking evil can grow upon us.

I ask, have you ever been deceived? I have. I think about nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand times that I trust anybody I get caught—hence the longer I live, the less confidence I have in my own judgment. But I think this is a sound rule of life: I would rather be betrayed nine hundred and ninety-nine times out of a thousand than once unfairly suspect an honest man. If the man is unworthy of trust, and I trust him and he betrays me, in the end it can not hurt me. It will ruin him, but it will not hurt me. "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" If somebody has borrowed money from you, or has done some other thing which occasioned you loss, do not worry about it. He has lost much more than you. It is imperative that we should keep that root of bitterness out of our spirits. Keep on trusting people. It is better to trust than to be holding everybody under suspicion. God give us the charity that thinketh no evil!

"Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." That is the verse that I had intended to speak to you about, but now I have time only to hang the picture for you, so that you may look at it. "Iniquity"! Do you know what sin is? It is missing the mark; falling short of the standard; failing in the race. We all do that, all of us.

In relation to another person, any person at all, do you ever find the slightest satisfaction come to your own spirit if one relates something in respect to the other person that is derogatory of that person's character, of his quality as a man? Do you like to drag people down? or even to hear of their being down? Are you rather satisfied when you find that another is no higher than yourself? Is there any measure of satisfaction when another falls? Do you say, "I expected it"? Could you rejoice in an enemy's success? If you can, then you know what it is to love your enemy. But when you want him to be defeated, and hope he will fail, there is not a bit of love in your heart toward that person. Do not say there is—there is not. What we need to do is to pray that the love of God may be shed abroad in our hearts so as to make it impossible that we should rejoice in anybody's failure to attain to the scriptural standard.

"But rejoiceth in the truth." I fear there are many people who all the time, and some of us who some of the time, are a little bit glad when somebody else has trouble. You allow yourself to be glad when somebody else has as hard a time as you. Is there any satisfaction whatever in anybody else's wrong-doing, or anybody else's defeat, anybody else's failure at any point? Or does it make you sad? If we really love, dear friends, we shall be really sorry.

You remember how one expecting that he would be happy to hear of Saul's defeat, told David of his own part in slaying him. David called one of his young men and rewarded him as he had treated Saul. Then he pronounced that marvellous eulogy on Saul and Jonathan! If we really love people, all these sparks will die when they touch us. There will be no affinity here.

Some years ago, when we were making alterations in the basement of this building, when I left the office late at night I saw some men loitering around. I tried to convince myself that everything was all right, but I cruised around in my car for a while, and then went home. About two-thirty I got up, dressed, and called Mr. Fraser and said, "I want you to get up and meet me at the corner of Sherbourne and Wellesley Streets." He enquired, "Is anything wrong?" I do not know that there is, but I want to make sure. I cannot sleep; I feel uneasy. Let us go down to the church."

I picked him up at the appointed place, and we came down. I saw a policeman on the way and said to him, "I feel a little uncomfortable about our building to-night; get in and come

down to the church with us." "All right", he said, "I will go along." We came in at the Gerrard Street door, and as we walked back through the corridor he said, "Are you armed?" "No. Why should I be armed?" He picked up one of those clubs that they used to swing here and said, "Take one of these each. You will need it if there is anyone here." I took a club and went swinging away!

"We went down where the workmen had been busy. There were shavings strewn around, and a pool of water in the centre; and right in the midst of that pool of water was a live electric wire. It had boiled the water away, and whitened the clay around it. As I looked around I said, "Thank God for that pool of water." If that wire had lain in a pile of shavings instead of in that pool of water—Jarvis Street Church building would have been destroyed. As it was, that live wire could do no harm: it only boiled the water.

When live sparks from the devil touch you, what do they find, a pool of water or a pile of shavings? "Thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity." Put out the fire. Do not let it blaze up. "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" If at any time a report reaches your ears about another that is uncomplimentary, examine yourself to find out whether you rejoice in it or not; and if you do, go and ask God to forgive you, and ask Him to put something inside you that will put out the fire. We should have heaven on earth if we had that love in our hearts that rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth.

On that score, most of us could minister quite as much satisfaction to other people, as other people could minister to us. If that is the thing that the soul is going to feed upon, somebody's defects, somebody else's shortcomings, most of us could provide abundant material for other people to feed upon. There is a mutuality about life's relationships. Oh, that the love of God might be "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us". Then the fire, reaching us can never go farther. We should be a fire-wall between the fire and the next building. The fire of envy and jealousy will burn out in the nature in which the love of God is shed abroad.

I saw an advertisement the other day, advertising furniture that was unvarnished and unpainted. Why should anybody want to buy unpainted furniture? It is an inadequate illustration because perhaps some people buy it that they may paint it themselves. But there is another reason: They want to see the natural wood. They want to see what they are buying. Thus should we train ourselves to rejoice in the truth; in the genuine, in reality.

Let me read the remaining verses without comment: "Bearing all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be tongues, they shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

Did you ever see that chapter exemplified anywhere? It has never had but one exemplification in all the world's history. If you would know the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians, study the Lord Jesus Christ: in Him you will see the Truth of this chapter incarnate. There love is at its highest, love in absolute manifestation: "Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth."

Somewhere, years ago, I read the blind Dr. Matheson's comment on that verse I read. He described the Lord Jesus as standing above all others, the preeminent One. I suppose we should like that, should we not? There are certain people who would like to be the only one. Some people enjoy traveling first-class, not because they are first-class passengers, but because other people cannot travel first-class. They like to be on the top. They are not particular about the altitude, so long as there is nobody above them, but everybody below. But Dr. George Matheson said of the Lord Jesus, "He was weary of the top of the hill, and sad to find Himself so fair."

Do you know what he meant? That being on the top of the hill, He reached down with His arm of grace and said, "Come up with Me." For does He not say, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even

as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne"? He does not want the top of the hill to Himself, but stoops to lift us up, to make us like Himself. He is sad to find Himself so fair, sad to discern in you and me an inferiority to Himself, possessed of a passionate longing to see us conformed at last to His own image and likeness. God give us a love like that. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE SIGN AT THE CROSS-ROADS.

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, January 31st, 1932.

(Stenographically Reported)

"And they arose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem."—Luke 24:33.

These simple words describe a great crisis, and reveal a principle which enters into the salvation of all who are really saved.

Here are two people with their faces set in a particular direction, with a course clearly marked out before them. The day is done, and they return to their home at evening-time, but suddenly a great light bursts upon them, a new truth dawns upon their spiritual consciousness; and "the same hour" of the night their lives are changed, their outlook is altered, and without waiting for the dawning they change their plans completely, reverse their programme, and turn their faces in a new direction: "They rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem."

What was that great revelation? What was the truth which effected such a revolution in their lives? which changed their whole outlook, and altered the aspect of life in general?

They have spent the day in Jerusalem. They have listened to many rumours, all of them having one element in common: it has been reported that the Prophet of Nazareth Who had been crucified—there was no doubt about His crucifixion; Who had been buried—there was no doubt about His burial—but it had been reported, and the rumour had rapidly spread throughout the city, that the Prophet of Nazareth was not dead but was alive again.

Beyond doubt, these two people had made such investigation as was possible to them, but they had been unable to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. Weary of the conflict which must have taken place in their own minds, they are returning to their own home. Very naturally, on the way they discussed these reports between themselves, comparing one story with another; but while they are still uncertain, their own hearts are hospitably disposed toward the rumour, and they would be glad to believe that it is true.

And that is an important consideration. What is our attitude toward truth in general? Are we ready to afford hospitality to the truth when it comes knocking at our door? Or are our minds locked and double-barred by some form of prejudice? Truth always has an affinity for truth, and is never at war with itself. He whose heart desires the truth, will not long desire it vainly: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." Thus they discussed these matters between them, having reached, as I said, no conclusion satisfactory to themselves, nor finding any explanation upon which mind and heart could repose with comfort. They were sad, and about the only conclusion they could have reached was that these many rumours were too good to be true.

Going on their way, they are joined by a third party, a stranger whom they do not know. He enters into conversation with them, and enquires the reason for their

melancholy, for their sad demeanour, for the gloominess perhaps of their tones. And in wonder they ask him whither he has come, and how it comes to pass that he should be ignorant of the marvellous happenings at Jerusalem. They enquire whether he is a stranger, "knowing nothing of these things"? He asks them a further question, "What things?" Then they tell him the story of the crucifixion of their erstwhile Friend and Master, Jesus of Nazareth, and how they "trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel", that in Him the promises of the ancient scriptures should have found their fulfilment.

They tell him also of the rumours that have reached their ears, and of some people who have actually been to the sepulchre, and have found it empty, but that as yet they have only hearsay evidence: they had not seen the Person Who was reported to have been risen again.

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Then He carried them back into the Old Testament scriptures and talked to them out of the book of Moses,—perhaps from Genesis, possibly about Isaac, and of Abraham's readiness to offer him up as a burnt-offering; then beyond that to the story of the paschal lamb, and Israel's ritual of blood. He must have spoken of Joshua and the land of promise, and by and by of Israel's sweet singer, the shepherd of Israel, David, who spake of the Coming One. At length he must have reached Isaiah, the fifty-third chapter. At all events, in all the scriptures from Genesis to Malachi this Stranger briefly expounded the things concerning the Christ.

Never before had they heard anything like it. They were strangely moved. Their hearts were mysteriously warmed, and, arriving at their domicile, the Stranger would have bade them farewell—"He made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." He accepted their invitation: "He went in to tarry with them." As the simple evening meal was spread, the Stranger suddenly ceased to be a guest, and became the host. He took the bread and brake it, and even as He did so the darkness was dissipated, and "they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight."

They had no mind now to retire, no disposition longer to tarry even in their own home: "They rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem", moved by this revelation, inspired by this great truth.

And that is the philosophy of conversion; that is how it happens always in principle. God Himself comes out of the unknown; first of all as a stranger, but as One Who knows the hearts and the minds of men, and with His master-key He unlocks their understanding. He comes in to take

possession, and all the world—and all the universe—is changed; “old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”—“They rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem.”

Come with me to the crossroads, then, and let us read the signposts; let us see what a difference the coming of Jesus Christ makes to the thought of men, to their whole intellectual outlook upon life, as well as to the moral content of life itself.

I.

Their meeting with the stranger imparted A NEW SIGNIFICANCE TO HIS DEATH. What a problem the death of Jesus—I speak thus of Him now, for the moment, to get the standpoint of those who knew Him on the other side of the grave, and therefore call Him, Jesus—I say, what a problem the death of Jesus presented to His intimates, to those who knew Him, to those who had had even a glimpse into the greatness of His heart, who had had some appreciation of the perfection of His moral nature! Why should such an one as He die? What is wrong with the world when such a person as Jesus of Nazareth could die as He died?

His death constituted a challenge to the moral government of the universe. If they were thinking men they must have felt that something was sadly out of joint in the government of things. Spring and summer, autumn and winter, succeed each other, and in the realm of nature Law operates inexorably; there seems to be order and design. The farmer can sow in the springtime, in the confidence of reaping a harvest. But in the moral realm something has gone wrong. A man has lived nobly, has exhibited a moral perfection such as the world has never seen—and he has been rewarded by an ignominious death, by being driven from light into darkness. By the hands of men He has been chased out of the world.

These men must have said, “What is wrong with the world?” People have thus talked about the Great War and all the suffering it entailed. But I submit that wherever you find human suffering, you find also human sin, for sin is everywhere. Terrible as such a catastrophe was—and would be should it come to us again—yet there is in it no contravention of any principle of justice, for there is not a man or nation anywhere who has not sinned and merited all the punishment that may fall upon him or it. There is no problem there philosophically, but here is the Embodiment of moral perfection nailed to a cross.

What mental confusion there must have been! How the minds of these men must have been at conflict with themselves! Talk about the problems of today? In all human history there never was so great a mystery as was presented in the death of Jesus during those three days in which His body lay in the tomb. There is no explanation of it. If it must rest there, I cannot believe in One Who sits upon a throne of justice and of truth. I say that the death of such an one as Jesus impugns the moral government of things.

What is the explanation of it? That day, that hour, the Stranger said, “Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?” There was a moral reason for it. There was and is an oughtness about it. It is soundly based philosophically. It had to be because He was Christ. Beginning at Moses, He showed beyond doubt that the atonement was wrought into the very fabric of things, that the atonement was not an afterthought but a forethought, predetermined, foreordained, an inevitable provision for

the moral needs of man, just as this world was furnished for his physical habitation.

You must not isolate the Cross. You must not shut it up to a point of time. You must not look upon it as a brief parenthesis. You must regard it as an eternal fact, as a revelation of a suffering God, Who took the world’s sorrow to His own heart and “bore our sins in His own body on the tree”. As He expounded to them that principle, they saw the Cross. It was an instrument of the curse, crude and cruel, but now to them it stood out as a beacon light in all history, and long before it was written they would have acquiesced to the sentiment of the hymn, “All the light of sacred story gathers ’round its head sublime.”

I suggest to you a fascinating study: look for the Cross in the Old Testament. Look for the Cross in the plan and purpose of God. Look for the Cross in the unfolding of His plan, of Whom it is said, “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” Viewed in the light of the resurrection the Cross has a new significance, the death of Jesus of Nazareth a new meaning. It is not restricted to a point of time. It loses its local, its racial, and its temporal character; and we behold the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, we behold God in Christ reconciling, attuning, the world unto Himself.

All that happens when He Who died upon the cross, and was buried and rose again, and showed Himself alive by man infallible proofs, appears to us. No one can understand the significance of the death of Christ apart from His resurrection. Whoever denies the fact of the resurrection is bound, in the nature of the case, to misinterpret the death of Christ—as well as all that preceded it, and all that follows after. But in the light of His resurrection they understood the cross. “I am he that liveth, and was dead (who became dead); and, behold, I am alive for evermore.”

Do you wonder at our insistence upon these cardinal truths? I mean cardinal literally, the truths upon which other things hinge, the keystone to the arch, the truth which is at the centre of things, and which cannot be surrendered without the surrender of all light, and a lapse into the densest of darkness.

Do you know Christ personally? Do you know why He died?

II.

Let me add another word. The truth of the resurrection effected a change in them because it threw A NEW LIGHT UPON THE LIFE OF JESUS. Have you observed how accustomed we all are to gild somewhat the pages of another’s history when his life-story is ended? We are disposed to forget his faults and frailties, so that even the ordinary person becomes somewhat of a hero. We are disposed, without ecclesiastical authority, to effect their canonization; and they become saints overnight. We are prone, not only on the negative side to speak no evil of the dead, but to invest their lives with all the dignity with which, with any degree of appropriateness, they may be adorned.

What a beautiful life Jesus lived! How full of alms deeds was He! “He went about doing good”—not only *being* good, but *doing* good. He scattered blessing wherever He went: He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and taught the ignorant. Then His life ended, and He Who had promised to be a veritable fountain of blessing suddenly became a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. The darkness which accompanied His death spelled for many the end of all benedictions. The hands of blessing were

still and impotent, and no longer able to touch. But now that He lives again, and they look back upon that record of a perfect life, they say, "Now we can understand it." It was only a brief parenthesis in the eternal circle, a crescent moon, a manifestation of what God is. His life-ministry of perpetual beneficence was really a disclosure of God.

We think we understand Bethlehem now. It was but the starting point of that divine manifestation; and as we understand its culmination in Calvary, we understand its beginning in the stable of the inn. Thus the whole character of Jesus becomes glorious. In anticipation of it, you remember He took three of His disciples up into a mountain and allowed the glory to shine through the veil of His flesh; and He was transfigured before them. Now that He has gone into the grave, and has come up again in the power of His resurrection, He becomes infinitely glorious as the Son of God—"declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness (or, the Holy Spirit), by the resurrection from the dead."

I say again, apart from the resurrection, you cannot understand the life of Jesus Christ any more than you can understand His death. It is a problem inexplicable on any rational grounds, apart from the resurrection. I submit that to the devotees of the evolutionary hypothesis and say, "Explain it to me, will you? I challenge you to open the tomes of history, and search the records of human life of all peoples, and find me any parallel to Jesus of Nazareth's appearing two thousand years ago. Granting all that you say about the slowness and the imperceptibility of the movement of the principle of evolution, and yielding to your demands for millions of years—what of it? Take all your millions of years and show me anywhere anybody comparable to Jesus of Nazareth."

Even our Unitarian friends admit His matchless personality. Even they exalt Him as the ideal—not seeing the irrationality of their position; for I say the splendour of His character cannot be explained apart from the open grave, and the fact of the resurrection. But when we see Him risen, we understand the great truth uttered in the prayer this evening: we have a Daysman betwixt us Who can lay His hand upon us both.

When these disciples saw it, "they rose up the same hour, and returned." No man can see that truth, really see it—I do not mean merely to yield a mental assent to it: I mean that no man can really afford hearty hospitality to the fact of the resurrection, and come into vital contact with the living Christ, without having his whole life changed. He is bound to rise up and go some other way. It was anticipated in principle when the wise men, having seen the Babe, by special divine illumination, departed into their own country another way. A man always takes a different way home—and comes home a different man—after he has seen Jesus Christ.

III.

Then this further word. That singular, that unique revelation, INVESTED HIS WORD WITH A NEW AUTHORITY. Have you ever gone to the house of a friend just after the crepe has been hung on the door? The undertaker has been there, the time for the funeral has been set, and the bustle immediately succeeding the advent of the dark-winged angel is past. They are waiting now for the funeral occasion, and they are talking with the few intimate friends gathered there about one subject, the one

who is gone. Sitting there for an hour, if you are intimate enough, as one friend after another comes in, what do they tell them? What he or she said just before going. How the last words are treasured! How they are passed on! It may have been the simplest thing in the world, but those words are handed on to all the neighbours who come, as though they were a golden treasure, as though they had in them the wisdom of all the Solomons. The last word!

But did anybody ever live who left in the minds of men such a verbal treasure as did Jesus of Nazareth? Somehow or another, when He spoke the people were able to remember. Have you ever thought of that? Some of us speak, and nobody can remember what we say. We have to say it over again—and still they do not remember. But it is written, "They remember his words." His teaching came back to them with a new significance when they saw Him risen from the dead.

Were they present when He preached the sermon from the mount? Had they heard His matchless parables? Were they there when those golden treasures fell from His lips as He spoke about the many mansions in His Father's house, about the path that leads upward to the skies? Were they there when He said, "A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father"? Were they among the number who said, "What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith."

A great many things which Jesus said have their sequel in the resurrection, and they cannot be understood apart from the resurrection. If you deny the resurrection, you will deny the unity, the integrity, the supreme authority of the Book. That is the key to it all.

I wish I had been with them, don't you? How I should have liked to hear Him open the Scripture! They thought they knew a little bit about it, but they had a new conception as they heard this great Expositor, Himself the supreme and final Exposition of all that is therein contained, begin at Moses and all the prophets, and expound "unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."

Who else could talk of himself without egotism? Who else but God can say, "Beside me there is none else"? As He talked with them of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, and Joshua, and Ruth, and Boaz, and David, and Solomon, I think they could have said, like the spouse of the beloved, "The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills." They saw Him coming down through all the Old Testament dispensation. They witnessed His triumphal march through the centuries to Calvary, and to the open grave. It is no wonder their hearts burned within them.

Do you understand the Bible? Has it any authority for you? You say, "No, sir." I will tell you how you may come to accept the word of God as the truth: you must know Him of Whom the Bible speaks, and let Him explain His own word.

I think I told you once a story which will bear repetition, a story of two ladies who met on a social occasion. They talked about a book that was extremely popular at the hour. One spoke with enthusiasm, in enthusiastic appreciation of the book, and said it was the greatest book

she had ever read. She then enquired of her friend whether she had read it. "I have the book on my shelves, but I cannot say that I have read it. I have dipped into it, I have read a few chapters; but I found it very prosy, most uninteresting. It did not appeal to me at all." "I am sorry," said her friend, "for of all the books I have read—and I have read a few—none have been so entrancing as that." She replied, "Perhaps I am not capable of appreciating its value, but I certainly did not enjoy what I read."

Months passed by, and these two friends were present upon a similar occasion. The one who had spoken so enthusiastically about the book was engaged in conversation with someone else nearby where the other was speaking to-a fourth. While not eavesdropping, she could not help hearing the conversation, and she heard the one who had been so unappreciative of the book say to her companion, "Have you read such-and-such a book?" "No." "Then you must read it; it is the most extraordinary book I ever read in my life." The one who had before recommended it said, "I wonder what new interest has come to her that she should change her whole attitude toward this book", and she listened as the one to whom she had formerly recommended it without success, expatiated upon its charm, its literary quality, its sparkling wit, and all the rest of it. She turned to her friend and said, "Did you hear what Miss So-and-So said about a certain book?" "Yes." "Well, I never was more surprised. Some months ago I spoke to her about that book in such terms as she now employs, and she said she had tried to read it, but had failed utterly to find any interest in it." "But," said the other, "have you not heard the sequel?" "No." "She has met the author of the book in the meantime, and they have fallen in love with each other. Their engagement has just been announced. They are to be married!"

I remember my dear friend, Dr. Keirstead, one of Mr. Whitcombe's professors, a great man of God, talking to a group of students. He said something like this: "There in the college is a young man who tried to attend to his studies, but in spite of himself his interest is somewhat divided—for it is a co-educational institution, and there is someone else that has attracted his attention. But of course he is only a student, and he must be very careful. He does not know what the future holds for him. But these two have met, and they have talked about the moon and a few other things, keeping discreetly from the main matter. Though each of them knew full well what the other was thinking about, neither broke the silence. But all other subjects were merely a pretext for talking with each other; they were holding fellowship and communion without words.

"The gentleman said to himself, I am not in a position to make a proposal to any young woman. I am only a student, and must wait until I am established in life. (That is a very good position for any student to take, and I commend it to you students. It is very wise.)

"After graduation the young man goes away to the west, and settles down for a while; but before going he enquires, 'You will write occasionally?' 'Yes. I shall write you; and you will answer?' 'Yes.' So the letters pass back and forth. They are somewhat formal, somewhat reserved. At last he finds a position in life. But he has had a dream of some day telling the story himself. He is not going to write anything like that: that is too good to be written. He is going to tell it in person, not by letter. But oh, the thousand, or fifteen hundred, or

two thousand miles, cost money to travel; and it might better be spent in some other way than taking a journey, for the man, though not a Scotsman, is prudent. At last, with some reluctance, he decides to communicate that which has been struggling for utterance this long time, by means of His Majesty's mail.

"A certain young lady receives one day a letter addressed in a familiar hand, but unusually heavy! It has an extra stamp: it is a budget this time. She says, 'Let me see now. The address is familiar. That 'M' looks like his handwriting, and possibly the 'T', but I wonder who wrote those two 'SS'? Then there is my name. Yes; he may have had something to do with it, but someone else must have been engaged in writing it too.' The name, the address, the postmark, are all examined. But what is the date of the manuscript? Carefully she examines the postmark, and the date, and analyzes the address upon the envelope. After a while she turns it over, and wonders just how it was sealed.

"At last she opens it, sees whence it came, and notes the handwriting. Then she says, 'It is a most interesting literary composition. I wonder from whom the writer borrowed that particular word? Is that Tennyson, Shakespeare, or who is it? This is a composite letter; he did not write it himself. Some redactor has been at work here.'

"It may be the worthiest epistle that ever was written, but no woman in the world ever looked at it like that! What does she do? She opens it! She would not think of its literary charm. She would not stop to ask what elements were combined in its production. She knows that behind the hand that wrote it was a heart overflowing with affection, and that it was written to tell her one story—and one story only.

"The Bible is literature, is it," said Dr. Keirstead, "it is literature. The greatest that ever was written. But you will never understand it as literature, you will never get to the heart of the Pentateuch by means of your theological microscope: you will know the Bible when it comes to you as a love-letter from the Bridegroom of your soul.

When this Stranger opened their understanding, and opened the scriptures to their understanding and said, "See, the Book is full of Me. I came from eternity to tell you the story of My love," instantly every word of Scripture was clothed with the authority of heaven itself, because Jesus Christ had come out of heaven to tell men what His word meant.

Is that what the Bible is to you? Is it a bound volume of our Lover's epistles, always telling the same story, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee"?

IV.

Last of all, it INVESTED THEIR OWN LIVES WITH A NEW MEANING. "We trusted." Do you mark that? They wrote their faith in the past tense. "But yesterday we trusted; but yesterday we hoped that the dream of all the sages had been realized, and the vision of all the divinely-inspired seers had at last been fulfilled. We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel. We followed Him, and they took Him up to a cross; they crucified Him; they took Him down, and they took Him to a garden and to a new-made grave of which Joseph of Arimathea was the owner. We buried Him there, we rolled a stone against the mouth of the sepulchre—and life ended in that *cul-de-sac*. There was nowhere to

go. We saw everybody going down into that grave. Everybody was covered up. There was no outlook, no prospect for the future. But now the stone is rolled away from the sepulchre, and the grave is empty—and, what is more, the Crucified is alive again."

I do not wonder that they stooped down and looked into the sepulchre. Do it. Get down on your knees and look into the sepulchre, for through that sepulchre you will see a path that leads into another world, and another life.

Did you ever motor through a strange country? Have you come upon a road sometime that seemed to have no outlet, that led through a dense forest? You said, "I must have missed my way." Wooded land rises on either side, and you seem to be going right into the forest. But a little distance on you come to a bend in the road, and you look down the long road that leads to another city. You say, "It is all right. I am going somewhere after all."

Thus did these disciples come to the grave as to the end of human life with nothing beyond—until He came back from the grave. Seeing Him, all life had a new meaning. They would have said, "Life is full of paradoxes. We know the balances are somewhat unequal. It does seem that there are some maladjustments in life. It does look as though there ought to be some justice effected here and there. We grant all that, but we have a new perspective now. Once we thought the cross a tragedy, a crime. We could not understand it. Death was the worst of all enemies. But now we find him robbed of his sting, and the grave of its victory. Through the risen Saviour we see a path of light that leads to another life, and another world, and another city whose builder and maker is God.

The politicians are talking about the defects of our economic system—I fear they will have something more to talk about before long. Fearful possibilities lie in the news from the far East. May God be pleased to give us peace in our time! But it is quite possible that we shall be faced with other problems than the universal depression before long. Our philosophers will have to turn aside from a consideration of dollars and cents, and discuss other anomalies. War is not the only anachronism, not the only thing that ought to be outdated. Life is full of it. If you find—or think you find—a solution for one problem, another will emerge. Life will be found full of contravention. The whole world is inverted. Man's thinking is upsidedown. There is no solution of life apart from the risen Saviour. But when we see Him risen in glory, He becomes the key to every situation. If we believe in Him we are on the road to glory.

That is what the Bible means when it says that he "hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel". The Old Testament saints believed in a life to come. Darkly, like Abraham, they saw His day; they saw it and were glad. They "confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth". They looked for a city that hath foundations, but they saw it not. Nor did man know what lay beyond the grave until Jesus Christ came. He came back as the representative of that other life, the same in identity, the same in perfect character, the same Jesus on one side of the grave as the other, with an outlook toward heaven. He said, "If I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself."

But I must ask you the question, Have you seen Him? Do you know my Saviour as a living person? Do you

know the meaning of His death? Can your conscience find rest in it? Can you say, "He was wounded for my transgressions, he was bruised for my iniquities: the chastisement of my peace was upon him; and with his stripes I am healed"? The God-man died for me. His infinitely capacious soul took in all my griefs, and carried all my sorrows. His soul—not His body only—was made an offering for sin. Thank God, "Jesus paid it all".

Can you sing that? Do you know that you have a living Saviour? "Laid in the grave, and we shall not see Him any more. We must wearily wend our way alone," they said in effect. "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?" A Stranger has come. He keeps step with them, and when they come to their home they say, "Come and stay with us." He accepts their invitation, and is known unto them in the breaking of bread. They said, "He is not gone: He has come back to us. He walked with us by the way; He sat with us at the table."

It is possible to have Him come and live with us. I do not wonder as they went to Jerusalem, finding others gathered together telling the same story, that Jesus appeared again in their midst. You and I will need Him to-morrow. Mark my words, you will need Him before this week is out. You had better have Him now. Take Him home with you to-night. Let Him walk home with you, and then have Him tarry with you until the night is gone, and the day shall break. Some day, when the night begins to fall about us, and we hear far voices out of darkness calling our feet to paths unknown, for us, if He should tarry, the day's work shall be ended, and we must depart hence:

Can you pillow your head upon the promises of His word, rendered authoritative by His certification after His resurrection? Can you say, "Time and eternity are all one to me. I have a Saviour Who belongs to both, and I belong to Him. It is of little consequence to me whether I live here or yonder. For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Whether I live or die, I have Christ; and in Him I have all things."

Trust Him to-night. Put your hands in His to-night. Leave all your problems with Him for solution, and He will lead you on to glory, right through the gates into the city.

Let us pray: O Lord, we bless Thee for the truth that Thou art with us still. May the Spirit of Truth sanctify it to our good, and to the salvation of some who hitherto have not known Thee. Bring us out of darkness into Thy marvellous life. Translate us from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of Thy dear Son, Amen.

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Baptist Bible Union Lesson Leaf

Vol. 7

No. 1

REV. ALEX THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 8

February 21st, 1932

FIRST QUARTER

THE PLACE OF SACRIFICE.

Lesson Text: Leviticus, chapters 17, 18.

Golden Text: "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."—Heb. 9:22.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

Monday—Deut. 12:1-16.

Tuesday—Deut. 12:17-28.

Wednesday—I Kings 11:1-13.

Thursday—Luke 10:25-37.

Friday—Jude 1-16.

Saturday—Jude 17-25.

I. THE PLACE OF SACRIFICE,

(17:1-9).

In this lesson we come to laws which are largely of an ethical nature, the beginning of the section known in critical realms as "The Law of Holiness", extending to chapter twenty-six. The first chapter deals with the slaying of animals for food, the second with chastity. In the first section animals used in sacrifices are referred to, and in the second, animals caught in the chase. In the slaying of these animals there was evidently a danger of the performance of some idolatrous rites. The Israelites had but recently left a heathen country, they were travelling toward another one of the same nature, and at the time of the giving of the laws they were surrounded by heathen nations. Contamination from heathen customs was therefore a possibility and this the Lord seeks to prevent, with what success their future history reveals. Typically their condition prefigures the position of the Christian, surrounded by people alien to God, and living in opposition to His laws, (Eph. 2:12), and in constant danger of contamination from their ungodly customs.

The directions given were suited to a wilderness existence, where the people lived in easy access of the central place of sacrifice. It is also worthy of note that the Israelites were not great flesh eaters, so that the command to bring the animal to the door of the tabernacle and there slay it, would not be a burdensome one, (v. 4). They were prohibited with a severe penalty, (vs. 4, 9), from slaying the animal in the open field where the temptation to carry out heathen rites might be great. The worship of the he-goat is mentioned in this connection, (v. 7), an Egyptian form of worship, accompanied by unseemly rites, fittingly described by the term, "whoring". Evidently the Israelites had sinned in this particular manner, (Ezek. 20:6, 7, 15-18), as also later they became infected with the idolatry of other nations. Bringing the animals to the gate of the tabernacle was a precaution against such secret sacrificing, and offering the same as "peace offerings" (v. 5), gave due re-

cognition to the Lord as God, and gave a religious significance to the meal. Several lessons may be derived from the central place of sacrifice typifying our Lord, the only One through Whom we may approach the Father, and in Whom we may present our offerings. Attention may also be directed to the law of prevention as well as cure, and to the significance of presenting the food to God before partaking of it.

II. THE PROHIBITION OF BLOOD, (vs. 10-16).

In previous lessons the prohibition of this section has been studied, therefore no lengthy explanation will be required in its teaching. It is well to note the lessons, however, before passing on. There is the hygienic reason underlying the prohibition, due to the danger of infection through partaking of this part of the animal. There is also the religious reason, in that the life is in the blood, and the same was presented unto God in sacrifice, and was His. The blood of the animal caught in the chase was therefore poured out and covered with dust, manifesting reverence for that which was sacred, as well as taking a precautionary measure in a sanitary sense. From this there may be taught the lesson of reverence for sacred things. There is so much irreverence, even among boys and girls, that teaching on reverence is greatly needed, stating the reason for reverence, the blessings of the reverential attitude and the consequences now, and hereafter, of irreverence. A case of uncleanness concludes the chapter, (vs. 15, 16).

III. A PECULIAR PEOPLE, (18:1-5).

In all the laws given to Israel separation unto God is implied, with its consequent result in differentiating God's people from the heathen about them, and thereby making them in the highest sense a peculiar people. In these verses such a separated life is clearly enjoined, and inasmuch as the principle affects the saints of God these days the same is worthy of close attention. First, the Lord proclaims Himself their God: "I am the Lord your God", (v. 2). As such He had a claim upon them, there was a close connection between them; He was the source of blessing for them, and they had an obvious duty toward Him. He was the only One entitled to their worship and service. It meant also that they were His people. In reference to the saints of this New Testament age the same may be said: He is our Lord and God. May we give Him the preeminence due to Him, (Col. 1:18).

The negative aspect of the life of Israel is then stated. The people were not to do after the doings of the land of Egypt, or of the land of Canaan, (v. 3). There must be a firm stand taken concerning the heathen customs of those lands. Oil and water do not mix, neither do true and fake worship. Certain modernistic leaders are evidently not quite sure of this, judging by the manner in which they refer to heathen teaching of the present day. Some, indeed, are in favour of a kind of eclectic religion, taking what they esteem to be the best out of all religions, and making one thereof. Such a conglomeration could never, by any stretch of the imagination, be called Christian. Again, in reference to customs not directly con-

nected with religion, but not in accordance with God's law, there must be a distinct stand taken. The child of God must have nothing to do therewith. Real separation must be effected, and maintained. This is one of the marks of a real child of God. He acts thus in obedience to the command of God, (2 Cor. 6:13-7:1), but his desires also lead him in this direction.

A strong negative attitude is essential on the part of the child of God, but this is only half his general attitude, he must also take a strong stand in a positive direction. Not only must he refrain from sin, but he must do good. It is possible to be good in such a manner that one is good for nothing. The Israelite was enjoined to keep God's judgments, ordinances, and statutes, (vs. 4, 5), so the Christian is directed to keep God's commandments, (John 15:10), and to serve Him in an acceptable manner, a blessing being promised for obedience in both cases, (v. 5; I John 5:22). The child of God in all ages is expected to do God's will, therefore he must know it, (Col. 1:9). Note the blessing for studying the word of God. It is his duty truly to represent God before an alien people, and bear witness faithfully to Him, (Acts 1:8). He is God's representative on earth. Explain the privilege, responsibility and blessedness of this position.

IV. THE LIFE OF CHASTITY,

(vs. 6-30).

Specific directions follow in this section in relation to the character of the separated life. Such a life must be pure in all its relationships. Among the heathen nations immorality abounded, but this was not to be permitted among the people of God. On account of their sin the Canaanites were driven from their land, and put to the sword. Ancient empires have fallen for the same reason, and in a manner affecting man in an individual and collective manner God had manifested His hatred of the sins depicted here. There has always been some laxity in respect to them by certain sections of society, and particularly so at the present time in connection with divorce, but the saints of God must uphold the high standard of God in life and by lip.

In these laws explicit directions are given in each case, so that there could be no excuse for the commission of the sin. Command is given first in relation to the laws of incest, (vs. 6-17), then in reference to polygamy, (v. 18), and the rights of marriage, (v. 19). Condemnation of adultery follows, (v. 20), with equally strict commands concerning passing the children through the heated arms of the god Molech, (v. 21), unnatural lust, (v. 22), and bestiality, (v. 23). The guilt of the Canaanites is stated, (vs. 24, 25), and the command is given to Israel to refrain from such sins, warning being given concerning the consequences of disobedience, (vs. 26-30).

The Union Baptist Witness

Is the Official Publication of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec. Send all communications to the Office Secretary, 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto 2, Canada

THE GOSPEL BAND.

Last week the report of The Gospel Band suffered in the process of the pages' make-up at the printers and did not appear in its entirety. It is now given as it should have been submitted a week ago and will be read with interest for the Band has served many of the churches of the Union. The full report was submitted by Mr. Harold Sager at the Annual meeting of the Runnymede Road Baptist Church where the members of the Band are in membership.

During the year, the Gospel Car which is the means of transportation used by the Band travelled more than 3,000 miles. Towns and villages surrounding Toronto, and wherever an opportunity of service presented itself in places within visiting distance were given meetings.

The first service of the season was held at the corner of Pacific Avenue and Dundas Street, Toronto, on May 2nd, 1931, and the last one was held in the town of Bolton on October 3rd, 1931. Some five thousand tracts were distributed besides portions of Scripture and other pieces of literature.

During the year forty-one church services were conducted and at these meetings seven accepted Christ as Saviour; three others indicated their desire to follow the Lord, upon whom they had already believed, through the waters of baptism; one backslider was restored.

In connection with the services held at Otterville and Rosanna, it is noted that there were several responses to the invitation and that at West Oro, when the Band visited the Church to assist in the re-opening services, after its having been renovated, there was a great meeting. Every available seat within the church was taken and many who could not gain admittance listened through the windows and doors. At this service a young man accepted Christ as Saviour.

Voluntary offerings for the support of the work and the maintenance of the car amounted to \$292.79.

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THE EASTERN CONFERENCE.

The annual Winter Conference of the Regular Baptist Churches of the Montreal and Ottawa District, was held with the church at Westboro on Thursday, January 28th, and proved to be a time of rich blessing to the large and representative gatherings at each of the two sessions. The churches represented were, Westport; Westboro; Calvary, Ottawa; Buckingham; St. Amedee and The Gore; Dalesville; Lachute; St. Paul's, Montreal; Beneficent, Montreal, and Emmanuel, Verdun. The pastors present were, in the order in which the churches have been named, Pastor C. Hardie, Rev. D. Fraser, Rev. J. Hall, Rev. M. Doherty, Pastor L. Hisey, Rev. F. W. Dyson, Rev. A. St. James, Rev. Jules Daugherty and Pastor R. Hisey, each of whom took an active part in the proceedings of the Conference. A letter of regret at his inability to be present, but expressing his

heartiest wishes for the success of the Conference was received from Rev. R. E. Jones of Sawyerville and was read at the afternoon session. Rev. W. E. Atkinson, secretary of the Union, was present on his way to visit one of the churches.

Helpful and inspiring addresses were delivered by Rev. A. St. James and Rev. J. Hall in the afternoon, and two stirring evangelistic addresses were brought to the evening gathering by Pastor R. Hisey and Rev. F. W. Dyson, and the closing moments of this session will long be remembered by all who were present, as a time of heart-searching.

Special vocal music was rendered, in the form of a solo by Mr. David Brown of Verdun, and a duet by Rev. F. W. Dyson of Dalesville and Mr. S. Goldsworthy of Lachute.

It was decided to hold the Annual Summer Conference in Dalesville during the last week of June and all who were privileged to attend the last such event in Dalesville in 1929 will look forward with anticipation to approaching Summer Conference, and those who have not visited Dalesville have a treat in store.

The ladies of the Westboro Church cared for the physical needs of the large afternoon gathering by providing a repast fit for a king, and the gratitude of all who enjoyed their hospitality was warmly expressed in a resolution which was passed at the close of the day, in which the Church and its Pastor, Rev. D. Fraser, were thanked for all that had been done to ensure the success of the Conference. Gracious provision had also been made for those who needed to remain overnight and many were the expressions of gratitude voiced by those who were privileged to be entertained in the homes of the people of the Westboro and Calvary churches. It was indeed a time of happy and profitable fellowship. Rev. Matthew Doherty of Buckingham, Vice-Moderator, ably presided throughout.

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CALVARY, OTTAWA.

Since the New Year, it has been the joy of Rev. James Hall, Pastor of Calvary Church, Ottawa, to have had fifty profess conversion through the preaching and testimony of Calvary Church.

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RUNNYMEDE YOUNG PEOPLE.

Good times are being experienced by the Young People of the Runnymede Road Baptist Church, Toronto, and this department of the Church regularly and liberally supports Missions and meets from week to week to study the Word of God and rejoice in His salvation. The meetings are splendid training places for young Christians and the aggressive leaders are always on the look-out for strangers whom they may help.

The Rev. A. C. Whitcombe of Orangeville is giving a series of addresses on the Book of Amos at the Runnymede Young People's meetings. The first ad-

dress was given on January 25th and there was a large and interested attendance.

Mr. Whitcombe graphically described the life and call of Amos to be the servant of the Lord Jehovah. The message was a timely one, found to be right up-to-date, and leaving a desire in the hearts of all for further study. Mr. J. H. Hartley is the President of the Society which is well organized into working groups.

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JUSTIFIABLE PRIDE.

Although the pages of the *Union Baptist Witness*, we trust, will never become the silly means by way of which pats-on-the-back, metaphorically speaking, are dispensed, we think there are occasions when we can be justified in expressing pride in our young people, many of whom stand high in their school work and withal witness a good confession.

In spite of the fact that from the conversation of some folks, one might be led to believe that Regular Baptists are devoid of grey matter, it is from time to time called to our attention that many of the boys and girls are showing their ability in ways that must be acknowledged. A long list could be given, but the occasion of this note is based on a rather unusual choice of two schools for debating honors. It so happens that two young men, members of the same church, are to be pitted against each other. The one will represent the High School of Commerce and the other the Collegiate Institute in the city of Ottawa. These two young men, Clarence Sawyer and Edmund Hall, are members of Calvary Baptist Church, Ottawa; Edmund is the son of the Pastor of the Church and Clarence is the nephew of our missionary, Rev. H. L. Davey. It promises to be a keen contest and is creating considerable interest.

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HESPELER.

During the past three months, the Hespeler Baptist Bible School has increased its attendance 40 per cent, and sixteen have professed the acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. Other departments of the church show steady progress and a unified people with a mind to work and pray are expecting great things from God in the salvation of the lost and the building up of the saints in the most Holy Faith. The Pastor, Rev. W. N. Charlton, rejoices in the splendid prayer meetings of the church, realizing that it is only by way of the Throne that power comes.

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WINGHAM.

The children of the Wingham Regular Baptist Bible School, so well trained by Rev. James Gibson, have recently had the privilege of singing the Gospel hymns over a radio broadcast. Pray that the Lord will bless these opportunities of testifying.

WESTPORT.

Pastor Charles Hardie of the Westport Baptist Church has recently been assisted in special services by Rev. James Hall of Ottawa and Rev. Donald Fraser of Westboro. The Lord blessed the preaching of the true gospel through these His servants and ten souls surrendered themselves to the Lord.

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HILLCREST.

Hillcrest Regular Baptist Church, Toronto, is a missionary church and the Lord is blessing all departments of the work. The Church is but a few months old and yet much has been accomplished. The Bible School and the Junior meetings are looked upon as a means for bringing young people under the influence of the church and reaching them with the gospel.

Although the church has no baptistry, arrangements are being made that those who are convinced that the way of obedience for believers is by testifying of their new life through the approved ordinance, may follow the Lord through the baptismal waters.

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RUNNYMEDE ROAD.

Sunday, January 31st, was another blessed day at Runnymede Road Church, Toronto. At the morning service the Pastor brought a message which stirred the hearts of Christians and compelled the attention of all who were to be found within the walls of the church. Some were deeply troubled and somewhat perplexed as they listened to the gospel preached as they had never heard it before. Pray for them—the Lord is speaking to them but prejudice and wrong teaching must be surrendered before peace is found.

Pastor Loney, following the morning service and preceding the Bible School session, spoke at the Home for Incurables and then back at Runnymede he brought an interesting message to the Open Session of the Bible School. It was a particularly full day for this always busy Pastor, and had the evening service suffered somewhat, it would not have been surprising, but the evening message was one which will never be forgotten. It was indeed a time when Christians praised the Lord for His redemption and when sinners were pricked to the heart. At the close of the service Pastor Loney, buried seven in the waters of baptism and as these young people confessed the Lord before men, it was a time of rejoicing even while the tears flowed and prayers for the young people ascended to the Father.

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FRENCH EVANGELIZATION.

Rev. Jules Dautheny preached at St. Paul's Bilingual Baptist Church, Montreal, on Sunday morning, January 24th, and at that service seven were baptized, two from the Beneficent French Church, where Mr. Dautheny is Pastor, and five from St. Paul's, where Rev. Arthur St. James ministers. All these converts were formerly Roman Catholics. For one of them prayer has been made for twelve years, but the promises of the Lord are abiding, and St. Paul's Church

has experienced the truth of the promise, "we shall reap, if we faint not."

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OVER THE ROLLING DEEP.

Our out-going missionary party have been faithful in chronicling their impressions as they have travelled from Canada to Liberia, and have sent home a comprehensive diary of much interest. From the record of their enjoyment of their busy four-day stay in England to their visit to Freetown, Sierre Leone, just prior to reaching their destination at Grand Bassa, Liberia, we note that our missionaries have a deep sense of appreciation and are indeed observant. Surely, we can look forward to many interesting letters from the field during the coming months, as the new contingent add their quota to those splendid reports which come from time to time.

Missionaries of a Different Sort.

This is the compliment which came to our missionary party when they gave their testimony on the Africa boat. The officers of the boat hardly knew what to make of them, and expressed themselves as finding them different from other missionaries with whom they had come in contact. Pray that our representatives may ever be a peculiar people, witnessing of the life they have in the Saviour.

In England.

A letter from Miss Florence Stacey, which was never supposed to get into print, contains so many amusing experiences that we are taking liberties with it. "We were met at the boat by Mrs. Hancox's uncle, and that was very nice, and so was he. We were quickly rushed into a taxi, and to us it was a funny cab, in which we sat face to face and had no room for our knees. The only window was up near the roof, and one had the feeling that all the traffic was aiming to bump into the taxi as it raced along over the rough cobble stones at a rate of between thirty and thirty-five miles an hour. Say, we just hung on for all we were worth and tried to look pleasant." "Later we had the experience of climbing onto a 'tram'. We tried to do it soberly, but all the passengers knew that we were strangers and laughed at us. We rode upstairs, and had a good view from the height."

"The sidewalks in Liverpool are made of the small cobble-stones, and are pretty rough. No wonder the English people wear low-heeled shoes."

"The shops here are very nice, and the clerks most obliging; nothing is too much trouble for them, but they do not hurry, and one must wait until all the articles brought out for inspection are carefully put away, before the one chosen is sent for wrapping, or your bill is made out. It was hard for us to be patient when we were in such a hurry and had so much to do in our short stay. To make up for this, however, Mrs. Hancox and I were presented with a box of nice chocolates, and they soothed our feelings considerably. Then, the store sent us two tins of tropical chocolates when we were leaving."

"Liverpool, as you know, is on the River Mersey. The river is not very

wide, and one can cross it, about five miles, on the ferry. Right across the river is Birkenhead, a lovely town. Mrs. Hancox has a cousin living there, and we went to see her in her beautiful home, and we had a wonderful time. We were asked what we would prefer to do—go to see the model village, or go on a sight-seeing trip to Wales by bus. We chose the latter, and it was such a treat."

It is really a shame not to give the splendid descriptions sent by Miss Stacey in more detail, but possibly we shall have room for this later.

Another Side of the Trip.

From Mr. Hancox we have descriptions from a man's viewpoint. It would appear that every part of the ship interested him, and that to pilot one is now his ambition, for he says, "All I need now to qualify for the job of captain are the papers."

Detroit, Mich.,
January 25th.

The Gospel Witness,
130 Gerrard Street,
Toronto, Ontario.

Dear Sirs:—

As indicated by the inclosed card we are baptizing close to fifty persons next Sunday night at The East Detroit Baptist Tabernacle.

Your interest in this blessing would especially be from the fact that Brother William Fraser was the evangelist at our special meetings a few weeks ago and this is largely as result of his ministry.

Brother Fraser came to us at a time when we surely needed the fearless kind of preaching that typifies his work. He not only gained many, many converts for us but put our church on a new basis of understanding as to duties of members, officers and pastor and relationship to each other as set forth in the new testament.

His visit here was surely a great blessing to the church and to the city of Detroit. His radio messages over station WJBK were heard by thousands of our listeners.

We praise the Lord for the continuous revival he is sending us. Every Sunday night we are blessed with converts and the work is growing daily. We have over fifty young people in our Life Service League now engaged in regular Bible study in preparation for definite Christian work.

We seek an interest in your prayers for His continued blessing.

Most cordially,
(Signed) E. J. ROLLINGS.