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

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A Religion of Light

(The following is a sermon preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church Sunday morning, June 19th, 1910, by the Pastor, Rev. T. T. Shields, just five weeks after the beginning of his pastorate, May 15th, 1910, from John 12:46: "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness." In view of his later protest against Modernism in McMaster University and the Denomination generally, extending from 1919 until now, the views expressed in this sermon (now printed from manuscript written at the time) will be of interest to many. The principles here enunciated no longer, alas! find exemplification in Modernistic McMaster University; but they are illustrated in the educational policy of Toronto Baptist Seminary which was established for their conservation and propagation.)

In the spiritual, as in the natural life, we all have to grow from babyhood to manhood; and, in both, in the period of infancy, the nursery is the whole world, and just outside the door is paradise. All the fondness for pretty things, for things that can be handled, for little things whose dimensions can be measured by baby hands, the insatiable longing for everything in sight, whether it be a burning lamp or a shining razor—all this is equally characteristic of both natural and spiritual infancy.

We have been told that this is an age of enquiry, an age of quest. But from whom did the present generation with its passion for knowledge learn to ask questions? From whom, if not from our fathers? To hear some men, especially some young men, talk, one might suppose that the interrogation mark were quite a new thing, about as new as the degree of this spring's university graduate. The mothers of twenty centuries ago, if they were with us to-day, would laugh at our fancied superior alertness. They would say, "We remember that our babies lived in an age of quest too." And the divine Father above us would answer us, "My first two children, Adam and Eve, also lived in an age of quest."

As a matter of fact, we have only pushed our fathers' enquiry a little further, and not so much further as is sometimes supposed. Certainly in spiritual knowledge we have not outstripped the saints of long ago. The conceptions of the mission of the Christian church, of the function of the Christian ministry, of the purpose and potentialities of the gospel, and of the possibilities of the Christian life, the conception of these things entertained by the average

present-day Christian, and of necessity therefore by the average church, falls immeasurably short of the length and breadth and depth and height of the beautiful pattern which must inevitably reside in the thought and aspiration of the mature Christian who has long companied in close fellowship with Jesus Christ.

My speech is quite free from hyperbole when I say that in the common view an evangelist is little more than a ticket vendor who stands in the street with a leather bag slung from his shoulder; a pastor is somewhat like a server at a "quick lunch" counter; the gospel is a sort of railway guide and timetable; and the church a kind of spiritual railway waiting-room. But put beside this purblind view of the Christian life and its manifold ministries, or beside any better picture of the average conception of these things which you can honestly substitute for the one I have just sketched, the New Testament picture of the prospect which is unfolded to the wondering view of those whose faith has led them out of the darkness and through the morning twilight to look upon life in the meridian splendour of Him Who is the light of the world: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. * * * And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of

the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, with the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

That is the Biblical view of the mission of the church and its ministers, and it is only an elaboration of this pregnant saying from the lips of Jesus Christ, "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness."

This text may be resolved into two simple propositions: first, that the Christian religion is a religion of light; and, secondly, that its light is for those who believe on Jesus Christ.

I.

Let us begin with the observation that THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION IS A RELIGION OF LIGHT.

Religion is the reverent acknowledgment in heart and in act of a divine Being, with all that that acknowledgment may involve. The Christian religion proposes to give to men a knowledge of God, and of themselves as related to Him, that they may know how to acknowledge Him. And for this purpose it claims to be not a veil, a covering, not a temple without windows, nor a sanctuary without a candle, but "a light that shineth in a dark place".

I remark therefore that *Christianity must be a religion of light if it be true*. If it be true, if its revelation of God be true, if its characterization of man in his inner nature, if its story of the relation of man to his Maker, of his relation to the life and the world about him, and of his relation to the life and the world beyond him, if this be all true, it is bound to be a religion of light. In the nature of things, truth is invincible, indissoluble, eternal; and equally in the nature of things, all that is false is vulnerable, transient, evanescent.

"We can do nothing against the truth." Hence the religion of truth welcomes the light because it is itself light. It has nothing to fear in its forward march against the darkness of error. Light has no fellowship with darkness, and darkness must flee before the light. It has nothing to fear from the attacks of darkness. If the Christian religion be of God it is true, and if it be true its light is inextinguishable. The smoke of battle or of industry may cloud the sky, and men may blind their own or each other's eyes, but earth has no power to extinguish the sun. However men may regard a leaden sky, the sun ever laughs at the clouds, and by his heat they are melted away. Thus the Light of the world will shine on to the dawning of Truth's fair day.

But having in mind this general truth, it must also be borne in mind that religion has its special function, and that its light is primarily designed for spiritual illumination. Jesus Christ was primarily a religious teacher. He was chiefly concerned with spiritual things. He refused to be turned aside from His mission. He came to tell men what they could not find out for themselves. He

summed up His life's work, when, in His last great prayer, He said, "I have given unto them thy word."

Similarly, the record which God has given to us of His Son, the Bible, is primarily a religious Book. Please hear me in this attentively. Do not jump to conclusions, but follow me to the conclusion of my argument. The Bible is a spiritual light: it is designed to teach religion, and it knows how to mind its own business. The Bible does not teach science. Do not be alarmed. I am not going to pretend to a knowledge I do not possess. I am not a scientist. My knowledge of the physical sciences I fear is very limited, but probably no more limited than that of some we have known who pretend to know a great deal. Had the Bible been designed to teach science I might have learned at least a little from it. But I do not think anyone would ever become an astronomer by reading Genesis, or a geologist, or a meteorologist, or a master of any other of the physical sciences. Again I say, hold these sayings of mine in your mind for a few moments and hear me to the end.

The Bible does not teach history in general. It is concerned with the history of a divine revelation, it is the record of the divine communication of religious truth to men; and in that realm it is supreme.

Once again: the Bible does not teach geography. There is geography in the Bible, but you could not draw an accurate map even of Palestine with no other knowledge than that contained in the Bible. If you think I am wrong, put yourself to the test. Similarly, you could not write a treatise on the solar system if you were shut up to such information as the Bible contains.

But *while the Bible does not teach science, it is never unscientific*. Never yet has the Bible been at variance with any established fact of science. When I read of one sitting upon the circle of the earth, I do not think of it as being more than a figure of speech until science tells me what Isaiah did not know, that this earth is a globe. When I read, "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be"; and that at that time "in that night there shall be two men in one bed", "two women shall be grinding together", "two men shall be in the field", and one of each taken and the other left, I understand only in a general way that Christ will find men variously occupied when He comes; but when science tells me that it is midnight in one part of the world where two men may be in bed, that at the same moment it is early morning where women may be grinding the morning meal, and that elsewhere it is noon where two men may be in the field—when I learn what neither Matthew nor Luke of their observation or investigation knew when they wrote these sayings of the Master, I discover that while the Bible does not teach science, it is not unscientific in its statement, respecting these matters. And if, even respecting these things which now are accepted as true, science should have to change her ground, the scripture will remain unbroken. Again I say, await the conclusion of my argument, and hold in your mind this statement that the Bible, like Him of Whom it speaks, is primarily a religious light.

Next I remark that *the mission of the Christian church is to be a medium for the communication of religious knowledge*. That is her first and fundamental work, to give to the world a knowledge of God. And there are those who think the Christian church fulfils her utmost duty when she addresses herself to the work of evangelization. I am convinced that they who so believe have

a very inadequate view of the sphere of the church's ministry and influence, unless and until we give to the word evangelization an immeasurably larger content than the conception which limits that work to conversion or little more. The new born soul must be instructed that it may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

This leads me to a further observation, that *the Christian religion, while primarily a spiritual illuminant, welcomes all true light as auxiliary to its own.*

Some years ago when preaching for a few nights in a country church which was lighted by acetylene gas, one of the lights refused to burn, which left one corner of the church in semi-darkness. I suggested that they light a few oil lamps for that part of the church, but some of the dear brethren said it would only make matters worse, because the gas-light was white and the oil-light yellow. But I said, "The gas may be stronger and whiter, but light never quarrels with light. Put up your lamps." They did so, and found that the people in that corner could read their Bibles and sing the hymns.

The religion of Jesus Christ is the friend of light. Do not be afraid of anybody's coal oil lamp, even though it burns in a professor's study. A candle may add little to the beauty of the morning, but you need not fear that it will make the sun less bright, and it may assist the man who has been digging in the mine out into the light of God's glorious noonday.

So then, *the light of the Christian religion, just because it is true, and because it is spiritual, shines for the illumination of the whole man.* While God comes in at the skylight, He does not remain on the top storey, but illuminates the whole house. Though He puts His light on the candle-stick up there, it is that it may give light to all that are in the house. Hence Paul prayed for the Ephesians that "the eyes of their understanding might be enlightened".

The ancient promise runs, "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." We are to "gird up the loins of our minds", to be "transformed by the renewing of our minds." Each man is to be "fully persuaded in his own mind"; "if there be any virtue, if there be any praise", we are to "think on these things". So that you see the cultivation of the mind is indispensable to Christian growth. Spiritual light has no fellowship with intellectual darkness, whether it be in the individual, in the church, or in the body politic. The life and ministry of every true Christian, and of the church collectively, must echo the first creative fiat of the Almighty, "Let there be light."

Hence it follows that *the Christian religion, with the Christian church which is the organized medium for the transmission of its light, has ever been the inspiration of true education.* The school has ever been the church's firstborn. Missionaries have invariably found the establishment of schools essential to the success of their work. And even such men as Spurgeon and Moody, popularly but erroneously supposed to be men without training, but who really were divinely-trained in other than ordinary schools, and whose minds underwent the most thorough cultivation and discipline—these men were foremost in promoting the cause of education, and have left behind them enduring monuments of their conviction of the necessity of the fullest Biblical and intellectual equipment in order to the highest degree of spiritual efficiency. But I need not further emphasize the principle. The conver-

sion of any ignorant father illustrates it. Careless before, he now conceives it to be a religious duty to send his children to school.

But someone will say, "Did you not say that the mission of the Lord Jesus, of the Bible, of the church, of religion generally, is primarily spiritual? Should not the church therefore confine herself to purely Biblical education?" Our Lord did not teach physical or natural science in the sermon on the mount, but He did say, "Ye are the salt of the earth", and you will understand Him better if you know all about salt. He did not teach physiology, but He did say, "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee", and it will help you to understand His saying if you know something of that science. He did not teach ophthalmology, but He did say, "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." An oculist might well expound that passage.

And did He not say, "Behold the fowls of the air—Consider the lilies of the field?" Your ornithology and your botany will help you there. Did He not also speak of gathering grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? He spoke also of the mote in the eye, of dogs and swine, of fish and serpents. He did not teach architecture, nor lecture on petrology, nor on the laws of contraction and expansion, nor on dynamics, nor on hydraulics; but He did speak of two houses, one of which crumbled in the storm, while the other stood firm.

A man who is versed in all the sciences which enter into the building of a modern skyscraper will find his knowledge useful in the interpretation of the last paragraph of the sermon on the mount, although that paragraph will never teach him how to build a skyscraper—it will teach him, blessed be God! how to build a sky piercer in the spiritual sense, with an elevator which will lift him up to God.

And so I might go on with the discussion of all philosophies and all sciences, and we should come to this in the end, that all the discernment which philosophy can give you—if it be not a philosophy mixed with vain deceit; and all the knowledge which a lifelong study of science—if it be not a science falsely so-called—can furnish you, will not be wasted if you bring it to the better understanding of the sermon on the mount. And as you push on into the light you will find the Bible always saying, "I am glad you are catching up to me. I told you so long ago, but you were such a child in knowledge you could not fully understand."

What is true of the sermon on the mount is true of the Bible as a whole, and of the history of the Bible, and of the history of the Christian religion: it cometh to the light that its needs may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.

Hence *the church is under obligation, in order to its own highest development and largest usefulness, to exercise an educational, as well as an evangelizing ministry.* I believe the local church must recognize its obligation in this respect. Less than a century ago there were many in England whose education was limited to that which the church, through the Sunday School, provided. Thanks to the light which the Christian church has kindled in the world, instruction in secular subjects is now free to all; but I believe the local church cannot fulfil her mission to her own generation until she provides her converts with facilities for a well-balanced, fad-free, symmetrical, education; and I will venture to tell you that it is my dream

that God will enable us in Jarvis Street in this respect to lead the way.

There is no church in the Denomination where such words as mine are less needed than here. For there are many still here who have shared the wide vision of the generous founder of McMaster, and the discernment and sacrifice of the still earlier pioneer and founder of our general educational work, once the honoured pastor of this church. But there may be others even here who have not recognized the fundamental character of our educational enterprises, and my words to them may not be without profit.

I think the teaching of Scripture is clear that *the church must assume the responsibility of furnishing herself with leaders*. It is true that spiritual gifts are divinely bestowed, but Timothy was admonished to "neglect not", and to "stir up the gift that was in him". Indeed, the pastoral epistles are really lectures to theological students. Paul specially charged Timothy, "The things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." There is nothing more important than the finding and furnishing of faithful men who shall be able to teach others. And to that we must address ourselves with greater earnestness than ever. Ministerial Education is just as important as Home Missions or Foreign Missions, for if our supply of ministers fail, no amount of money can make up for their lack.

II.

Suffer a few words on this second important proposition, THAT CHRISTIANITY RADIATES ITS LIGHT FOR HIM WHO BELIEVES ON JESUS CHRIST AS LORD.

All is not truth that is so called. All is not light that is called light. Even Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it shall come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

So then we must enquire *what is involved in believing on Jesus Christ*. Hear this: "Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should

speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak."

What Jesus meant by believing in Him in this case, is evident. He means believing in Him as God's last word to the world, believing on Him as the Incarnate God, as the Word made flesh. Nothing less can be meant by these words. It is not enough to admire Him. We must not regard Him as being subject to the limitations of our human kind. His word is the last authoritative message to the world, by which men shall be judged in the last day. It means recognizing Him as being in the place of supreme authority and power as the Son of God. Whoever so believes in Him shall not abide in darkness.

It does not mean believing exactly as you or I believe. I may not understand Him as well as you do, but may yet believe on Him just as fully. Indeed, I can understand one groping through the darkness who sees the light but dimly, whose knowledge is very imperfect, but whose heart cries out, "Thou Son of God, I trust in Thee." He shall not abide in darkness.

So then we come to this at last, we can tolerate any view of the Bible which is compatible with a belief in the supreme authority of Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, in Whom is light and in Whom there is no darkness of error or ignorance at all; but in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and in Whom dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead bodily. We can view without great alarm many theories of the church so long as they are consistent with belief in the supreme authority of Christ. The same is true of theology. Absolute uniformity of theological opinion will ever be an impossibility among thinking men; but any system of theology is tolerable to men of faith which rests its case on the infallibility and sovereign authority of the Incarnate Word.

And so of the forms and functions of civil governments. Baptists may be monarchists or republicans, liberals or conservatives—they may be almost anything which allows the soul liberty to obey Jesus Christ as Lord; but they can tolerate no usurpation of His authority in the realm of intellect or of conscience.

And by that principle, I am sure, we are resolved to abide. Then we cannot abide in darkness, but shall have the light of life. So shall we as individuals, and as a church, and in our wider denominational and national ministry, go on in the path of the just which is as "the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

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THE CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD AMUSEMENTS.

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, Feb. 13, 1921.

(Stenographically Reported)

This sermon has already been printed four times in this paper, viz., August 19th, 1922; July 23rd, 1925; February 20th, 1930; and April 16th, 1931. In each instance, save the first, it was printed in response to requests from many countries for copies, and in every case our supply has been exhausted. We have been waiting for an opportunity to print it again in order to be able to supply the hundreds who are continually writing for copies. The Editor's absence from his pulpit and from his office for two weeks, owing to the death of Mrs. Shields, August 11th, makes it possible for us to fill in with this sermon.

It will perhaps interest many who will read it now for the first time to be informed that this was regarded by many as "the last straw" sermon which precipitated the upheaval in Jarvis Street in 1921, and the ultimate withdrawal of three hundred and forty-one members. This seemed a severe blow at the time, but since then more than twenty-five hundred persons have been received into the fellowship of the church, and many hundreds more have professed conversion in its services.)

"And through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish, for whom Christ died."—I Corinthians 8:11.

The Christian attitude toward amusements is a subject of great importance. While belonging, in some respects, to the category of minor questions, to the "childish things" which we may be expected to "put away" as we attain to some degree of maturity in the Christian life: yet because, as Christians, we can never be unrelated to anything which affects in the slightest degree the spiritual welfare of the least of God's children, we cannot be either indifferent or superior to this matter.

It is a fact, moreover, which even the most liberally and charitably minded find themselves compelled to acknowledge, that vast numbers of professed Christians are now being carried away by an ever-growing love of pleasure, which, like a mighty tide, is sweeping over the world. It cannot be denied that many church members go oftener to the theatre than to church, and pay more for their amusements than for their religion; that there is reason to fear that many such are better versed in rules "according to Hoyle," than in the principles of the gospel according to Matthew, and Mark, and Luke, and John; and are bolder and more expert in dealing cards than in disseminating the Word of God. Some, too, there are who are most punctilious in their observation of religious decorum; who would be offended by a colloquialism from the pulpit, or an inartistic performance by the choir; but who see no impropriety in the presence of professioning Christians at the dance.

Nor is this condition of things peculiar to any one denomination, nor to any one country. It is a matter of general observation that vast multitudes of the professed disciples of Christ, by their addiction to these and other forms of amusement, openly advertise themselves to be "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God".

Cañdid minds, I think, will acquit me of the charge of exaggeration, when I say that this has had, and now has a deadening and almost paralyzing effect upon the life of the churches. The public worship of the sanctuary, the preaching of the gospel, the study of Scripture, the exercise of prayer, the spiritual service of the Christian life, and all the pure spiritual joys flowing therefrom, are esteemed dull and uninteresting.

And I venture the assertion that this inordinate love of sensuous pleasure vitiates not only the public taste, but the taste of that part of the public which professes to be Christian. This has resulted in many deplorable reactions upon the life and activity of the churches. Standards have been lowered to suit the popular taste. People who feed on Charlie Chaplin several days a week have but little appetite for anything but Charlie Chaplin on Sunday. Standards may not always, however, be vulgarized. They may only be reduced to fit the diminishing capacities of the people. The man who becomes addicted to the use of stimulants soon loses his appetite for wholesome food, and what food is forced upon him must be administered in tabloid form. And it seems to be the policy of "the god of this world" to vitiate the appetites of God's children for all healthy spiritual enjoyments, by treating them with stimulants.

Respecting the particular form of amusement provided in the moving picture theatres, it ought frankly to be said that, independently of the character of the pictures, the habitue of the "movies" is certain to find the habit mentally demoralizing. Even now there are many who refrain from reading certain books, preferring to await their production on the screen. Quite apart from the moral quality of the pictures, this aspect of the influence of the craze for the "movies" should give educators, and all concerned in the cultivation of the mind, the most serious concern.

The great question, however, which faces us is this: What is the Christian Church to do? What is the truly Christian attitude toward these things? If people will have nothing but pleasure, is the Christian Church to provide it? If the multitudes insist upon being entertained, must those who serve in the church, in the pulpit and elsewhere, learn the entertainer's art? If young people refuse to engage in religious exercises designed to develop both the mind and the spirit, unless such exercises are diluted with some sort of entertaining or pleasurable element, is it the duty of the church to accommodate her ministry to the popular demand? Or is there higher and safer ground which we may take?

I.

LET US EXAMINE THE PRINCIPLE OF THE TEXT for our answer.

It appears to have been common in pagan Corinth, as in other places, to offer for sale in the market places, meat which was the residue of sacrifices which had been offered to idols in heathen temples. Some of the Corinthian believers seem to have made a practice of using such meat for food. They argued that as an idol was nothing in the world, meat which had been presented to the idol in worship was neither the better nor the worse for having been so used. Therefore they saw no reason why they, as Christians, should not eat it.

But there were others who viewed the matter differently. Lacking the clear intelligence of their more enlightened brethren, they appear to have felt that, since the meat had been used in idol-worship, the eating of it would involve some recognition of the idol. Therefore when they saw their fellow-Christians eating such meat, notwithstanding their unenlightened consciences felt the practice involved a recognition of the idol, they claimed the liberty their fellow-Christians exercised, and in the doing of it were caused to stumble.

It is probable that this matter had been submitted to the Apostle Paul for judgment, as the first verse of this chapter seems to imply—"Now as touching things offered unto idols"—and this chapter is his answer. Many a pastor in our day is asked similar questions by members of his flock, who are sincerely desirous of knowing and doing the will of God in all things.

The apostle begins by telling them that they are right in the assumption that "an idol is nothing in the world," and that, therefore, meat is unaffected by the fact that it has been used in sacrifice. He tells them that in the eating of such meat in itself there is no wrong. He lays down the principle that *there is a spiritual knowledge which affords liberty*: "As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many, and lords many), but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." That is to say, when a man knows God as He is revealed in Jesus Christ, he knows there is no other god; and that God is a Spirit Who requires of His creatures a spiritual service; and that, therefore, we are not to judge ourselves nor others by outward forms, by the mere externals of life, such as eating and drinking. On the contrary, we know that it is spirit, and motive, and intention with which God is concerned. Or, as the same apostle says elsewhere (Rom. 14:17): "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

The argument, therefore, is that knowing an idol to be nothing in the world, so far as the act itself was concerned, and by itself considered, a Christian, knowing this, might eat meat which had been used in idol-worship without offence either to God or to his own conscience.

On the other hand, the Corinthians are reminded there are some who lack the spiritual discernment to perceive

that the nothingness of the idol leaves the sacrifice unpolluted: "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled."

And herein another principle is enunciated to this effect: that while the believer's relationship to God is unaffected by his eating or refraining, and his own conscience, therefore, is also undefiled thereby, *there is still another relationship to be considered, and that is, the believer's relationship to his neighbour.*

And here let me pause to interject a more general observation: in respect to its own desires, the human mind is marvellously resourceful in discriminative judgments. When it suits us, sin and righteousness are defined in terms of our human relationships, and men go so far as to measure a man's fitness for the presence of God by the service he appears to have rendered to his fellows. But how swiftly we can swing to the other extreme: "As long as I have a clear conscience toward God, whose business is it what I eat or drink, or where I find my pleasures or my recreations?" Thus we choose to magnify the one or the other of the tables of the law as comprehending our whole moral obligation, as the inclination of the moment suits us. One day we are sure that if our consciences be at peace with God, nothing else matters. The next day we are equally certain that so long as we busy ourselves with some particular bit of human service—usually something we rather like to do—it really does not matter whether we pray or otherwise recognize God or not.

The underlying principle of Paul's teaching, however, is this, that the gospel provides a way whereby "the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit"; and that the principles of the gospel applied to life and conduct will relate the believer in self-denying service to both God and his neighbour.

But now, to return to the specific matter more immediately before us. I have said the Corinthians are here reminded of their further obligation to their neighbour: "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge." "But," someone will object, "am I to be brought into bondage to another man's ignorance? Because he is so ignorantly superstitious stupidly to suppose that the idol pollutes the meat, or that the idol and the sacrifice are inseparable, am I therefore to be deprived of the liberty which my clearer knowledge gives me?" So secure did they feel themselves to be in their spiritual knowledge, they felt they could actually "sit at meat in the idols' temple" without violating their own consciences, knowing the idol to be nothing, and God to be all in all.

But our apostle lays down a further principle, *that while there is a liberty in knowledge, there is a still larger liberty in love*. "But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither if we eat not, are we the worse"—which means that, knowing our relationship to God is not affected by such matters, we may do as we like. Thus the truth of God makes us free. "But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak."

"But why should I allow the absurd prejudices of my ignorant brother to deprive me of legitimate enjoyment?" Because, my friend, you may cause your weaker brother to stumble if you insist on the exercise of your liberty. "But why should I be held responsible for his stumbling?"

If I may legitimately do without injury to myself, that which, to him, becomes an occasion of stumbling only and wholly because of his ignorance, why should not his stumbling be charged to his ignorance, and I be left in the enjoyment of my Christian liberty? Is there any sound reason why my freedom should be restricted, why I should be required continually to deny myself for fear of offending the ignorant, old-fashioned, and superstitious?"

In effect, you really ask, Why should you care if the ignorant and weak stumble?

There is a reason why you should care, and why you should deny yourself for the sake of the most benighted human being. Hear the tremendous answer! *He is a soul "for whom Christ died"*! This man Paul has but one answer for every question: it is always the Cross! Everything is referred to the Cross. He sees everything and everybody through the medium of the Cross. He measures and values everybody by the Cross. Nor is this a solitary note in his teaching. He wrote the same to the Romans: "Destroy not him with thy meat *for whom Christ died.*" Thus he measures and values all that is in this world and cries: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." And that is no more than our Lord Himself said: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

Thus our text, and the gospel generally, puts love before knowledge as the guiding principle of life, and as the foundation of the largest liberty. Knowledge afforded liberty conscientiously to eat meat: love gave liberty to refrain from eating for the sake of the interests of a soul for whom Christ died.

II.

LET US CONSIDER SOME MODERN ILLUSTRATIONS OF THIS PRINCIPLE.

There are certain forms of amusement which are only evil. There are plays which cannot be defended before the bar of an enlightened conscience; there are uses of playing cards which lead inevitably to ruin; there are kinds of dances which are flagrantly immoral, and which no reputable person will attempt to justify. To these propositions no one in this audience will object. But with these things we have nothing to do in our present discussion. Every true Christian will instantly, and instinctively, recognize that the thing which is evil in itself should have no place in the Christian life. Participation in such amusements as I have just named, I feel sure every one here this morning will readily acknowledge, would be as unworthy of a professed Christian as lying or stealing.

The case before us is that of a matter which is not evil in itself, but which some uninstructed people, here called "weak", think to be evil. It is with the Christian attitude toward these we are now concerned.

For the sake of argument let us assume that the theatre is an institution of great educational possibilities. Lest I be misunderstood, I give it as my personal conviction that the theatre, as an institution, is immoral; that its influence, on the whole, is not good but evil. But I speak of the theatre in this way as an institution. I shall not argue the point here, for that is beside my purpose this morn-

ing. There may be exceptions, and I am willing to assume the exception, to assume that there may be individual theatres whose management keep their stage clean and pure and wholesome. And this involves the further assumption that there may be good plays. Doubtless many are not good; but we will assume that some are, and that their teaching is morally sound, and their influence morally uplifting—or at least not degrading.

We may assume further that the conscientious Christian—and who can be a Christian without being conscientious?—will exercise the utmost discrimination, and will go only to the best theatres, and the best plays, in which there can be nothing that is in any degree harmful.

And we may make the same assumption respecting the playing of cards. Surely no one will insist that there is any evil in the cards themselves; they are neither moral nor immoral: but unmoral. That, to the discerning, is self-evident. But I am aware of the strong prejudice conceived by many against the cards themselves, although the pieces of pasteboard so marked were essentially evil. Personally I know nothing of cards, but I suppose there is something peculiarly fascinating about the various games they are used to play. It is not difficult for me to imagine a game of cards to be a very pleasant diversion, nor indeed to believe that such a game may be mentally refreshing. I am not now speaking of the use of cards for gambling purposes. No one questions that cards are frequently put to evil uses; that even in private drawing-rooms men and women have been inspired by a simple, friendly game with a passion for gambling which has led to their ruin, and even to suicide. No one whose knowledge is at all extensive will deny that cards have been the latchkey to the penitentiary for many—to let them in; however, not to let them out. I say it is not to be wondered at that so many should look upon a pack of cards as having been printed in hell, in view of the terrible havoc they have wrought.

But it must surely be assumed that no true disciple of Christ would permit himself to have part in a game in which any of these things could find a place. He would play cards only in such a way as there could be "no harm" in it.

But what shall we say of the dance? I confess to having had no personal experience. There are those who insist that the modern dance in any and all its forms is always and only evil. I have no doubt it is often so. Indeed I feel sure that certain dances can work only evil to those who engage in them. But I have no time to-day to discuss that aspect of the question. I would take ground, for the sake of argument at least, that many censors of the dance who are better informed and more experienced than I, would not take, I would assume that there may be perfectly innocent and harmless dances. For I am compelled to assume that no Christian would deliberately and persistently participate in any sort of dance associated with the probability of evil. I assume, therefore, (I say again, for the sake of argument, for the testimony of the more experienced makes me cautious, that under right auspices some pure-minded people may dance without injury to themselves.

Thus I have assumed that it is only with the good play, the innocent card game, the harmless dance—if such there may be, the Christian will have anything to do.

Can you, however, be sure that others will be equally discriminating? It is admitted that these things are not always good, but sometimes decidedly evil. What if

others fail to exercise your carefully discriminating judgment? Perhaps someone will say that their failure to do so is their own responsibility. Beyond question, to great multitudes, the theatre is the theatre, the dance is the dance, and cards are cards. They do not discriminate, and they will not. Some fail for want of capacity to discern between the good and the bad, and some from want of inclination. "But that," I have heard even professed Christians say, "is their concern and not mine."

But remember, *the text lays down a principle for the government of the relationship of a person of a very high degree of religious intelligence to one who is densely ignorant and superstitious.* You must draw the picture for yourself. At one end of the scale you have a religiously enlightened mind, plus education, culture, refinement, wealth; all these co-operating to discern between the precious and the vile. At the other end you have one steeped in prejudice, restricted in capacity, weak in character, and sheep-like in his imitative propensities. Between these two extremes there may be many varying degrees of intelligence on the one hand or ignorance on the other. But I take the extremes. What principle can possibly bridge that gulf or span that difference of spiritual enlightenment and moral vigor? *Only the principle of the Cross!* And that is the principle by which all truly Christian conduct is determined, and on which all Christian character is founded: "For whom Christ died!"

Let me take the highest possible ground. I anticipate your argument as to your taste for literature and the drama, your love of music and the aesthetic, your passion for cultivated society and mental recreation, and your superiority to the degrading influences to which the less favored are subject. I will take your argument at par—"Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge"! Do you hear it? "Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge." Let me thunder it in your ears: "*Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge!*"! What then? "*Through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish for whom Christ died?*" Oh, my brother, do you care? Do you care for the soul for whom Christ died? What? Does this question of amusements affect the business of soul saving? Yes, it does. Most emphatically it does! The passion for pleasure, for society, for worldly amusements has made barren churches as it has made childless homes! *And we shall never accomplish our God-given task, nor glorify Him in the salvation of men, until by the power of the Holy Spirit we learn to relate ourselves to men everywhere as to souls for whom Christ died.*

III.

MAY I VENTURE NOW TO OFFER A WORD OF EXHORTATION AND APPLICATION?

For the sake of clearness, I repeat, I have nothing now to say about indulgence in that which is known to be sinful. Nor have I any word of denunciation to utter respecting that which is not evil in itself. It would be as wrong to belie your moral intelligence by assuming there is evil where there is none, as it would be to ignore the ignorant conscientiousness of another, who, where there is no evil, thinks there is.

The supreme question is, Can any one of us afford to be indifferent to the fate of one "for whom Christ died"? That is the highest and strongest appeal which even God can make. From eternity He has estimated everything by the Cross! Have we learned to estimate men by the

Cross? The man is poor, and ignorant, and obscure, and unattractive, I know; but he is a soul "for whom Christ died." For his own sake he is worth much; and he is one for whom an inestimable price has been paid.

For Christ's sake we cannot afford to be indifferent toward such an one. Can you not remember the thrill of satisfaction you experienced when you first realized that Christ died for you? And in that hour you realized His own satisfaction in some measure. Dare any of us consent to permit anything which might defeat the purpose of the Cross in another's life? Shall we have done once for all with all worldly standards, and henceforth measure all men by the Cross?

Do you realize that *some may be perishing through your act of selfish indulgence?* "It is only an innocent pleasure," you say. But the moment your pleasure becomes an occasion of stumbling it ceases to be innocent: "When ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ."

Do you see *what estimate they put upon the weak brother who selfishly insist upon doing their own pleasure irrespective of its influence upon others?* They put their own passing pleasure before the salvation of the soul. That is the text's teaching. That is the consideration it forces upon us: "Through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died?" Is there a professed Christian here who will refuse to forego an evening at the theatre that another soul may have an eternity in glory? On one particular evening the weaker brother saw you there, and he found sanction for his course in yours. I know he is "weak", and "ignorant", and "prejudiced", and "narrow-minded", and all that is contemptible in the eyes of some: But for him Christ died! Can it be that anyone of us will deliberately sacrifice the interests of a soul for whom Christ died, for a few hours' pleasure? Even to save a soul from death can we refuse to deny ourselves? I must be faithful. The spiritual requirements of the hour are insistent. The testimony of Scripture is most urgent: "Destroy not him with thy theatre-going, or with thy card-playing, or with thy dancing, or with the pursuit of any other kind of pleasure—destroy not him for whom Christ died!"

Does someone contend that such teaching is extravagant and impracticable? That it involves the erection of impossible standards? That such self-denial requires an unreasonable service? I remind you that the difference between the very greatest and the very humblest of earth is infinitesimal in comparison with the gracious and infinite stoop of the Lord of glory when He died for your sinful soul. And for one for whom He died will you do nothing? For one for whom He sacrificed everything, will you sacrifice nothing?

No, my standard is not impossible. It is the simple standard of the New Testament. To be a "living sacrifice", to "be not conformed to this world" is our "reasonable service". It is for this we are here. For this we have been sent. I should be unworthy of my office were I to preach anything less. I must apply the principle to myself; and I say frankly, that if there be any pleasure upon which my heart is so set that it is more to me than the interests of a soul for whom Christ died, I am unworthy of my office, and I ought immediately either to resign that pleasure, or resign my office. And I say the same to the office-bearers in this church. I say it to the deacons: If there be a deacon of this church who thinks more of an evening at the theatre, of the diversion of a

game of cards, or of the pleasure of the dance, than of the interests of a soul for whom Christ died, he is unworthy of his office; and he ought immediately to resign either his pleasure or his office. And the same may be said of Sunday school teachers and officers, and also of every member of the church. The teaching of Scripture requires that every interest in life should be subordinated to the purpose of the Cross—which is, that they should be saved for whom Christ died. For any of us who call ourselves disciples of Christ, there is but one course compatible with love and loyalty to Christ, and that is to resolve that by His grace, and by the might of His Spirit in the inner man, we will put Him always and everywhere first; that we will live to realize the purpose of the Cross in our own lives, and in the lives of others; that we will lose our lives for Christ's sake that thus we may find them.

As I thus closed my meditation, a thought occurred to me—it may have been a day-dream—I said to myself: "What if some young man should rise in his pew before all the congregation and say, 'I have here and now resolved that henceforth at all costs, I will in all things put Christ first'—if such a thing should occur, who knows how many would follow his example, and perhaps the revival we have longed and prayed for would come today." Shall we not all resolve to rededicate ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord, and from this forward, put Him always first?

(As the conclusion of the sermon was reached a young man under the gallery rose and said, "I would like to say, Pastor, that I have resolved to put Christ first," and in a few moments a large number of men and women rose signifying the same decision.)

OUR SEMINARY IN MISSIONS.

The faith in which the Toronto Baptist Seminary was founded was really a missionary purpose. We are training young men and women that they may become effective missionaries of Christ in this land and in lands beyond the sea. Already our School of the prophets has proved itself in the work of its graduates. May we be permitted, then, to repeat a few of the many testimonies which might be given as to the benefit received from our course of instruction.

Pastor J. Fullard (a graduate of 1930), now Pastor at Essex, Ontario, writes: "My years at the Seminary have made me think for myself. I have been led into many avenues of study, started on the path, and now with such an introduction I can follow each path as far as my ambition will take me. . . . Greater than all, however, I learned somewhat of what it means to be a minister of the gospel. I learned something of dependence upon God, something of the tremendous responsibility, something of the honour and the privilege which God has conferred upon His servants, something of passion for souls, something of love for Christ."

From Northern Ontario, Rev. H. C. Slade (1930) tells us: "The course I received at the Toronto Baptist Seminary has proved to be indispensable in preparation for the gospel ministry, and invaluable for spiritual and mental cultivation."

Now let us hear from Canada's most westerly province, British Columbia. Pastor E. V. Apps (1931) writes: "I was impressed with the whole programme of studies, everything is designed to make the students, as far as it is humanly possible, capable servants of God. No time

or energy is spent on secondary matters, everything is brought into bondage to the one end of making 'able ministers of the new covenant'."

From the United States we next hear. Mrs. W. J. Jones (née Helen P. Lindsay) (1929) writes from Wheaton, Illinois: "I do know that it has been a joy to build up on the foundation studies received at the Seminary, a privilege that would have been denied me but for the years spent there."

Our Seminary has more than one graduate in Jamaica, British West Indies. Rev. O. T. Johnston (1930) writes that among the denominations in this his native island a Bible college course is not considered sufficient. One man who was already a graduate of a well-known Bible school, was required, in order to full standing, to take two years additional training. "I am proud to say that my Alma Mater is well recognized here, and one student after going through our class work confessed that our work in theology and exegesis is far ahead of another college mentioned." Mr. Johnstone baptized forty-seven, and received thirty-three by restoration in the nine months preceding the writing of the above.

And now let us hear from the Emerald Isle. Pastor T. McClure (1930) writes: "All of us who have gone through the course owe a great debt of gratitude to the School, I am sure."

From Central America, Missionary G. E. Franklin (1929) tells us that the course at the Seminary did much to clarify in his mind "the shades of error that are just outside the central beam of truth that comes from Jesus Christ and the Word through the Holy Spirit's revelation."

Pastor William McArthur (1929) who plans soon to go as a missionary to the Far East, says: "Really, I value those three years spent in the Seminary very highly."

Next let us hear from Inland China, Rev. S. R. Jeffery (1931) writes to tell us: "At the Seminary I learned how to use latent tools, besides receiving new ones. Some knowledge of Greek and Hebrew has made many scriptures clearer. I learned better how to discriminate in my reading apart from the Bible, both secular and religious. I learned better how to trace the great doctrines through the Scripture, and stress each according to its importance."

Come to the near East, and hear Miss Sydney Bonyun (1929), now in Jaffa, Palestine, as she testifies that "the Seminary teachers, no matter what their subject was, kept the vision of service uppermost, so that the student perforce had to answer. Perhaps more than anything the Seminary taught me the value of 'stick-to-it-iveness'

'But, oh, not the hills of Habersham
And, oh, not the valleys of Hall
Avail; I am fain for to water the plain,
Downward the voices of Duty call—
Downward to toil and be mixed with the main!'

From our own mission in Liberia, West Africa, Miss Minnie Lane (1931) writes that: "One cannot conceive of the many lessons that the Master teaches His scholars as He prepares them during their school life in order that they may be better fitted for service abroad. Needless to say that the hours spent on study when alone with my Lord, were the ones that drew me nearest to my Saviour, and now while out here with my Lord alone I know how to study without others."

Missionary work must be learned by the doing of it, and this school emphasizes practical Christian experience

(Continued on page 12)

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 7

No. 3

REV. ALEX THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 37 September 11th, 1932

THIRD QUARTER

JOSHUA, THE NEW LEADER

Lesson Text: Joshua, chapter 1; Deut., chapter 31.

Golden Text: "Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." Joshua 1:9.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

Monday—Deut. 7:12-26.

Tuesday—Deut. 17:14-20.

Wednesday—I. Chron. 22:6-16.

Thursday—Psalm 46:1-11.

Friday—I. Peter 2:17-25.

Saturday—Romans 8:31-39.

I. THE COMMAND TO CROSS THE JORDAN (vs. 1-9).

The section of Scripture just completed in our study is, in large measure, a record of the wilderness life of the children of Israel. They had left Egypt with high hope of entering the promised land, but all who were adults at the time of their liberation from the Egyptian yoke had died, with the exception of Caleb and Joshua, on account of their sin against God. Even Moses had been called into eternity, and Joshua was leader in his place. Such a history is a sad one, with lamentable failures and severe judgments, extending over a period of forty years; but it is rich in spiritual lessons, indicating warning and encouragement.

All these experiences now lay behind Israel, and the fulfilment of hope was nigh. It must therefore have been a time of keen expectancy and satisfaction, not unmingled with sadness that so many had lost the coveted privilege of crossing the Jordan. It would be a time of looking both backward and forward, and of manifesting the spirit of realism and idealism.

At such a time after the death of Moses the Lord spoke unto Joshua and gave him commandment concerning the crossing of the Jordan (v. 1). The fact of this communication gave evidence of the divine approval of Joshua's position. He had been chosen by God for his office (Num. 27:18), and this communing of Jehovah with him further certified to it. Those who are called of God receive His messages, and communicate them unto men. In a similar manner, based on His revealed will, He is making known His purpose in these days. His messengers should therefore seek to know His will, and then deliver it faithfully and fearlessly, regardless of circumstances.

The nature of the command is worthy of consideration, being interesting, instructive, and encouraging. There is first the announcement of the death of Moses, previously reported (Deut. 34:5), but here stated by the Lord as a matter of history, not without due importance, in giving the command for the beginning of a new experience in the history of Israel. This is followed by the command to arise and go over the Jordan into the promised land (v. 2). They could not proceed without this word of authority

from God, being dependent upon His leadership; but, having received it, there was no longer cause for delay.

When we know God's will we should carry it out at the earliest possible moment. To this end have His own been brought into His service. Note the causes of delay in obeying God's revealed word, and the blessings attendant upon instant obedience thereto. The command to proceed is accompanied by a series of promises and exhortations. A most encouraging promise is given concerning their possession of the land in the information that, "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses." This must have been a real incentive to action. It meant also a combination of faith and works. Before entering the land it was theirs by faith, but only after they entered it was it theirs by possession, and only then could they enjoy its blessings. In the spiritual realm there are many blessings for the children of God, but it is only as they are appropriated that they really become ours, and we enter into the enjoyment of them. There is also the thought of increased possession in accordance with the progress made. Every advancement meant greater possessions, so that these two terms became synonymous in their application. And in the Christian life the same is true: as we advance we increase our spiritual possessions. There ought, therefore, to be constant progress therein. The extent of territory to be possessed is then indicated (v. 4). This exceeds the boundaries of Canaan, and is similar to the promise given to Abraham (Gen. 15:18). Note the great extent of the same, and the great territory to be possessed in the spiritual realm.

A further promise of a more personal nature follows, wherein Joshua is informed of God's presence with him, and he is exhorted to be strong and courageous. Several things are worthy of note as found therein. First, no man would be able to stand before him all the days of his life. This was because God had called him into his position, and no man would be permitted to dispossess him of it. He would be the supreme leader without dispute. In the second place, God would be with him, and would not fail him or forsake him (v. 5). In his position of leadership he would have to face many trials, but the presence of God would restrain him, and give him wisdom and boldness in the performance of his duty. Note the comfort of the divine promise, and the implications arising therefrom, in reference to the faithfulness of God and His purpose concerning His servant; also the application to the present day, in His abiding presence with His own (Heb. 13:5). Being assured of the presence of God with him, Joshua is enjoined to be strong and of a good courage. Boldness is a characteristic of all those who live in touch with God (Acts 4:31). Fearing God, they fear no man (Romans 8:31), and conscious of His presence, they care not for loss of favour on the part of man. Note the need for courage in the present day in bearing witness to Christ, and contending for the faith. The assurance is then given of the success of Joshua's work: he would divide for an inheritance the promised land. This implied entrance therewith and conquest thereof.

Another exhortation follows, enjoining a strong courageous spirit, accompanied by an injunction to act in accordance with the law. Joshua was not to depart therefrom either to the right hand or to the left, that he might prosper in his way (v. 7). The law was to be his guide, his book of instruction, edited by God Himself, and suited to His needs and those of the people.

This implies that the Lord never leads anyone contrary to His revealed will. He makes this clear to us, and with enlightened understanding we carry out the same. The book of the law was not to depart from Joshua, but he was to meditate therein day and night, that he might obey its teaching and prosper thereby (v. 8). Note the privilege of the possession of the book, the necessity for meditation therein; and the purpose. The divine message concludes with an encouraging exhortation which would uphold Joshua in every trying situation (v. 9). No one need be afraid or dismayed who is sustained by the presence of God. Note the attitude of Old and New Testament saints in this respect, as, Abraham (Gen. 14:14), Gideon (Judges 7:15), David (I. Sam. 17:45), Elijah (I. Kings 18:37), Elisha (II. Kings 6:16), Amos (Amos 7:14-17), Peter and John (Acts 4:19, 20), and Paul (Acts 16:25).

Joshua may profitably be studied as a type of Christ, his name meaning saviour, and fittingly denoting his work on behalf of his people. It may be noticed that as saviour he led his people out of the wilderness, across the Jordan, and into the promised land, where, continuing under his leadership, the people gained victory over their enemies, received their inheritance, and settled in their possessions.

II. PREPARING TO CROSS THE JORDAN (vs. 10-18)

Having received the command to cross the Jordan, Joshua immediately gave orders to prepare for the same. The direction given to the whole camp was to prepare victuals, and to the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh the reminder was given of their promise made to Moses concerning aiding their brethren in the conquest of Canaan. The answer of these tribes was to the effect that they would obey his commands, and go where he sent them, hearkening unto him as they had done unto Moses. They also stated that if any should rebel against his commandment, and not hearken unto his words, such an one would be put to death (vs. 16-18). Such an attitude must have been reassuring to Joshua, implying as it did loyalty to promise and to person, and speaking of whole-hearted co-operation in the work of conquest. It meant a united nation in the face of its foes. The church of Christ is also face to face with enemies, and each local church is enjoined to engage in the conflict (Jude 3; Eph. 6:10-18), and unity is essential if success is to be gained. In too many cases lack of unity prevails, due to the selfish desire of some who seek their own interests instead of the welfare of the work. The interest of the whole should be our concern, and not the desire of any part, keeping in mind the purpose for which we have been called into being (Eph. 4:8-16).

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BELIEVING A LIE.

In the splendid article which appeared in the pages of the August 18th issue of *The Gospel Witness* headed, "Why Toronto Baptist Seminary?", Mr. Brown made mention of the modern cults, and among them referred to what is known as "Unity". It may be that there are those who have not heard of "Unity". The fact is that there are thousands who have been touched by its teachings who do not know anything of the danger of such a philosophy. "Christian Science" we know, "Russellism" we know, but what is "Unity"? That is the question, what is "Unity"?

A Sunday School teacher was much concerned and burdened for the salvation of the teen-age girls in her class. She called on one of the mothers, and in conversation told her of how she longed to see them saved. "But you must not be bothered", was the counsel which she was given by the one whom she visited, "God will take care of everything." It did sound like scriptural advice, and the teacher came away with a "wonderful" book that was to give her much light on the subject of God's care. The teachings of that book were very beautiful. They maintained that one could have what they wanted, when they wanted it and where they wanted it. There were mystic sentences to repeat at certain times each day. In the midst of the busy work-a-day world one was asked to stop and meditate that they might be in tune with the Infinite and establish their at-one-ment with God. It did seem marvellous that prosperity, health and happiness were within one's grasp, so the poor, ill-taught Christian began repeating such words as, "I see myself spiritually mighty, courageous, strong and healthy", but she did not get very far along the path, for she was trusting the Saviour who was the very Son of God, yea God himself, for her eternal salvation, and the book made the astounding statement, padded on each side with quotations from the Book of Books, "The world has known many saviours, of whom Jesus was one". That sentence saved her; it startled her to such an extent that the book no longer was beautiful, its teaching was revealed. We believe that no one who has experienced salvation through the shed blood of Christ will be tripped by this subtle teaching, but a warning should be heralded from the house-tops, because much headway is being made by these blind leaders of the blind, whited sepulchres, "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth", and modernistic churches are supplying hundreds and thousands from their flocks each year to this soulless, hypnotic religion.

The teaching would appear to be a welding of Christian Science and Theosophy and certain metaphysical (?) interpretations of passages in the Bible. It is sometimes spoken of as New Thought, certainly it is a counterfeit Christianity, and its claims of victory over sin (sin is

denied), one had better say obstacles; its claims to healing, its God principle idea and its glorification of man as divine, in the last analysis opens up a pit of such awfulness that one is truly unprepared to imagine—transmigration and reincarnation are involved.

Thousands are daily coming in contact with the teachings of this cult. Its literature is to be found in tea-rooms, hair-dressing parlors, in the depots, in schools and colleges, and its false doctrine can be detected in the Sunday School graded lesson books. Its disciples are ready at all times to drop a word. They are diet faddists, "commanding to abstain from meats," and they are always, always, equal to any situation—charming and cultured. They tell you so themselves!

Sinners saved by grace, glory only in the works of righteousness which their Lord and Saviour has accomplished, in Him they stand complete. He has promised that sin shall not have dominion over us. He is our victory. He is our sufficiency. We have a prayer-answering God. We need no such bluff as what is known as "Unity" for poise and stance. Beware of its teaching.

SPECIAL SERVICES.

Messrs. Lorne and Bruce Hisey are holding special services on the field in Quebec Province, where Mr. Bruce Hisey has been labouring during the summer months. Pray that the Lord will bless these young men and through their ministry bring sinners to Himself.

SERVICES AT WINGHAM AND JAMESTOWN.

The Rev. James Gibson tells of the meetings held in the Community Hall at Jamestown, and asks that the services in that town and at Wingham be remembered in prayer.

DRILL A LITTLE.

After nearly five years, it is rather surprising to realize that there are those who are not quite sure of the name of our Convention. May we suggest that there be a little drilling along this line. Our Convention is known as the UNION OF REGULAR BAPTIST CHURCHES OF ONTARIO AND QUEBEC. The name means something. May it ever stand for principles concerning the things entrusted to us by God! Say it again, the UNION OF REGULAR BAPTIST CHURCHES OF ONTARIO AND QUEBEC. And remember the work of the Union in your will.

NORWOOD REGULAR BAPTIST CHURCH, EDMONTON, ALTA.

What has been accomplished at Edmonton is of the greatest interest to friends in Ontario and Quebec, first of all because of the stand taken by the people of the Norwood Church, and secondly because of the ministry carried on by the Rev. Gordon Searle, formerly of the Toronto Baptist Seminary.

Glorious times have been experienced lately, although the Pastor is very conscious of the subtleties of the Evil One. On June 19th, there was a time of blessing, two young married couples who had been coming to the services for a few Sundays, stepped out of their seats and walked down the aisle signifying their desire to make Jesus Christ their Saviour and Lord. One of the young men had not been inside a church for ten years, but oh, the joy which came to him with the finding of the Saviour. These four, with another young man recently converted, were buried in the waters of baptism on June 26th.

Pastor Searle recently completed his second year of ministry in Norwood and the church in happy fellowship recognized the event on Wednesday, June 22nd, making a presentation to their Pastor and Mrs. Searle.

The Norwood Church also was the meeting place of the Convention meetings of the Regular Baptist Missionary Society of Alberta and from Tuesday, July 5th to Thursday, July 7th, entertained some one hundred delegates. It was indeed a time of feasting and on the last day of the Convention, messengers duly appointed by the churches, ordained Pastor Gordon Searle to the work of the gospel ministry.

THE ALBERTA SOCIETY.

For several weeks, we have hoped to print something of the splendid reports which have come to us of the work in the Province of Alberta. During the past several months, the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec has had a share in the support of the work, and, while it is smaller than we desire it to be, surely it is followed with the prayer of the whole Convention and we, as a Union, are definitely linked by intercession to the work in that Western Province.

EAST YORK MISSION.

The enthusiastic Pastor of the East York Mission, Mr. Bernard Jeffery, assures us that a meeting every night in a tent for five weeks was not too much and that next year, the Lord willing, the Mission anticipates having the tent meetings throughout the whole summer.

During the weeks which have past, much headway has been made and many have come within the sound of the Gospel. The meetings were eminently worth while, although the numbers making a definite decision were somewhat disappointing, but the heavens echo the thanksgiving which accompanies the salvation of a soul. One man definitely accepted Christ and one young woman has surrendered herself and has applied for believer's baptism.

The Mission has now started a Sunday morning service at the hall where they have hitherto met only for an evening meeting. It is felt that the seed sown by their tent campaign will bear abundant harvest in the months to come and preparations are being made for the re-

ception and training of those who come to them.

The many friends who assisted Mr. Jeffery and the Pastors of our Convention who brought such splendid messages night after night and made the meetings possible, are publicly thanked by the Pastor and the workers at the Mission. The continued prayers of the Union fellowship is asked.

* * * *

VISITING BOURE WITH THE MISSIONARIES.

It would appear that the town of Boure is some six hour's walk from the Gear Bar Zonda Station, so if we are to accompany Mr. and Mrs. Mellish and Miss Stacey, we must be stirring very early in the morning. They are leaving at 5.30 a.m. Then we must be prepared for a "nice" walk, taking our beds and our meals with us, for we are to stay over-night. There are the usual rivers to cross and one must always watch his step. Are you ready?

Mrs. Mellish writes: "We arrived at Boure about 11.30 a.m. and got settled in the town. Yes, I say settled, for we made up our beds and got dinner over. Then we repaired to the kitchen. From the kitchen you see all the sights and, by the way, the kitchen is the place where the women cook chop and where the men talk. It is built without walls and serves as our cook-house, dining-room, entertaining room and whatnot.

"This is one town we particularly love to visit and we never fail to get a royal welcome. The chief is an old man but very energetic and we have found him fine in many respects. There is another man we must describe. He has a head of unusual size and the hair has been shaved completely off, save for a small portion forming a crescent. The remain-

ing hair is his 'medicine' and is carefully tended. You may imagine how queer he looks."

The usual meeting is held at the town and the people are reached either by means of the Bassa which the missionaries are now able to speak to some extent, or by the singing of the hymns which the children, accompanying the missionaries, know in the Bassa tongue, or by the help of Lafayette Payne, who is an interpreter. Do continue to pray for these ambassadors of the Cross who labour as our representatives: Pray that they will soon master the vernacular of the people and that the Lord will keep them steadfast in their determination to acquire it.

Mr. Mellish tells of the difficulty that the ladies experienced in crossing a stream which the driver ants decided to cross at the same time. As far as the bridge, or what serves for a bridge, was concerned the ants were accorded priority rights and the ladies depended on the boys. How those boys kept their feet in the swiftly moving waters was something that Mr. Mellish could not understand, but they were steadied on each side by other helpers and so, the ladies were eventually landed safely.

Then Miss Stacey had the thrilling experience of sleeping right under a leak in the roof, or we should say, not sleeping under it, for when she was in the midst of her dreams after a heavy day, she awakened to find the water pouring in upon her. It was necessary for her to spend the rest of the night in her camp chair. Would not that be comfortable?

There are many evidences in Africa, even to this day, of a one time great civilization and in Liberia it is found that the people have some idea of God. Poor degraded, sin-bound, dark Africa, a

nation upon which the judgment of God has fallen. A people now given over to spirit worship and drinking to the dregs the cup of sin and shame.

In mercy, God has commanded His followers to take the gospel to "every creature" and in Africa this very day He is calling out a people for His name.

From the "Christian Herald" we quote an item which tells of the Black Magic of Africa. It will give us some idea of conditions there. "In Africa, wizardry has such a hold that actually millions of people are absolutely in the power of spells and charms. Sorcery and witchcraft are the monopoly of a vast secret society, which has ramifications all over Africa. Meetings at midnight, curses, spells and charms are the stock-in-trade of the witch and wizard. . . . Though a good deal of so-called witchcraft is undoubtedly just fraud and quackery—simply playing on the credulity of a superstitious people—yet beneath all this I am quite sure there is a substratum of truth. There is a good deal of poisoning going on, and I am sure that these witches have knowledge of poisons which are undiscoverable by modern science. When a man dies after being cursed, he may have been poisoned, on the other hand, auto-suggestion plays a great part. Centuries of tradition have installed a fear of witchcraft into the hearts of these people."

Mrs. Mellish tells us that she is compiling the data which comes to her concerning the belief of the people with whom our missionaries labour. After reading such a description of conditions, do we not feel how necessary it is to make intercession that our missionaries' hands may be strengthened and the powers of darkness dismayed?

OUR SEMINARY IN MISSIONS.

(Continued from page 9)

as well as thorough Bible study. During the last school year our students distributed tracts, held shop-meetings, taught Sunday School classes and preached in the jail, the rescue mission and elsewhere. During this summer a number of the men are labouring as student pastors. Some are on settled fields, but when for others there was no such opening, new fields were opened. For instance, one student went to a district near the churches where an older brother preaches, to carry on the work with "brotherly" assistance. The Lord has been pleased to seal this work with blessing. For still others the work has not been that of student pastors but door-step evangelists. We have gone back to the apostolic method, which Paul followed in Ephesus, of preaching Christ from house to house. Tracts, GOSPEL WITNESSES and Scripture portions have been distributed, while the gospel workers have sought to arouse interest in the indifferent or to present the Way to Life to seeking souls.

More might be added, but surely enough has been said to prove our point,—the Seminary is a missionary work. In accord with the work of our Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec, it is our earnest hope to provide it with Christian workers who have a clear grasp of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and who are able to speak the gospel effectively. It is also our hope

that the day may not be far distant when our graduates will be pressing the battle to the gates in all the needy lands on earth.

W. GORDON BROWN.

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