

# 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.

Editor: T. T. SHIELDS

Associate Editor: ALEXANDER THOMSON

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

Address Correspondence: THE GOSPEL WITNESS, 130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2, Canada.  
Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada.

Vol. 11. No. 41

TORONTO, FEBRUARY 23, 1933

Whole No. 562

## What Is The Oxford Group Movement?

By the Rev. W. Percy Hicks, B.D.

(The following article is by the Editor of *The Christian Herald*, London, and is reprinted from the issue of that paper of February 9, 1933.—Ed. G.W.)

This is a day of new movements; and because some of them are religious, and are more or less independent of recognized methods and ideals, many people are puzzled. Frequent references are appearing in periodicals to what some call the Oxford Group Movement, and others "Buchmanism," and several readers have asked for information concerning it. The curious thing about it is that some who have studied the movement consider it to be the work of Satan, while others claim that it is inspired of the Holy Spirit, and is the beginning of a new revival. It cannot, of course, be both. The problem to many is whether they should give it countenance or avoid it.

Let it first be said that most new movements have had to face prejudice and opposition, and it does not necessarily follow that a thing is wrong because it does not flow along well-recognized and conventional channels. At present, at any rate, the "groupers" are very much alive and notably enthusiastic. As Dr. Hutton caustically puts it, they have given sedentary hearers of the Gospel "the jumps;" and he recalls the

### Story of Lord Melbourne,

who, after listening to a sermon by a faithful evangelical, is said to have muttered, "Things are coming to a pretty pass when religion is made a personal matter!"

Whatever may be our opinion of the Oxford Group Movement, one thing must be conceded—its adherents are evidently looking for reality in a personal religion, and are tired of the empty platitudes and dead formality into which so many churches have drifted. They claim to be making converts, and if this means that people are being regenerated in heart and life through personal surrender to the claims of the Lord Jesus Christ and trust in His atoning blood, we cannot but rejoice, for such is wrought only by the Spirit of God. It must, however, be regretfully admitted that little seems to be said about this at their meetings.

It appears that the founder and recognized leader of the movement is the Rev. Dr. Buchman, an American Lutheran minister. We are told that he became dissatisfied

with the comparative failure of his ministry, and he set his heart upon finding

### A Deeper Spiritual Reality

for himself. Having found it, he began making his vocation the work of leading others to a like experience, first by conversation with individuals and then by homely gatherings now called "house parties." The movement seems to appeal mainly to university students and others of an educational turn of mind, and when Dr. Buchman visited Oxford it gained such strength that the ancient university city became its nominal headquarters in Britain. Let it be made clear, however, that this modern Oxford Group Movement has nothing whatever to do with the century-old Oxford Movement or Puseyism, which was the real genesis of Anglo-Catholicism, or the Anglican drift toward Rome.

The Group Movement has made no attempt to inaugurate a new sect or denomination. People are invited to "house parties," and the fact that so many men noted for their modernist theology, and even some who lean to ritualism, are among their adherents, shows that they are broad enough to suit anyone. They do not excel in Bible teaching, or give any considerable emphasis to study of the Scriptures. The central purpose of their gatherings seems to be

### "Sharing Experiences."

It is claimed by some of its enthusiasts that this is really a revival of the old Methodist class-meeting, but there seems a divergence of opinion on this point. There is certainly a realization of the sinfulness of sin and the need of forsaking it. Dr. Buchman sums up the spirit of the movement in five "C's"—Conviction, Contrition, Confession, Conversion, and Continuance. That sounds quite good on the face of it. But as one writer says, who has been in the movement, "every one of these is possible on a purely moral basis—know you are a sinner, feel sorry for your sins, confess them, turn away from them, and continue on the new way. But if, in addition to all this, there is no faith in the blood of Christ and no

acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Substitute and Saviour, then the guilt of sin still remains and the soul is unsaved."

That exactly expresses the attitude towards the movement of an old-fashioned evangelical, and is fully in accord with New Testament teaching. Certainly, some Group leaders have stated that they believe in the Cross, but a study of their writings makes one wonder whether they mean quite the same thing as Spurgeon and Moody, and all other recognized evangelicals. It has been well said that

**"Christianity is Christ,"**

and in all our doctrine and experience He must have the pre-eminence. He is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life," and none cometh to the Father but by Him.

This brings us to the central point of difficulty concerning the Oxford Group Movement, and we will face it without any desire for merely hostile criticism. We stand for the Truth, and desire to be fair in considering all who profess to be followers of God. Now, it is noticeable that, in studying to understand the Movement, we find that its paramount weakness, pointed out even by some of its sympathizers, is the lack of any doctrinal basis. Such men as Canon Raven and Dr. R. J. Campbell, for instance, urge that this lack should receive attention, "for if it does not (says Dr. Campbell) the tendency will be for the present emotional zeal of the groups to peter out. . . . The principal weight of group testimony, so far, is upon moral change. Is it enough?"

The answer of all true evangelicals would be, No, a thousand times No! Spiritual experience comes by faith, and if there is an absence of doctrine, where is the foundation for faith? The New Testament is

#### The One Supreme Authority

in spiritual knowledge and experience, and the elementary doctrine of the inspired Scriptures is the need of faith in Christ as Saviour. "Not of works, lest any man should boast."

To talk of "surrender," when there is no recognition of Christ's atonement, is a delusion, and to substitute "experience" for revelation is as unsafe a foundation as trusting to feelings.

It may be admitted that some born-again Christians have been attracted to the movement—as they have been to other movements outside the organized churches—because of the evident enthusiasm and apparent vitality in contrast with the lassitude and lifelessness of many churches; but Group leaders may well consider their bearings, and set themselves the task of bringing the movement into line with those who exalt the written Word and magnify the living Word. To keep on recalling moral failures is a vastly different thing from testifying to our faith in Christ and the joy of His salvation.

Let us not be misunderstood. We admire almost any enthusiasm in these decadent days, and if any movement can help us forward on the road to a real spiritual revival in the power of the Holy Spirit, all true believers will rejoice. There is a tremendous need for calling to the Church of God today, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Youthful minds and hearts are yearning

#### For a Real, Vital Godliness,

and there is "a sound of a going among the mulberry trees," in many parts of our land and of the world. But from the days of Pentecost no spiritual quickening has come apart from the doctrine of the Cross, and no power of the will has brought salvation apart from the work of the Holy Spirit of God.

One of the most revealing studies of the movement has come from Oxford itself. The Rev. C. M. Chavasse, M.A., Master of St. Peter's Hall, Oxford, who is a pronounced evangelical, says: "Many in Oxford, like myself, who count disciples of Dr. Buchman among our friends, and admire their zeal and sincerity, are filled with grave misgivings about this cult, which we have watched closely for five years, and our misgivings are shared by practically all religious leaders and responsible persons in the University. Dr. Buchman's groups have within them the seeds of death. . . . The root error of the groups is that they are founded upon no essentially Christian basis. A particular group may be Christian if it possesses a Christian leader, but the atoning and empowering Person of our Lord does not emerge naturally from their teaching. According to their practices communion between God and man is not mediated through our Lord Jesus Christ alone; and He has been dragged in as a Patron,

#### Or as an Example Only

of what our communion with God might be. The groups are out to change lives, but not to win men and women to Jesus Christ. Their theology (although they profess to have none) seems to be a leap from surrender to God the Father to communion with God the Holy Spirit. The group itself, with the influence and inspiration of its fellowship, seems to take the place of Christ. . . . The very great majority of the members of the groups who are staunch and splendid were Christians already, with a Christian background, and the groups gave them the challenge and the shake-up they needed."

This statement by one of the greatest Christians in the University cannot be passed over lightly, especially as it confirms the testimony of others. Now, the greatest heresy of these modern days is the attempt to belittle the Lord Jesus Christ and put His atoning work in the background. With all charity and Christian forbearance, we would ask group leaders to consider this:

#### "What Think Ye of Christ?"

By Him alone comes regeneration of heart and life. We greatly sympathize with the manifest desire of youthful minds to find a real vital faith in place of the cold formality of many churches, and the lifeless philosophies of modernist preachers; but let no one imagine that the Word of God has been dethroned as the supreme authority and revelation of God, or that "the blood of His cross" is no longer an atonement for sin. The urgent need of the time is not new cults or new theologies, but a contrite return to the blood-sprinkled way of Calvary. "The way of the Cross leads home." We assure all young people that by the grace of God there is deliverance from the power and love of sin, through a simple believing acceptance of Christ, "who offered one sacrifice for sins for ever," and "by one offering perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:12, 14); and all who come to God through Him may experience the joy of His salvation.

## THE BUCHMANITES.

(We desire that our readers should have the fullest information obtainable about Buchmanism, or, as it is now more attractively named, the Oxford Group Movement. For this reason we publish the following article which appeared as the leading editorial in *The Presbyterian Record*, published in Toronto, February, 1933. This paper is described on its front page as being "the official Monthly Record of the Presbyterian Church in Canada." Our view of the Oxford Group Movement is known to our readers; therefore comment on this editorial is unnecessary.)

The religious sensation of the period, in a certain area at least, has been created by a company known as The Oxford Group, whose members visited some of our leading cities, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, and Hamilton. The reports of their activities reached every part of the Dominion and corresponding interest in their character and work was awakened. Crowds waited on them in the Assembly halls of the large hotels in which their public meetings were held, churches were well filled when members of the group appeared in the pulpit at the regular services, and the press very fully reported their meetings and their messages, and heralded their alleged successes.

Judgment upon the character of this group and their work has ranged from unqualified approval and highest commendation, on the one hand, to sharpest criticism and severest condemnation on the other. Some years ago President Hibben of Princeton University, after investigation, denied to Buchman, and his followers, the freedom of the University; yet at a meeting of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America in December last the President of Princeton Theological Seminary, Dr. J. Ross Stevenson, represented the movement as a return to primitive Christianity in its simplicity of faith, righteousness, fervour, and fellowship. The President of McMaster University, Hamilton, is reported to the effect that such was their gracious influence that if he could he would pay the return fares of all of them to the Old Land, a deliverance perhaps a little unhappy in its suggestiveness. It would have been more logical for him to say that in view of their great and good work he would be ready to pay, if he could, all the expenses of a protracted stay. His approval was, however, evidently wholehearted. The President of the University of Toronto, Dr. Cody, is said to have described the company as The Salvation Army in evening dress. If commendation this is, it is somewhat restrained. *The Detroit Free Press* discusses the leader, Dr. Frank Buchman, under the suggestive interrogation, "Saint or Salesman?" and another critic asks, "Is this another modern racket?" Such are some of the extremes of judgment evoked.

That the movement or group should invite approval and win adherents is not strange. High ideals in morals are expressed in their four absolutes: honesty, purity, unselfishness, and love; they point to changed lives and the fruits of repentance in restitution and reconciliation; they establish intimate relationships with apparently happy and helpful fellowship; they are zealous and many regard them as truly sincere. Those who consider the Church to be cold and formal and who constantly, though very vaguely, insist upon the need of a revival, welcome the group, and the universal experience of sore trial, as history shows, is propitious for any individual or company promising relief from heartache, fear, unhappiness, and the sense of helplessness.

Then, too, the group is fortunate in the name it bears for this designation relates it in the minds of some to that celebrated Oxford movement about a century ago, and leads others to assume that the group comes with the official commendation of the great English university. True, they have laboured in both Oxford and Cambridge, but without any official relationship to these honoured seats of learning.

The name, *The Oxford Group*, was first adopted or given, when a group from Oxford went to South Africa in 1928. If priority of service should warrant their bearing the name of any university, then properly they should be *The Princeton Group*.

Their proper name is *Buchmanites*, for they are the followers of Dr. Buchman, as Wesleyans were the followers of John Wesley. The name, however, does not so readily and cordially recommend them as *The Oxford Group*. In this connection one has remarked that their adoption and retain-

ing this name is quite inconsistent with their profession of *absolute* honesty.

The movement was born of the genius and fervour of a Lutheran minister in the U.S.A., Dr. F. N. D. Buchman, who at the age of twenty-four was ordained to the ministry of that Church. He seems to have suffered from disquiet and uncertainty in his experience as a Christian, and in his service as a minister. In his search for satisfaction he visited Keswick, England, in 1908, and reports that at Cumberland, after hearing a woman speak on *The Cross*, though not remembering anything that was said, he experienced a wonderful change affecting his whole being. Even his body seemed surcharged with vitality. Then began his work amongst students. Though he keeps to a degree in the background, Dr. Buchman is, without doubt, the forceful personality in control of this body of workers.

As to their belief, no definite statement, so far as we have observed, has been made, and any attempt to elicit information in that particular results apparently in the vaguest form of replies.

Their work is promoted by group meetings, personal interviews, and house parties. At the group meetings the chief features are conversation and personal testimony in which the confession of sins has a large place. There is neither teaching nor form of worship in the ordinary acceptance of these terms. The evidence seems preponderant that in these confessions sex has a very large place, and from what happened in Toronto the effect upon many good and pure people is that of abhorrence and repulsion. What goes on at their house parties is variously reported and some of it very adverse.

In expressing our own views of the movement we feel under some restraint. We were denied the opportunity of attending their meetings, but, on the other hand, met their representative who sought the co-operation of the Church, heard others in the church where we worship, read press reports and opinions with something of the history and work of this body, and have been in close contact with those who regularly attended their meetings. Further we feel that caution is imposed because one must always feel the force of Jesus' reproof of his disciples:

"Forbid him not for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name that can lightly speak evil of me."

Nevertheless there remains the duty of appraisal to the best of one's ability and we are bound to say that our conclusion is adverse. In the distance, when first we heard and read of this company of religious workers, we not only had an open mind but were favourably disposed. First contact, however, created a most unfavourable impression which has been confirmed by all that we have since seen, heard, and read; and unexpected support for our conclusion, in almost complete and exact statement, we found later in an article in *The Statesman and Nation* entitled, *The New Revivalism*, and in other publications.

Our experience, too, has been that of others, particularly ministers, who were at first sympathetically inclined, but after fuller acquaintance were alienated. In Toronto some ministers committed themselves in abject, uncritical surrender to Buchmanite influence, but the ministers of our Church, though they embraced every opportunity to study the movement and to judge it fairly, were constrained at least to withhold their approval, and this we believe to be true of the great majority of the clergy of Toronto.

This needs to be said, that we are surely entitled to fullest information about those who in religious work seek our approval and co-operation, and questions respecting their views of God, Christ, sin, and redemption, the great fundamentals of the Christian faith, should be respectfully heard and faithfully answered. The same applies to the history of the group, their methods, work, and character of their organization. Reticence or secretiveness in these particulars is prejudicial.

Further, with respect to their methods, we must say that it passes our comprehension how any one of average intelligence could compare the group movement as conducted in Toronto, and the house parties as reliably reported, with the meetings in John Wesley's time, as one newspaper correspondent did, or with the assemblies of primitive Christians.

Their claim to the ideal of the absolute in honesty, purity, unselfishness, and love invites question.

Whilst they insist upon their desire to work in and through the Church, in experience this is not evident. The Churches are asked to consent to arrangements, not to co-operate in making them. True they endeavour to secure the approval,

in anticipation of their meetings, of the leaders in the Churches, but that is entirely different from wholehearted and thorough co-operation. According to a hearer all the testimonies at a meeting in Toronto decried the Churches. We have been forced to the conclusion that their policy resolves itself into *using the Churches for their own ends*.

Again it was frequently proclaimed that they did not want crowds. If that were the case they took the very means to defeat their own wishes, for they were heralded with almost extravagant newspaper publicity. It would seem as if every minister in Toronto and many laymen received copies of Montreal papers reporting their meetings and with pictures of those who had commended them. These were followed by expensive invitation cards intended to reach many thousand people. Hotel arrangements were also made in anticipation of large numbers.

They contend, and this is strongly emphasized that they have no organization, that it would be impossible to join the group, that there are no officers, not even a secretary or treasurer as one said. In this contention the group assumes an unusual degree of credulity on the part of the public.

Who engages hotels and other places of accommodation? If there is no treasurer why insist upon likeness to the primitive body of Christians when even the twelve disciples of Jesus had a treasurer? Who receives the large sums of money that are given to the group, for their expenses are enormous, and they insist that the Lord has not only met these expenses but dealt with them generously, even magnificently? Who goes to the cashier of the hotel and pays the bills? How was it arranged that a flying column of twenty should have come from Oxford to the help of the large company already in Toronto? All this business cannot be transacted without cohesion, co-operation and management.

If there is no organization, are we to conclude that it is a one-man body in whom there is a dangerous concentration of authority and power?

Care is taken to announce frequently and widely that no offerings are taken,\* that the group depends wholly upon the Lord to meet their needs and the workers' requirements. If dependence is solely upon the Lord why advertise the fact since it is a matter wholly between themselves and the Lord? When gifts are received, they are announced in a casual way, yet explicitly, and thus the duty of others is tactfully suggested. A member of the group is met in the King Edward Hotel by a man of unpromising appearance who produces a large roll of bills from which he gives a generous proportion to his spiritual benefactor. In all this advertising there is the subtlest form of appeal.

A correspondent in *The Statesman and Nation* refers to money matters in another aspect:

"Another questionable feature to which I have not yet seen attention drawn is the colossal amount of money raised and spent every year in the interest of the movement—and, in the absence of 'organization,' without published accounts of any kind. 'Teams' of propagandists, many without any visible means of subsistence other than group funds, are being transported across oceans and continents, moving on from one well-appointed hotel to another, or occupying on similar conditions permanent quarters in furnished houses and hotels placed at their disposal; the most luxurious of stationery is constantly in evidence; house parties, luncheons, and At Homes seem to be almost unlimited in number."

Whilst the group is with James as in his epistle he exhorts to confession, they seem to be against him when he says, "Have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons." This, too, was apparent, even intrusive, upon first contact. Of Russell's book, *For Sinners Only*, *The Statesman and Nation* says, "It bristles with 'blues' (the aristocracy) and the movement is marked by 'appalling snobbery,' and in it also is a 'sprinkling with peers, princesses.'" One cannot fail to note in the group's publicity that the Admiral, the Baroness, the Moderator, and others of high worldly station are not permitted to hide their light under a bushel, and this by those whose standard of honesty is not relative but absolute.

\*Since this was written, contrary to the claims made in Toronto that no offerings are taken, the report of a Buchmanite house party at Briardiff Lodge, Briardiff Manor, N.Y., an hour's run from New York, contains the following:

"The morning meeting had just ended. I saw 400 people empty the big hall, ninety per cent. of them dropping bills into two plates at the door. Most of them were dollar bills. Many were fives. Some were twenties."

In the confessions which they call 'sharing' the pitfalls are many and the dangers great, not the least peril being the menace to honesty and purity of thought and speech. Confession in their form appears to be essential to salvation. Ferguson, in *The Confusion of Tongues*, says that they exalt confession to a sacrament. Confession one to another of course is recognized as having a place and function, for oft it brings relief and secures guidance and help from the sympathetic counsellor.

Broadly speaking, however, the Buchman type of confession, induced under high emotional tension, by subtle art and mass pressure persistently sustained, a species of 'third degree,' with sordid, shameful, and corrupting particularity, merits severest reprobation. The explanation of it in part is made by Dr. Shoemaker, a Buchmanite, in a remark reported by Ferguson. Addressing a group in retreat preparing for a campaign, he said, "Remember they (the people) are interested in us as *rotters*. They are not interested in *saints*." This is their doctrine of sharing according to a leader.

All Christians believe in divine guidance, but not as the group seems to accept it by ignoring reason and commonsense, not to speak of Scriptural teaching. Our interviewer solemnly told of their being "guided", in their season of quiet waiting before the Lord, to choose the King Edward Hotel. Thus they seem to have been led to the Chateau-Laurier at Ottawa, the Connaught at Hamilton, the Book-Cadillac in Detroit, and the Waldorf Astoria in New York. We do not say that their meetings should not have been held in these places, but we revolt from the smug complacency of the group attributing this choice to special guidance from God in the quiet hour, apart from personal considerations and the interests of their work. Here the occult has its opportunity and the group invites the odium directed against mesmerists, spiritualists, and the like. God guides but not *always* to the neglect of the eye, brain, experience, and circumstance. Obviously also suggestion is vigorously operative in the quiet times of the group meetings, and incidents recited even in Toronto would be pitifully ludicrous were the issues not so serious. As in the case of fish consigned to the darkness of caves whose eyes disappear for lack of use, so our God-given faculties, under this theory of guidance, must suffer atrophy and perhaps extinction; and still worse, social confusion and contention must prevail when a company of people individually and collectively assert their infallibility.

There remains for us to say that we should be guarded in thinking, much more in speaking, disparagingly of the Church when contrasted in character and work with the group under consideration, or any other. The course of time is marked throughout, and particularly in periods like the present of widespread distress, by frequent religious manifestations which sooner or later have taken to themselves form and organization. Many movements have come and gone. Some have waxed and waned, a few have flourished, but the Church has remained and thus commends itself because it has stood the test of time. A whirlwind campaign by a company of religious enthusiasts is not to be exalted above the true, steady, faithful work of ministers and their people. Sporadic and ephemeral efforts, however attractive and engrossing for the time being, suffer in estimate in comparison with the year-by-year, in-season-and-out-of-season, sustained labour through the centuries of the various branches of the Church of Christ. Two tests of a movement are ever just, one, harmony between profession and performance, and the other, enduring results. Our judgment in respect to the former is unfavourable to the group. Others may and do take a different view. As to the latter, time will be the final arbiter. The Buchman movement is, up to the present, sporadic. His followers have flitted from point to point over the world, now here, now there, and their welcome and approval by many cannot be denied, but their abiding contribution to the extension of Jesus' kingdom has yet to be disclosed.

Meanwhile let the Church learn from whom it may, but it should enjoy the assurance that if it is leading men to live soberly, righteously, and unselfishly, if it is aiding them to bear their heavy burdens and to face life's stern realities courageously, it is accomplishing its God-given mission. Let us not be thrown off our balance by some meteoric display. It is for us to realize, as Elijah was taught, that God is not in the great wind, or the earthquake, or the fire, but in the still small voice.—R.

### DISPENSATIONALISM RUNNING WILD

(The following article is from the *Moody Monthly*, Chicago, and is by the Editor-in-chief, Dr. James M. Gray. We reprint it with Dr. Gray's personal consent, and with our most hearty approval. Our readers are aware that we have frequently warned them against extreme forms of Dispensationalism. We are glad to be reinforced by such an authoritative voice as Dr. Gray's.—Ed., G.W.)

Editors, MOODY MONTHLY:

As I have confidence in your judgment on Bible teaching, from having read the *Monthly* a number of years, I herewith submit some new teaching by a pastor of the Fundamentalist Church of this city. At least the teaching is new to us.

On account of its tendency toward Modernism we left the Baptist Church about the first of September with the intention of joining the Fundamentalist Church. But the second Sunday after this change the pastor of the latter began a series of sermons on "The Greatest Mistake of the Church" (or Body of Christ).

The teaching is dispensational, the old and new covenant being for the Jews only. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, are to and for the Jews only. Acts to the twenty-eighth chapter and twenty-fifth verse is for the Jews. Gentiles are to believe and be saved, but no repentance except for the Jews. The ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper are not for us. All the Bible is to us but not for us.

Kindly give us an answer on this.

Thanking you,

Sincerely,

The exegetical disease in the foregoing is symptomatic of "Bullingerism." It is a disease—a spiritual disease, in the sense that it is a departure from the normal in the functioning of the body of evangelical truth. In some cases, the good brethren affected protest against the designation "Bullingerism," but that term is not here used opprobriously, but simply to differentiate them from other evangelical believers, and especially from fundamentalists as now known, who are earnestly contending and under great difficulties, "for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." It is trying for these later while facing a strongly entrenched Modernism, to find hanging upon their flanks these extreme dispensationalists who seem to believe that the whole Church down the centuries has been wrong.

#### Who Was Bullinger?

Rev. E. W. Bullinger, D.D., deceased 1913, was an Anglican clergyman of great ability, possessing varied gifts and a penchant for dissecting Holy Scripture. "Dissecting" is not an improper word to use, because Dr. Bullinger was not content with interpretation or exegesis of the ordinary kind, which is a matter of grammar, the study of the context, the design or scope of a book, and the comparison of scripture with scripture. He insisted upon a kind of mathematical or tabular arrangement of every book, chapter and part of a chapter under consideration. This "arrangement" had two fundamental forms which he called "alternate" and "introverted," for which he acknowledged indebtedness to earlier scholars, but particularly Rev. Thomas Boys, M.A., of the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

He was a prodigious writer, Dr. Bullinger, of pamphlets and books, including *A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*. He also edited a monthly, *Things to Come*, and in the latter years of his life this contained a series of articles from his pen which were posthumously collected in a volume, *The Foundations of Dispensational Truth*. The complexity of the teaching in this volume is in itself almost enough to discourage any one from even entering upon the study of dispensational truth, important as it is.

#### Grateful Acknowledgment

But after saying this, the writer would be unjust and ungrateful did he fail to admit the aid which writings of Dr. Bullinger were to him at one period in his Christian life, especially in clearing up the profound and precious truth of the union of the believer with Christ, or the Church as the Body of Christ. There are also isolated Scripture texts on which Bullinger shed light for him beyond any other commentator he recalls. All of this is acknowledged without

reserve both in justice to the memory of Dr. Bullinger and in praise to God.

The first "jolt", however, which the writer received in following Bullinger was in coming upon his brochure on *The Rich Man and Lazarus*, and discovering that he did away with an intermediate state between death and the resurrection, and taught the error of soul sleeping. Indeed, as one of his English critics said, "The unscriptural doctrine of total unconsciousness between death and resurrection did not go far enough for him, since he denied that there was any soul left to sleep or any surviving personality to be conscious. To him man was not a tripartite being, as the Bible says, but spirit and body only, which together comprise the soul."

#### Identifying the Hall Mark

Therefore to us it was no great surprise to read the foregoing letter and to learn of "The Greatest Mistake of the Church," namely, that "the old and new covenants are for the Jews only and also the Synoptic Gospels and the Acts down to 28:25. That Gentiles are to believe and be saved, but that repentance is for the Jews only. That baptism and the Lord's Supper are not for us Christian believers, and that all the Bible while to us, is not for us."

Of course, the letter may not have done entire justice to the sermon. And then also, the preacher himself may not have read any of Bullinger's works at first hand, but only some transcript of or excerpts from them in the works of others. Nevertheless, the report of the sermon just as it is, bears the unmistakable hallmark of Dr. Bullinger's teachings, and so we speak of it.

#### Fundamentalists Warned

One reason for speaking of it is because the error it represents is spreading, and particularly just now in the Middle West, and sad to say, among fundamentalists. For this there may be a local reason, of which we have been informed, but of that we are not now to speak. Our purpose now is simply but earnestly and affectionately, to place fundamentalists on their guard, and to beg them not thus to hinder their hitherto strong and united testimony against a common foe. Nothing would give more satisfaction to the powers of darkness than to split the fundamentalist ranks. And nothing would more weaken their witness to dispensational truth, including the premillennial coming of Christ, than to cumber up their teaching with such bewildering affirmations as those quoted above. Even Bullinger himself says that to pursue the study of the subject thoroughly, a knowledge of the original languages is indispensable. "No translation," he says, "can transfer all the arrangements and correspondences." Is not that enough to convince the plain man, to whom, and for whom, the Word of God was written, that no such "arrangements and correspondences" are an essential part of that Word? Bullinger further says that while there is much an English Bible student may accomplish, yet it is "more perhaps than he will ever have time to discover or power to digest"! Why then expend effort upon it when there is so much of more importance to be done? Will such teaching confirm the faith of the people of God in the Word of God? Will it increase the respect for Fundamentalism? Will it promote missionary effort and the salvation of souls at home or abroad? Will it build up Christian character or help us to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?

We take a case. A book has just come to hand entitled,

#### "The Bible and Baptism"

It is written by a brother beloved, a trained theologian as we had always understood him to be, a stalwart defender of the faith, and a leader among the fundamentalists. But evidently he has come under the spell of Bullinger, and the Foreword of his book contains the astonishing declaration, "This booklet is different from all other books on baptism"! We are not sufficiently familiar with the history of the subject in all the centuries to confirm that declaration, but we can certainly say that his book is different from all other books on the subject with which we are acquainted, unless it be Bullinger's. In working out his thesis, the author says that baptism is not an ordinance of the Church, that it does not constitute a confession of Christ, and that the whole history of water baptism "is one of error and superstition."

#### A Castle in the Air

It is interesting to note that this brother quotes such present Bible teachers as Pettingill, Gaebelein, Barnhouse, and

(Continued on page 10)

# The Jarvis Street Pulpit

## IS MODERNISM RED COMMUNISM DISGUISED?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, February 19th, 1933.

(Stenographically Reported—Broadcast over CFRB, 690 k.c.,

as is every Sunday evening Service of Jarvis Street Church, from 7 to 9 o'clock Eastern Standard Time)

"What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?"—Luke 15:4.

I have selected this text this evening for the sake of the principle it enunciates, to which principle we shall return in a little while to use it as a standard by which to measure other matters.

My subject this evening is, "Is Religious Modernism Red Communism Disguised?" What agreement is there between these two systems of thought? (One is religious and the other political—what kinship is there between these two philosophies of life?)

If you have in your study a map of earlier date than nineteen hundred and nineteen you may as well give the map away, for while it may still teach you something of geography, it can teach you nothing respecting national possessions and government; for the reason that the Treaty of Versailles largely remade the map of the world.

Since the last century religious thought has undergone a complete revolution. That which was wont to hide itself behind closed doors a quarter of a century ago now flaunts itself in academic gown, in pulpit and university hall, and boasts of its superiority. It is very necessary, I believe, that Christian people should be informed, instructed, in respect to these strange philosophies which now occupy the minds of many, and which are so generally propounded from pulpit, and platform, and editorial chair.

### I.

We are accustomed to speak of a certain form of religious thought as Modernism. Perhaps it may be well for us to understand something of its principles, that we may be able to identify it when we hear or read it, that we may know something of what the modern school and pulpit are teaching.

There are, of course, degrees of Modernism. Few people take extreme positions, either in religion or politics, at one leap. They usually reach those positions a step at a time. But if once they are set in a given direction, and they continue to progress in that direction, it does not require a specially enlightened prophet to predict where they will ultimately arrive.

Modernism, in its extreme form, is a denial of supernaturalism in religion, though not all Modernists deny everything that is supernatural in religion in the beginning. The prolific mother of the principles of Modernism is, as I have often pointed out to you, that strange doctrine that masquerades under the name of science, but which properly understood is not science but philosophy, and which calls itself Evolution. There is a theistic evolution. That is to say, there are those who hold that the created order must have had some beginning, and they find it easier to believe in the eternity of mind than in the eternity of matter. Therefore they put some sort of God, a First Cause, at the beginning of things, and recognize that things as they are must have had their origin in Him or in It.

But even theistic evolution makes God to be so remote a figure, and removes Him so far from the actualities of life, that He ceases to be a factor in human affairs. That conception of the universe is that it is like a great machine, that it was released by the hand of a First Cause, not in its present form, but that it had within itself a principle, certain potentialities, and that by the operation of forces resident within itself the ordered universe has come to be what it now is.

That naturalistic view of life obviously excludes all conception of a personal and transcendent God Who, by His sovereign will, interposes in human life, answers men's prayer, and does for them what they ask. That mechanistic view of the universe makes life to be but an incident in an ordered and mechanical course over which mere men have no control. So the universe grinds on in its appointed course, according to the operation of certain laws, and by forces, not from without, but by forces—impersonal forces—resident within itself.

That view, when carried to its logical conclusion, makes the idea of a personal God so remote that nobody prays to Him, nor depends upon Him for anything. Long ago He had something to do with our ancestors, countless millions of years ago; but since that time we have been largely left to our own devices.

That, in one form or another, and in one degree or another, is the thing that is taught in text-book, magazine, and newspaper; and from—I fear I should be correct in saying—the majority of pulpits. I do not mean specifically, and by the careful formulation of exact statement on the subject: I merely mean that the preacher or teacher proceeds on that assumption. You hear on every hand of the evolution of society, of the evolution of this, and that, and the other thing; as though that were a fixed and invariable, universal and inexorable, law. If that be so, then the application of that principle reduces—and must reduce—the Bible to a purely natural production. If there be nothing supernatural in the universe, there can be nothing supernatural in or about the Bible. There may be good things in it—and probably are, according to that theory—as there are good things in human nature. In man's outreaching after something better he has sloughed off coarser views and principles of life, and is becoming more and more refined.

Quite apart from my subject let me say—because it is so humorous I cannot allow it to pass—if that be the law of life, if that is how we have come to be what we are, and where we are, it seems to me that some genius ought to write us some great anthem of praise addressed to whatever gods there be, giving thanks for the fact that we did not arrive earlier on the stage. For if the world as it now is be the product of the operation of this law of Evolution, I fear even the distances, the staggering dis-

tances of the astronomer, will be inadequate to measure the length of the road we have yet to go.

But I say, that view makes the Bible a bit of human literature, part of which is good, and part otherwise; part of it to be respected, and much of it to be rejected and utterly discarded.

And, of course, that leads inevitably to the next step. If that be true of the Bible, it is true of all that the Bible speaks about. It is true of the person of Jesus. In order to be in accord with the stage at which we have now arrived, I will call Him Jesus, Jesus of Nazareth. Of course *we* "have not so learned Christ", but our evolutionary friends must reduce Him to a human level. They cannot accept His supernatural birth.

There is an institution in this city, dedicated in its fundamental beliefs, to the proclamation of the theory that Jesus Christ is not God, but was only a man. Not long since there was present at a gathering within the walls of that institution a minister of a supposedly evangelical church. When the question was asked him whether he was in accord with the fundamental principles upon which that institution was founded—I will not tell you where it is; I will leave you to guess—he said he was in absolute accord with it. "How do the officers of your church, and the members generally, agree with that?" "Oh", said he proudly, touching his breast pocket, "I have my resignation written; if they do not like it, I will present my resignation." Such a man ought not to wait to be asked for his resignation, because the institution stands for the opposite of the thing his church professes to believe.

Modernists teach that Jesus Christ is only human.

That excludes the miraculous. The miracles of the Bible must be explained away, or denied.

As for our Lord's death: in that view, there was nothing supernatural about it. When once we have done away with the record, we are under no necessity to believe the story of the darkness attending His crucifixion. That is in the record, but could not have been supernatural. Somehow or another it crept into the story, but we must delete that! He died like any other man.

And as for His resurrection—He is not risen. They deny the resurrection and all the corollaries of His essential Deity, of the supernaturalness of His birth and earthly life.

That follows through the whole gospel. That being so, we have a different view of man. The story of Eden must be rejected. Man did not begin there; he began somewhere else a good deal farther back than that. Inasmuch as life has been one continuous progress, and he has emerged from the animal state, and is moving on from one stage to another, the elemental doctrine of sin is abolished. If a man has emerged from the monkey state he is to be congratulated. I do not wonder that they strut around and spread themselves. The principle of guilt disappears, and with it all recognition of responsibility to God. Man must, and will, by his own efforts, climb the golden stairs; and he will be a better man by and by—or, if not, his progeny will be. The individual will be merged in the race, and by and by—a few million years hence—there will have evolved an ideal race. If we could look far enough in advance we could felicitate ourselves that we had made some humble contribution to the grand consummation, even though we are but an atom in the ongoing of this evolutionary procession. That

is modernism when it is finished. That is the philosophical background of this religious decadence everywhere.

## II.

Let me ask another question. What is Communism? We read about an ideal state in the Acts of the Apostles, when the Christians "had all things common". The rich people sold their goods, and laid the price at the apostles' feet. They shared and shared alike. They had a community of interests and possessions. They were all the same. But that condition obtained voluntarily among the people, and was not the result of compulsion. The rich made themselves poor of their own volition, and the poor were made richer by the volition of others. With a fine Christian spirit they shared their property one with another.

I need not go into that. It was not repeated in the apostolic age. And it was in connection with that that Ananias and Sapphira sold their land, but kept back part of the price; and because of their untruthfulness they perished before the Lord.

But what is this that now shows itself in all countries, and is generally called Communism? I shall not discuss the economic aspect of it, but rather direct your attention to deeper principles than that. This thing that calls itself Communism in our day is really collectivism as opposed to individualism. The individual has but a short span of life, and if there be any evolutionary process in operation in his life, nobody can see it because it is so slow and imperceptible in its development. Nobody can see that he is making progress; he is an infinitesimal speck on the road; but our evolutionary friends tell us that, though it takes countless millions of years to mark any perceptible change, yet this man who perishes in the way contributes something to a better race.

In Russia individualism gives place to collectivism. The individual counts for nothing. It is the building, not of individuals, not the making of men, but the building up of a so-called communistic state.

That is ever man's folly, to try to make institutions. I shall show you presently that God concerns Himself with men, with individuals, and that the Bible, from beginning to end, is individualistic, and that it lays the emphasis upon the individual, and not upon the mass.

Again we have classism as opposed to individualism. A certain class is to be brought to the fore, and the individual is to be merged in the mass.

Communism substitutes compulsion for voluntariness. It is no one's affair what sort of government Russia has. Every nation has a right to determine its own form of government. But in Russia—and that lies at the heart of so-called Communism—the proposal is made that the minority shall rule. I suppose there are about one hundred and fifty thousand in Russia who have imposed their will upon one hundred and sixty millions. They have reduced a great nation of one hundred and sixty millions to absolute slavery,—compulsion as opposed to voluntariness. If Russia wanted it for herself, that would be another matter; but it is imposed upon her by others. Politically, it is the substitution of a dictatorship for democratic rule.

These two systems, Modernism and Communism, have much in common. I do not mean to say that our modernistic preachers and teachers had anything to do with bringing about the present state of affairs in Russia; but they have prepared the soil for the growing of the same prin-

ciple wherever Modernism has been taught. And it is an amazing thing that to-day wherever you find a modernistic preacher, nearly always you will discover him to be in sympathy with the lawlessness of Russia. Our universities and colleges are full of degrees of Communism. Why? Because you are bound to have it where the tenets of Modernism in science and religion are taught. If I believed the damnable heresy of Evolution, if I could believe it philosophically, I am sure it would make a Communist of me; for if I were but a speck in this machinery, in this inexorable machine, to be ground into pieces, I should rebel so far as it would be possible for me to do so, and try to get out of the mess.

That philosophy of life is bound to produce lawlessness, whether taught in the pulpit or the classroom. It repudiates all objective authority. There is no recognition of a power from without: it is all from within. It is a substitution of subjectivism for objectivism in religion and politics. Every man becomes a law unto himself. The pages of history are turned back and we find ourselves as they were in the days of the Book of Judges, of which time it is said, "There was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

### III.

Let me show you where these things, essentially, philosophically—I mean, in the nature of things—are opposed to, and incompatible with, the principles of Evangelical Christianity.

Oh the pity of it, that so many churches are served by modernistic preachers. The majority of people have taken their Modernism just as they have taken a cold. Has anyone here a cold? Yes; I hear someone coughing. Can you tell me, please, where you caught it? Why did you get it at all? Why did you not let it pass you? We say we caught a cold—but nobody goes hunting a cold. The cold caught you! If you were offered a million dollars you could not tell how you got it. Some microscopic organism entered into your system, and by and by manifested itself; and you found yourself a little off shade, below par, not quite one hundred per cent.; but you did not know how you got it.

That is how people get Modernism. They are inoculated. They do not recognize the bacillus that produces the disease. They drink it in through the hymns they sing, through the newspapers they read; they imbibe it as they listen to their minister on Sunday. And unless, as we sang just now, free grace awakes them with light from on high, and they discover they are suffering from some ailment, the foundations of Christianity are removed and they believe nothing that is essentially Christian. They call themselves Christians, while they are veritable pagans, without an infinitesimal spark of Christianity left.

Evangelical Christianity teaches the doctrine of direct creation. What did God do "in the beginning"? The text speaks of a man's leaving ninety and nine, and going after the one which was lost until he found it. That is entirely different from these modern doctrines. I read an account of a great religious convention a few years ago in which a man said that formerly the ministers of his church were accustomed to preach the gospel to the individual, but that they had seen that was a very slow process, so they had devoted themselves to various forms

of Social Service, in the hope of elevating the masses. I cannot see that much has been accomplished.

The Bible lays emphasis upon the individual. In God's sight one is never lost in the crowd. A criminal who violates the law of the land seldom goes to a little place to hide: he goes to the biggest city he can find. He reasons, "I can lose myself in the crowd." Christianity teaches us that we are never merged in the mass. In the beginning God did not say, "Let us create a state", any kind of state. Human history began with an individual, and human society began with a human family. That is God's way.

The principle of collectivism is directly opposed to the Word of God. And the Word of God is founded in the nature of things. These modern theories are opposed to the nature of things. They are death-stricken, and must ultimately perish. "Let us make man", said God in the beginning "in our image, after our likeness." And the teaching of the Word of God is that He has never withdrawn Himself from His universe, that this world and the other parts of the created universe are subject to the sovereign rule of a personal God Who "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" The will of God is regnant in the universe to-day, and He is enthroned above.

Therefore supernaturalism, as we call it, in religion is possible. I mean that God can stop the machine He has made if He wants to. I believe the sun did stand still at Joshua's command, and I have no doubt that He Who made this world was equal to such readjustment as that miracle required. The universe is not greater than God. It cannot be. He "is over all, God blessed for ever".

Then He has come to us in the Bible. This is a supernatural Book. Nobody imagined it: God told men to write it. He told them to write things that no human mind could ever have discovered for itself. The Bible is God's word from another world to this. It is supernatural from beginning to end. Everything in it is supernatural. It is "the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever".

The theory of Evolution breaks down at the person of Christ. Jesus Christ cannot be accounted for by that theory. Making allowance for the slowness of the operation of the principle of evolution, it yet remains true that the greatest Man that ever lived was born two thousand years ago. Nobody approximated His perfection before: no one has since. I say to my evolutionary friends, "How do you account for that great Figure?" All events prior to His coming are reckoned as happening "before Christ", and everything after as in such and such a year "Anno Domini".

How do you account for Christ on the theory of Evolution? Whence came He? You cannot account for Him on natural grounds. His birth was supernatural. God stooped to human life, and manifested Himself supernaturally, to show us that He is God, that He rules the world, and that we must deal with Him. If Jesus Christ had never come we might have been excused for entertaining these strange delusions, but He is the Rock upon which every one of them splits; for I defy any rational man to account for the perfection of Jesus Christ on any natural ground. It cannot be done. Never was there one



like Him before He came: there has never been one like Him since. He was the one embodiment of the divine ideal expressed at the creation, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

The image was made, but marred; and the Potter made it again. He began a new race, a spiritual race, in the second Adam, Who is "the Lord from heaven".

I pity the men and women who do not know that the Son of God is come; the men and women to whom God is so remote that they know nothing about Him, that they cannot talk to Him. When once you admit that postulate, when once you yield heart and intellect to that proposition; no miracle is difficult of understanding. The Virgin Birth, the supernatural element in the earthly life of Christ, the resurrection, are all clear to the view of him who has seen the Lord with the eyes of faith—and that supernatural element may be repeated in human life; we may be born, from above.

Revealed religion, culminating in Jesus Christ, as recorded in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, the Voice from heaven, lays emphasis upon the value of the individual. It represents Jesus Christ, as the Good Shepherd, leaving the ninety and nine, to go out after the lost.

I wonder if there are other inhabited worlds than this? Some of our astronomers suggest the possibility of Mars being inhabited. I should not be surprised if there are other worlds inhabited than ours. It would not disturb my faith, but only enlarge my view, if that were so. I shall not know here. Science will never prove it. But we may discover it later when we have to do with "principalities and powers in the heavenly places", of which the Scripture speaks. I should not be surprised to discover that there are other worlds still obedient to God, in which there are other creatures who have not violated His law. And sometimes I wonder if this matchless Teacher, when He spoke of leaving the ninety and nine and going after the lost, had not in mind unfallen worlds who still do His commandments, and in His grace condescend to this rebellious planet, and is going after the lost "until he find it". But I do know this, that in creation and redemption the Bible magnifies the individual.

Is there a lonely man or woman here this evening, a stranger in the city? Or perhaps someone who hears me in this, or some other city, who says, "Nobody cares. I am lost in the crowd." No, my good friend, you are not. The Good Shepherd has His eyes always upon the lost sheep: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." You will not have to give account for your father, your mother, your brother, your sister, your husband, your wife, save only as your example may have affected them, if that be so. But we must give account of ourselves to God—"every one of us."

Individuals can be lost in Russia, and nobody knows what has become of them. But the Good Shepherd knows how many sheep He has. He counts them, and goes after that which is lost "until He find it".

Thus, as redemption has been provided for each individual, so in its application God comes to us one at a time. We were born into this world as individuals. We live as individuals. We are accountable to God as individuals. We must receive or reject Christ as individuals,

be saved or lost as individuals. I preach to you a personal Saviour—for individuals.

Has the Good Shepherd found you? He comes seeking you to-night. He would fain lay you upon His shoulder and carry you home rejoicing.

There is someone here to-night who said to me a year or so ago at the close of an open air service, "May I speak with you a moment?" "Certainly", I replied, "I should be glad to have conversation with you." "Well", said she, "do you really believe that God cares? Do you really believe that God thinks anything of me, that He has planned for me, that He actually cares for me?" "I not only *think* so, but I am *sure* He does. The very hairs of our heads are all numbered. The Shepherd knoweth His sheep." She shook her head and said, "I cannot believe that. I have been taught otherwise. I find it impossible to believe."

That lady had been to college, she had been theologically trained. But she had been taught the tenets of Modernism until faith could not grow in the soil of her heart. She did not believe that God cared—nor was she sure there was a God. We talked together, and I asked her to come to see me again. She came again and again, and we talked about the things of God. Sometimes it looked as though there were a glimmer of light, and then the clouds settled down again. The dawn was long in coming, but one Sunday morning, sitting in her pew, the light that never was on sea or land shone into her mind and heart, and the word was fulfilled, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." She turned to a friend beside her and said, "Oh, I believe!" God introduced Himself to her. He came out of the unknown. The Good Shepherd came to the bleating sheep who thought nobody cared, tenderly lifted it to His strong shoulders, and brought it home rejoicing. That dear lady is rejoicing in Christ to-night, and knows beyond all possibility of doubt that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself".

I am persuaded that Jesus Christ is the solution of all problems in the life of the individual. He is the solution of all community problems, of all national problems. Nor will human difficulties ever be removed without Christ. He is the desire of all nations. We all need Him. We need Him now.

Have you heard the Good Shepherd's call? And will you say, "Lord, here I am, a poor, guilty, sinner." I was coming home from the Pacific Coast a few years ago, and the train stopped in the deserts of Wyoming. I looked across the prairies, but there was little to see. There was, however, a little settlement of some sort, with a few buildings; and I saw a boy and girl—the girl perhaps thirteen years of age, and the boy younger. They were standing beside a mud puddle near the track, and in the mud, scarcely distinguishable from it, was a sheep, just like a heap of mud. It had become mired. The boy came first, and then the girl who was apparently his sister. She dismounted from her little pony, and went down to the edge of the mud puddle where her brother was. They examined it to see whether it was still breathing, and discovered that it was alive. They proceeded to lift that poor thing that was utterly helpless out of the mud, and on to the pony's back, to carry it home and nurse it back to health again.

So have men wandered in the desert from God, so have they become mired in their own sin, so have they defaced the divine image, that there is no likeness to God left in them. But the Saviour seeks you. He seeks you now. God help you to sing, as we shall sing in a moment,—

"I need Thee every hour,  
Most gracious Lord."

Let us pray:

Lord, we beseech Thee, brood over this assembly still. May the Holy Spirit incline many to repentance and faith! May many be soundly converted, really saved!

For our radio hearers we pray. Speak to the man who is alone, and to the man whose family are about him; speak, we pray Thee to the boys and girls. We think of hearers away to the south, across the line in the United States: in Maine, in Massachusetts, in New York, in Michigan, in Ohio, in Kentucky, in Illinois, in Indiana, in Arkansas, in Colorado, in Connecticut, in Delaware, in Idaho, in Indiana, in Iowa, in Kansas, in Minnesota, in New Hampshire, in New Jersey, in Dakota, in Oklahoma, in Pennsylvania, in Rhode Island, in Vermont, in Virginia, in Washington, in Wisconsin. In all these places they have heard Thy word from this house to-night, and they need Thee. We think of others in places far away in Ontario, in Quebec, away up in the northland, in Timmins and elsewhere. Remember in mercy the miners in their camps. Oh, Thou Good Shepherd, save them. We bring our radio audience to Thee. It may be hundreds, it may be thousands, and for aught we know it may be millions. Let this be a night of salvation, for His glorious name's sake, Amen.

### DISPENSATIONALISM RUNNING WILD.

(Continued from page 5)

even the Editor-in-Chief of the MONTHLY, not indeed as endorsing his strange position, but as affording a background for it. Now to be sure, all these men believe as teachers in other centuries have believed, that there are dispensational differences in Scripture, but Bullinger and his followers see those differences in every truth. As the English critic before quoted observes, "They find such differences where no one else would suspect them. A slight difference of expression, the omission of a word, the occurrence of a certain phrase becomes to their facile minds sufficient ground upon which to build a castle—a castle in the air."

Our heart is deeply grieved as we pen these words, for the author of this book is so able, has been so influential, and is so greatly needed as a sound and sensible evangelical witness in these apostate days. As we have thought of him in this connection there has come to mind the story of that "man of God out of Judah" who was sent to cry against the altar of Jeroboam the son of Nebat (1 Kings 13). The wicked king could not persuade him to do the wrong thing which "an old prophet in Bethel" easily influenced him to do, because he lied to him. We do not mean to class Dr. Bullinger with that old prophet in such a sense, but we say that it was only a man like Bullinger who could possibly have influenced the author of *The Bible and Baptism* to have written such a book.

### FISCAL YEAR ENDS MARCH THIRTY-FIRST.

The end of the year for Jarvis Street Baptist Church, THE GOSPEL WITNESS, Toronto Baptist Seminary, and Jarvis Street Radio Fund, will be March 31st. We appeal to our readers particularly to help us with the last three, and to the members of Jarvis Street for the first. During the year many religious periodicals have ceased publication on account of the depression. THE GOSPEL WITNESS,

with no organization behind it, no Convention to help it, has thus far been able to keep afloat. Many colleges have closed also for want of funds, but Toronto Baptist Seminary has kept its doors open. We need money—we need a lot of it—and we need it now. We ask our friends to think carefully of what they can do between now and the end of March, and earnestly to pray also that God will move His stewards wherever this paper goes, to come to our assistance.

For all these funds, address 130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto, Canada.

### MUCH EXAGGERATED.

The Editor of this paper is not much given to the discussion of his personal affairs, but we beg leave of our readers to make a correction. Word has reached us from several sources, from as far west as the Pacific, and as far east as the Atlantic seaboard, that a report is in circulation that the Editor of this paper is suffering from a malignant form of throat trouble. The rumour reminds us somewhat of an experience of Mark Twain. When he heard a report of his own death he remarked that the rumour was greatly exaggerated!

We are very thankful to be able to inform our friends that there is not an infinitesimal element of truth in the report. In common with thousands of other people who, in these days of depression, carry fairly heavy responsibilities, this Editor, who has had but one vacation in twelve years, is often a little weary. That weariness often manifests itself in a nervous cough. Sometimes it will depart over night, and leave us for a few months—only to come back as quickly as it left. But it is nothing more than the squeak of a spring on a motor-car. The squeak reports a heavy load, and a lack of lubrication.

We are grateful to many friends for their interest, and we write this little note to correct the false report.

### THE EDITOR'S LECTURE ON THE OXFORD GROUP.

This booklet of forty pages, containing the Editor's analysis of the Oxford Group Movement, is still much in demand. Every mail brings us large numbers of orders for copies. We shall appreciate the co-operation of our readers in distributing this lecture. The price has been set at cost:

Single copy, 5c; 25 copies, \$1.00; 50 copies, \$1.75; 100 copies, \$3.00.

### THREE HUNGRY, HEALTHY CHILDREN ASK FOR MORE.

#### THE GOSPEL WITNESS FUND.

This paper goes to about 60 different countries and is sent, on request, to hundreds of ministers and missionaries who cannot pay, free of charge.

It is supported in part by its subscription price \$2.00 a year, but chiefly by the gifts of people who regard it as a missionary enterprise.

#### TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY FUND.

This school trains men and women for Christian service at home and abroad. Its only endowment consists of the promises of God and the goodwill of God's people.

#### JARVIS STREET RADIO FUND.

Every Sunday evening service is broadcast over CFRB (690 k.c.) Toronto—a ten thousand watts station—from 7.00 to 9.00 Eastern Standard time. Send a New Year's gift to these Three Hungry Children. Address 130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2.

## Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 8

No. 1

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson II

March 12th, 1933

### HANNAH'S PROPHETIC PRAYER

Lesson Text: 1 Samuel, chapter 2:

**Golden Text:** "And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the Lord: mine horn is exalted in the Lord: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation."—1 Sam. 2:1:

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

Monday—Psalm 8:1-9.  
 Tuesday—Psalm 42:1-10.  
 Wednesday—Gen. 21:1-8.  
 Thursday—Mal. 1:1-10.  
 Friday—Heb. 12:1-8.  
 Saturday—Luke 1:41-55.

#### I. HANNAH'S PRAYER, (vs. 1-11).

After answered prayer there should follow thanksgiving and praise. Too often we take the answer for granted, and fail to express our gratitude for the same. Hannah remembered, and in this section her prayer of rejoicing is recorded. So full is it of joy that it is really a song of praise. Several things are worthy of note in connection with it. First, the expression of joy in the Lord. She rejoiced in Him, (v. 1). The world finds its happiness in other persons, and things, as worldly companions, pleasures and sins; and these are poor substitutes for the source of real joy. The saint of God finds his joy in his divine Master, (Rom. 5:11; 1 Thess. 5:16). Observe the characteristics of such joy, in its lasting qualities, being eternal in nature, in its independence of outward objects, in its continuance, even in times of suffering, (Acts 16:25), and in its helpfulness in all the experiences of life. Our Lord had joy in life, (John 15:11), His servant Paul taught much about it, (Phil. 3:1), and throughout scripture there is considerable teaching concerning it. Reference may also be made to the power of joy in the Christian life in witness bearing. We need to be delivered from the long-faced, miserable variety of so-called Christianity.

The expression of praise is followed by the statement concerning the exalted horn, (v. 1). This is a reference possibly to an eastern custom connected with the weaving by women of a tin or silver horn on the forehead, to which the veil was suspended. Wives with no children wore it in an oblique direction, and those who were mothers raised it a few inches higher making known thereby their maternal character. God had answered Hannah's prayer in the birth of Samuel and thus had raised her horn, and to Him she gave the glory for such exaltation. He had also given her victory over her enemies, and she took notice of this likewise, (v. 1).

After thus expressing her praise to God for His goodness Hannah further magnifies her divine Lord by stating certain characteristics concerning Him. None is as holy as He, (v. 2). His holiness may here be noted as well as the accompanying teaching that without holiness no man shall see Him, (Heb. 12:14). There is none beside Him, (v. 2). This is the language of love, as well as the expression of a universal truth. He is the only God, and apart from Him there is no other, (Deut. 4:35), and this is the way love esteems Him in a very real manner. No one can take the place of God in the heart which loves Him, and there is no rock like our God, (v. 2). Note the enduring character associated with this figure of speech, also the shelter and security implied thereby. In God we are safe amid the trials of life, and we shall be safe in the coming storm of judgment. Our God is the Rock of Ages, (Psalm 31:3).

The Lord is also "a God of knowledge", (v. 3). He is the Omniscient One, knowing all things in all realms, (1 John 3:20). Note the application of this to the individual life, in the divine knowledge of every human secret. The inner life of each person is well known to Him, "And by His actions are weighed". We are sometimes apt to pass over actions lightly, or we are inclined to judge them from their outward appearance, consequently our appraisal of the same is not always correct. But God weighs them. He knows their worth. He understands their real nature. Note the warning and comfort of this in the performance of life's duties. In view of this knowledge and action of God men are enjoined to be humble before Him and to cease their pride and arrogancy, (v. 2). This is the proper and wise attitude of all before the Lord. The joyous condition of Hannah as a mother is stated in a rather picturesque manner in the contrasts instituted in the verses which follow, (vs. 4, 5) leading her to magnify the Lord for the greatness of His power manifested towards His saints, and toward His adversaries, and containing a declaration concerning the Lord's anointed, (vs. 6-11), a prophetic reference, it would seem, to the Lord Jesus Christ, Who in the divine power was, and will be, exalted, (Phil. 2:9).

#### II. SAMUEL AND ELI'S SONS IN CONTRAST, (vs. 12-26).

A distinct contrast is manifest in these verses between Samuel and the sons of Eli. It is said of the latter that they were "sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord," (v. 12). By their positions they were priests of God, ministering in His service, but they were unconscious of His presence, and lacking in knowledge of Him. This gives evidence of the possibility of outwardly serving God while inwardly ignorant of Him. The religious leaders of our Lord's day were in this category, (Matt. 15:14), and there are many these days who are religious without being truly saved, some of them being teachers in Sunday schools, and even preachers in pulpits. "Ye must be born again", requires emphasis, (John 3:7). Illustrations of the fitness of Eli's sons are given. First, in connection with their religious duties, (vs. 13-17). Certain

parts of the sacrifice were set aside for the priest, (Ex. 29:27; Lev. 7:31, 32), but these men claimed other parts which they esteemed more highly, and seized them before the sacred ceremony of waving or heaving had been carried out, (Lev. 7:34). By such conduct they made men abhor the offering of the Lord, and committed great sin before God. Men in positions of responsibility and leadership exert great influence, and require to walk carefully before others, lest by their example they lead others in wrong paths. In the religious realm especially should such care be exercised for the eternal welfare of souls is at stake. On the part of all the Lord's people there should be the determination to abstain from all appearance of evil, (1 Thess. 5:22), and to follow the steps of the Saviour, (1 Peter 2:21). The world judges Christianity by what it sees in the Christians, therefore, our duty, responsibility and privilege are clear. Note the expostulation of Eli with his sons, but "they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them", (vs. 22-25). In this section there is also manifest the offence of the men in the moral sense, (v. 22), clearly evidencing their utter vileness.

In contrast with these men Samuel, the gift of God, is portrayed as growing in favour with God and with men, (v. 26). His childhood's ministry before the Lord is stated together with his dress, the kind attention of his mother, and the increase of the latter's family, (vs. 18-21). The recognized representatives of God failed but He had His servant in preparation. In every crisis of history God has His man ready to lead in the carrying out of His will. Contrast the godly with the ungodly, (Ps. 1:1-6), and comment on the blessedness of the former kind of life, and the foolishness of the latter.

#### III. THE MESSAGE OF THE MAN OF GOD, (vs. 27-36).

The privilege of parentage carries with it great responsibility respecting the training of the child. The old Adam is manifest in the young as well as in the old, and requires restraint. And God holds the parent responsible for firm and clear guidance in this respect. Eli was a godly man, but he neglected his duty toward his sons. "They made themselves vile, and he restrained them not", (3:13). Consequently the Lord sent a messenger to him to convey a reproof and pronounce judgment. The messenger reminds Eli of his privilege in the priesthood, reproves him for setting his sons before God, (vs. 27-29), and predicts the end of his house, (vs. 30-36), reminding him of the divine attitude, that they who honour God He will honour, but they who despise Him shall be lightly esteemed. The presence of an enemy in the Lord's habitation is also prophesied, and the death in one day of Eli's sons. This was a sad message for that servant of God, but it was warranted by the circumstances. Sin brings judgment, and children of God do not escape the consequences of their deeds. Note the danger of the Lord's people being disapproved by Him, (1 Cor. 9:27), and the certainty of the coming judgment for works, (1 Cor. 3:11-15).

# 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.

## A MISSIONARY MEETING.

It is always of interest to hear of meetings which fulfil their purpose and the Missionary Meeting held recently at the Runnymede Road Baptist Church, Toronto, was indeed well received.

The Church first of all appointed a Missionary Committee and then allotted one prayer meeting each month to the Committee. The meeting held on Wednesday, February 15th, was an interesting one when each member of the Committee present took part as well as several others.

The Chairman opened the meeting promptly and after the singing of several hymns and prayer, the purpose of the meeting was outlined. The goodly number who met were permitted to review the glorious work to which the Lord had called our fellowship of churches and then, taking the Missionary Bulletin as a guide, the work was followed.

The theme of the February Bulletin provided the Scripture study and the leader's own testimony helped clarify that which has often caused misunderstanding on the part of Christians concerning the Holy Spirit's indwelling. The time spent in hearing what the Scripture saith regarding this and in the tracing of references dwelling upon the beautiful impressive and comforting ministry of the Holy Spirit, contributed much to the presentation of the missionary reports which followed.

A member of the Committee read the opening paragraph of that part of the Bulletin headed, "The Horizon Scanned" with several of the items. As the fields were reviewed and some brief mention made of them, the need for intercession and the responsibility of all those who have joined hands in a great work was felt. To one of the young people was committed the presentation of the next series and entering into the spirit of the meeting and showing a deep interest in the reports, the items were read well. The closing references were presented by one of many years of Christian experience and as the work which the Lord had graciously blessed in our churches was followed there was much praise and thanksgiving. It seemed very suitable that this part of the meeting should merge into a time of very definite prayer and as the one who had been giving the reports finished reading, he lifted his voice in intercession. It was indeed fitting that prayer after prayer should follow and that the many requests should be brought to the Lord. The singing of the hymns were also but an expression of the continued spirit of prayer and it was in this atmosphere that the work in Liberia was brought to the attention of the meeting. The call of Liberia to the Union and a brief story, a recent experience at Geah Bar Zondo Station, as related by Miss Stacey was made, together with the showing of some of the new pic-

tures from the field, then voices and hearts were again lifted in prayer beseeching the Heavenly Father for the work and workers in that far country where the Glad Tidings are told to those in the midst of evil unmentionable.

The Pastor, Rev. P. B. Loney, then closed the meeting with prayer and the gathering dispersed, the missionary interest deepened and the Missionary Bulletin providing a constant reminder of the covenant made with the workers at home and abroad whose hands must be strengthened through the intercession of the saints.

Those who had charge of the missionary meeting were aware that only brief mention had been made of the needs of the work, but the spirit of the meeting and the joy which resulted in thinking upon the things of the Lord and of His work so graciously given and so graciously blessed is coveted for every church.

## HELD UP.

(Liberian News)

Miss Lane's letter written on January 1st, tells of an experience she had when returning from her Christmas holiday at Geah Bah Zondo Station. Miss Lane had in her care Mrs. Davey's two girls and her own little native girl and she was accompanied by the six boys who went with her from New Cess. As Miss Lane made the journey up country some time before Mr. and Mrs. Hancox, it was necessary for her to have the boys for her protection.

At one town because the girls were being put in the gri-gri bush, the missionaries were commanded to keep from the path, but after consideration, it was felt wise to push forward and not be held up by this evil palaver, so word was sent to warn the girls of the coming of the travellers and as the party approached they shouted that those in care of the ceremony might be aware of their coming. The missionaries were not allowed to tread where the medicine had been put upon the ground but they passed the grass hut which was decorated for the occasion and where the dance is held. They did not see the girls but saw the women in charge and they were frightful looking and wretched objects indeed, the mark of sin upon their faces. They seemed to be on the look out for Mrs. Davey's small girl but as Miss Lane had anticipated this she was prepared. Miss Lane's own girlie was put in the hands of the carriers and she herself took full charge of Daisy picking her up in her arms and running with her as the women grabbed for her. The poor little girl was badly frightened but she was safe and for the worsting of the plans of the women who have lent themselves to the terrible demands of evil and the safe journey, our missionaries are truly thankful.

## HOME NEWS BRIEFS.

### Runnymede, Toronto.

At the Runnymede Road Church, Toronto, on Sunday evening, February 19th, Pastor Loney had the joy of seeing four respond to the invitation given at the close of the service.

### Cannington and Sunderland.

Congregations are steadily increasing upon the two fields over which Pastor Robert Brackstone ministers and during the past few weeks three young men have confessed Christ.

### Hespeler.

The Lord continues to bless the work at Hespeler, numbers at the Sunday services are increasing and souls are being saved and believers strengthened. A baptismal service is shortly to be held when several believers will follow their Lord's command.

The radio broadcasts over Station CKPC—880K., from Preston, Ontario, are bringing much blessing to listeners-in, as letters pouring in to Rev. W. N. Charlton testify. Each Wednesday morning at 10 o'clock a service is broadcast and on Thursday evenings at 8 o'clock the Bethany Children's Choir is on the air.

## RECEIPTS FOR CONTRIBUTIONS.

Every contribution received by the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec is promptly acknowledged, unless otherwise requested and then a duplicate receipt is made and filed so that if at any time the donors may enquire concerning it, they may have the original. Small donations are cared for in the same way although it is appreciated that many do not wish the postage necessary to send the receipts expended. This note is inserted that all will be apprised of the Union's policy and should there be no acknowledgment forthcoming in due time, it will be deemed a favour if a note of enquiry is sent.

## DANNY IS BETTER.

It is just the best news which we received from Mrs. Davey. Her letter of February 5th tells us of Danny's improvement and of Neill's splendid progress. Mrs. Davey tells us, too, that in spite of the setback caused by Danny's illness, that he is making splendid headway in his walking experiments and he will soon be a most independent little fellow. We are told also that his appetite has improved and that he now favours many things unthought of before. At the present time he shows a keen appreciation of anything with a topknob and delights to chew any piece of furniture with such a decoration.