

# The Gospel Witness

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

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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit.

"HERE IS WATER; WHAT DOTH HINDER ME?"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, March 12th, 1933.

(Stenographically Reported)

"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus."  
—Acts 8:35.

### Prayer before the Sermon

We confess, O Lord our God, our entire dependence upon Thee. By grace we are saved through faith; and that not of ourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. We thank Thee that Thou hast devised means that Thy banished be not expelled from Thee, that through the precious blood of Christ we have access to Thy holy presence by one Spirit this morning. A company of people are here assembled who need Thee. Many have been found of Thee. We know that we have been born from above. Thus have we become Thy children, and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. We who thus believe come to Thee this morning as Thy children. We come into the presence of the heavenly Father. We remember that Thou hast said, If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him. So we come to spread our needs before Thee.

First of all we need Thy grace that we may praise Thee, that we may worship Thee as we ought, that we may render to Thee an acceptable service in the power of the Spirit, and made acceptable through the merit of the Lord Jesus.

So help us, we pray Thee, with daily grace for daily needs, that we may be better men and women, and boys and girls, that we may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour. Give us of Thy Spirit that we may make the reality of the Lord Jesus more winsome and attractive, that others may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven.

Bless those who live in homes where there are some who do not serve the Lord. Help the young people to witness to their brothers and sisters, to father and mother, the wife to the husband, the husband to the wife. And in our several places of occupation, in our recreational life, in all our social relationships, help us in everything, everywhere, to show that we are Thy children. May we never be off duty; but may it ever be to us a delight to tell to all around what a dear Saviour we have found.

We pray, too, for those who have not yet come to know the Lord. How many there are in our school, boys and girls, who are studying Thy word, but, like Samuel in the temple, have not yet come, personally, to know Jesus Christ as

Saviour! May the light of Thy gospel illumine their understandings this morning, and may many pass from darkness into light!

We pray for every home represented here. In these days of great distress and difficulty let Thy blessing be upon the parents. Help them to bear the burdens which all must bear in these days, the burden of family cares, of providing for the children. Lord, be the Succourer of all who are in need!

We pray Thee to bless all who are in particular difficulty this morning. There may be some here whose circumstances are adverse, against whom contrary winds are blowing, whose path lies uphill, and over rocky roads beset by many dangers. The Lord be the Helper of all who are in such situations.

And now as we turn to Thy holy Word, give us some refreshment. We come, Lord, a company of hungry people to the Bible. We need the heavenly manna; we need the touch of Thy Holy Spirit upon our spirits; we need to feel more deeply than we do our need of Him. So may Thy children receive in larger measure the Holy Spirit this morning! May we know Him in His fulness and His power!

Command Thy blessing upon Thy children everywhere, of every name, of every colour, and in every land. May all who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity and in truth, who seek to make the unsearchable riches of Christ known, receive the blessing of the Lord.

We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

In this place we believe that it is the teaching of the Word of God that there are really only two classes of persons in the world, those who are saved, and those who are still unsaved; those who have been born only naturally, and those who have been born again; those who believe, and know, because they believe, that they have passed from death unto life, and those who are still in the "gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." We conceive it to be the one and only business of the church of Christ so to preach Christ that sinners may be saved,

and that being saved they may be built up in their most holy faith, and grow up into Christ in all things. The Bible, both the Old and the New Testaments, as we shall presently see, is given to us for this one purpose: to make us wise unto salvation, "salvation" in the sense of being called, justified, and glorified.

During the days of His flesh the Lord wrought many miracles, and every miracle was a parable. But no two miracles, even though they had the same object in view, were ever wrought in precisely the same way. Our God is a God of variety. We boast of our ability to turn things out of a mould, and to make things exactly alike. The Lord never made two blades of grass alike, never two flowers exactly alike. In a little while the pansies will be out. Study their beautiful faces. They always speak to me like the faces of boys and girls, and men and women, only they are more beautiful. But there are no two of them alike. There is infinite variety among them.

And so the Lord has different ways of bringing people to Himself. Underlying every conversion the same principles are in operation. No man is saved who is not born again. No one is really converted who has not been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. No one is really a Christian who does not receive Christ. No one is really made a child of God who does not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Wherever there is a true conversion the Holy Ghost has wrought in a human life. But the Lord uses various instrumentalities; He deals with us according to the nature and constitution of our own minds. He reaches one mainly through the intellect,—less frequently, perhaps, than in other ways. Some are moved by the emotions. Some are brought by the rod. Sometimes the good Shepherd finds His sheep by the use of His dogs. But in one way or another the Lord brings His own to Himself.

This morning we shall turn to the chapter Mr. Whitcombe read, that we may study one way in which the Lord saves sinners.

#### I.

It is worthy of remark that A MAN MAY GO TO THE PLACE OF PRAYER, AND BE NUMBERED AMONG THE WORSHIPPERS OF GOD, AND RETURN WITHOUT KNOWING GOD. One may be very devout, very religious, and perfectly sincere, and yet not be a Christian. This man had come a long way to Jerusalem to worship, and was returning, and still he did not know God. Thus many people come to the house of God to-day. They bow before Him as other people bow; they participate in the hymns, in the prayers, in the praises. They may read the word of God, and listen with rapt attention to the proclamations of truth, and still leave, as this man left the place of prayer in Jerusalem, without having come into personal contact with the Saviour Himself.

This is a very simple reflection, I know, but think of the thousands of people in this city to-day who will attend various places of worship, who will hear the preacher, and participate in the service of praise, and yet leave still unregenerated men and women, untouched by the gospel and by the Spirit of God. I doubt not many come to this place and go away again no better for having come.

How is it with you, my friends? You are here as worshippers this morning. You have come, I am sure, expecting nothing but a presentation of biblical truth. Whatever other reputation we may have, deserved or un-

deserved, I think that is generally recognized, that here we stand for the Book. And so you have come to hear it. But you are not saved. You say, "I am a member of a Baptist Church." Well, that may be. There are members of Baptist churches who are not members of Christ. They have professed conversion, or they would not be members of a Baptist Church. But it is quite possible that the profession may be but an empty one, and the man or woman may be without a personal experience of the saving grace of God.

How is it with you? One thing I must always do, and that is, be as personal and direct as it is possible to be. And thus I address you, even though you have never been here before. Are you merely a formal, nominal, worshipper, or are you really a Christian? That is my first question. And to you who are Christians let me say, we ought to recognize that it does not necessarily follow because a person comes a long way to church that he or she is saved. Someone here may come from the other end of the city. We have many people come from out of town just to spend the day with us here. I do not know how far you have come; you may have come a considerable distance.

This man went a long way to church, and still was not saved. And I say, we who are Christians should recognize that fact. Oh, be content with nothing less than that people should come to Christ personally, and not merely to the place of prayer. This man was a man of deeply religious interest, for *as he was going home from church he read his Bible*. It is a very good thing to find people reading the word of God. But I remind you, that it is possible to read the word of God and still not be saved. This man was reading the Scriptures, but he was not saved. We cannot too strongly urge upon you the value of reading the word of God; but if that be a ground of confidence with any of you, any of you in the Young People's Department, or in the Intermediate Department, or in the Juniors, that will not save you. You may say, "O I am in the Sunday School. I read my Bible every day." You may read your Bible every day and not meet Christ every day. The great question is, Are you saved?

Let me turn aside from the Ethiopian to remind you that there is sometimes *a little bit of work to do after the service is out*. Philip had preached to great assemblies, I assume, in Samaria; but now he is specially commissioned of God to deal with one man. And he finds him outside the church door on the way home. How do you Christians behave after the benediction is pronounced? Is the service over then? What do you do? I suggest to you a very useful exercise: take the Acts of the Apostles and read from the first verse to the last, and make a note of the wonders which God accomplished after a public service was dismissed. And let those of us who are Christians be very careful how we behave ourselves, and how we employ our time, and how we establish contact with people who have just been to church. I wonder sometimes do we by foolish jesting help to destroy the impression which has been made?

This man had not gone to church without profit. His religious interest had been deepened; he was an investigator; he was reading the Bible. He did not want a mere, "How-do-you-do", from anyone. Mere sociability after the service would never have brought this man to Christ. I have nothing against hand-shaking, and the pleasant

salutation of a bright morning. That has its place. But a true messenger of Christ is never off duty: he must always be about his Master's business; he must always feel himself to be under the authority of the divine commission.

Thus Philip had some work to do after church was dismissed. Are you watchful of any strangers who may come within the doors? Are you concerned to know whether that man or that woman is a Christian? I am not suggesting that you should make yourselves objectionable. Always you will find when God directs you to speak to someone, that He goes before you, and you will find the way prepared for your approach. But after the benediction, please be careful to see if there be anything to do for the Lord. Here was a man reading the Scripture. It is not always you will find the object of your search with a Bible under his arm; but who knows but that he may have a text in his mind? Who knows but that he may be asking in his mind the same question this man was asking with the open Book before him?

Only the Spirit of God can touch anyone, but the Spirit is pleased to use human instrumentalities. God the Holy Ghost could have met the Ethiopian by the way without using Philip at all, but it pleased Him to send Philip. "He that winneth souls is wise." I feel always that it is necessary to make an explanation when we use that term, although it is biblical, lest it should seem as though it were within human power to win souls. It is not. But, using the scriptural phrase, the winning of souls is not a science: it is an art. Nobody can tell you exactly how to do it. Only the Spirit of God can make you wise. O what blunderers we sometimes are—trying to pick the fruit before it is ripe, trying to force open a rosebud instead of leaving it to the sun, trying to argue people into being Christians! It cannot be done. The spiritual artist, the one who is given spiritual discernment, will always be quick to recognize whether the Spirit has been before him. And whenever he touches one untouched by the Spirit he will leave him alone with a testimony, and a prayer to God. Argument accomplishes nothing. Do not dispute with people.

It is possible for one somewhat versed in the Scripture, taught of the Spirit of God, to expound the Scriptures to someone else. Hence the value of preaching and teaching. You teachers, one hundred and fifty or more of you, have been trying to help boys and girls, and young men and women, to understand what they read. That is what you have been here for this morning. Let us remember that God is pleased to use one man to open the mind of another, one woman to open the mind of another.

Philip found this man reading the Old Testament. Some of the modern preachers would be rather at a loss to know what to do, would they not? If a higher critic had found the Ethiopian reading from the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah I suppose he would have tried to explain which Isaiah it was. What nonsense! Let me give you a suggestion: whenever you hear a preacher dealing in that sort of nonsense, whether he is an M.A., a D.D., an L.L.D., a D.C.L., though he has all the degrees any university can confer upon him—whenever he suggests a doubt as to the inspiration, authority, and infallibility of the Word of God, just say, "Good-bye, Mr. Preacher, my time is too precious to waste listening to you." Not thus are people brought to Christ.

## II.

"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." There is only one way of leading anyone to Christ, and that is, preaching Jesus. Wherever you get your text, whether from Genesis or Revelation, or any chapter between, you must get to Jesus, for there is no salvation apart from Him. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Obviously, then, we must get to Christ. That is the only way.

This man began at the Old Testament Scripture, the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth". And Philip brought him to the central truth, the cross of Christ, the atoning sacrifice, and said to him that that word in Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled, literally, by Jesus of Nazareth when He died on the cross.

How about you teachers? No matter what the lesson, do you always get to the Cross? Do you *always*, not once in a while, but *always* preach the blood? Do you make it a rule never to dismiss your class at any time without having made the truth clear, that people are saved by the blood? I do not know of any other way of securing conversion. That is God's way. We must preach "Jesus". And it is always possible.

I have told you the story, but I will repeat it, of an old preacher who heard a young man preach. When the young man asked the older minister for his criticism of the sermon, the old gentleman said, "The defect of the sermon was that there was no Jesus in it. There was no blood in it." "But", said the younger man, "He was not in the text." "Where did you get your text, young man?" The young preacher replied, "I got it in the Bible." "But there is no text in the Bible that does not lead to the Lord Jesus. In England you cannot find a village, a hamlet, a town, a city, anywhere, through which there does not run a road which leads to London. And from every verse of Scripture there is a way to Christ. Find it, young man. And if you cannot find it, jump over hedges and ditches, but get to Christ and the cross somehow." That is preaching; that is teaching. He "preached unto him Jesus."

"And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water." I heard a man preach from this text years ago, and this is how he preached from it, "He 'preached unto him'—repentance? No! He 'preached unto him'—baptism? No! He 'preached unto him'—church membership? No! What did he do? He 'preached unto him Jesus'." I almost said, "Preacher sit down, and let me at that for a minute!"

He "preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?"

I wonder what made him say that? Can you imagine? I have little doubt that Philip made it perfectly clear that the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ was the way of salvation, and that everybody, without any exception, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus appropriated His death, and burial, and resurrection ought, as a matter of course, and in obedience to the divine command to be baptized. Someone here says, "I was baptized when

I was an infant." Do you remember it? "No." "How do you know you were baptized?" "My father and mother said so." If you were baptized when you were an infant, and you cannot remember it, you were baptized too soon, and you were not baptized scripturally.

This man said to the preacher, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip must have said something about that, don't you think so? I do not believe the gospel is fully preached unless we preach all that is in the Scriptures.

Some years ago I was holding an evangelistic meeting in a certain Ontario city. A certain gentleman came to me at that time and said he was a Presbyterian elder. He happened to be Crown-Attorney for the city too. He said he had been greatly blessed in the meetings and said, "Would you consider an invitation to come and hold a series of evangelistic services in our church?" I said, "What is your church?" He named a Presbyterian church. I said, "Certainly I will go—on one condition." "What is that?" he said. (I was younger then than I am now, and I was fairly blunt—I have not got over it either.) "Here it is in the second chapter of Acts. I suppose if I were to go you would expect conversions, would you not?" "Yes." "That is what you would expect if I came?" "Yes." "We should hope for the blessing of Pentecost in some measure anyway, should we not?" "Yes." "Well", I said, "we should have to have Pentecostal preaching, should we not?" "Yes." "Here it is: Repent; and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ. How do you like that?" He replied, "I will talk it over with the elders." No doubt they talked it over—I do not know whether they have gone to heaven since or not, but I heard no more from them.

How simple the whole thing is! There is not a word in the Scriptures about sprinkling infants. I remember a story of one of our great Baptist preachers of some years ago, Dr. Thomas L. Davidson. He was asked on one occasion if he would baptize—by which was meant sprinkle—a child. "Oh, yes", he said, "if you wish me to do so." The appointment was made, and he went to the home. He took the child in his arms and they brought him a basin of water. He said to the father and mother, "What is this child's name to be?" "So-and-so"—we will call it John Thomas. Then he dipped his finger in the water and sprinkled a little of it on the child's brow, and said, "In the name of your father and of your mother, and of Thomas L. Davidson, I name you John Thomas." "Oh", they said, "Doctor Davidson, that is not baptism!" "Well", he said, "that is the only kind I have authority to administer to this child. You wanted it?" "Yes." "And I am quite willing to give the child its name if that is what you desire." "But it should be in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost", they said. And he replied, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain'. Show me anywhere in the Bible, one word that would justify the baptism of unconscious infants in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and I will do it. But it is not there." It is a man-made institution, a relic of Rome. And if you ask any Roman Catholic priest where infant baptism came from he will tell you there is no scriptural warrant for it. But say to him, "The Presbyterians and the Anglicans do it. Where did they get it?" And the priest will say, "They got it where we got it: by the authority of the Church, and never from the

Scripture." There is not one word in the whole Bible anywhere to justify it. It is the prolific mother of nearly all the evils that have cursed the church. It puts the name "Christian" upon people who are not born again, and opens a way for unregenerate church membership, for a false conception of the church, for the universal apostasy that has set in since then. Let us get back to the Scriptures.

"What doth hinder me to be baptized?" "Only one thing: the lack of personal faith. If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." That is the condition. Nobody else has any right to be baptized.

Let me say to you boys and girls: always understand baptism does not save anybody; it never can save anyone. They call us Baptists, and say we make more of baptism than any other Evangelical body—for the simple reason that we insist that no one has a right to be baptized until he or she is saved, whereas in the catechism of the English Church, and in its baptismal service, if they mean anything at all, they teach the doctrine of baptismal regeneration; that people are saved by being baptized. They are not saved by being baptized. There are hundreds of people in the penitentiaries who have been baptized. Men have been hanged by the neck as murderers who had been baptized. Baptism does not save; nothing saves but the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost. The Ethiopian's mind was enlightened. He saw Christ on the cross as his Substitute, and with his whole heart he trusted Him, and because he trusted Him he desired to obey Him. He said; "Here is water. Why should not I be baptized? I believe what you have been teaching me, that Christ died and was buried and rose again. And I should like to give expression to that faith in my baptism."

"Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." And he said, "I will go home and talk it over with my wife"? What a convenient thing it is to have a wife sometimes!

Our personal relation to the Lord is nobody's business. We need ask no one's consent where the plain injunctions of Scripture are concerned. The commandments of the Lord are binding upon us as individuals: obedience is not a family, but an individual matter.

"And he commanded the chariot to stand still." He said, "There is no time like the present. If we go on a little farther we may not find water. Here is the water, and I am ready. You say I must believe, and I do believe. Why not now?" "All right", said Philip, and he got down out of the chariot—I do not know what facilities he had for changing his clothes. It was a warm country; perhaps he did not mind.

"They went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch." That is the proper way to baptize. Did you ever see a minister and the baby get into the basin together? I ask that question to show the absurdity of it, not to provoke a laugh. There must have been enough water for the two of them. "And he baptized him."

"And when they were come up out of the water"—could words make anything plainer than that? It was immersion; nothing else is baptism. What is baptism? First of all, faith on the part of the subject, the person to be baptized, an assurance that Christ is his Saviour. And what after that? Burial, immersion in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. That, and nothing less than that is scriptural baptism.

"And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."

I can understand that. When I was converted I had not any special joy. I am glad of that now. It was purely a business transaction with me. There was the word of the Lord. The Lord made me a promise. I received the promise; I gave it the assent of my mind and my heart, yielded myself up to it, and said, "If God be true, then I must be converted." I knew I was saved, not because I was happier, but because God said so. And I have been thankful for that many times since, because I have not always been happy. I have had dark days. Some days the sun did not shine; sometimes it was not easy to smile. But that did not affect my salvation. And I can look back and say to myself, "You were not overflowing with joy when first you knew the Lord. He knew what you were going to be, and what you were going to do, and so He determined to let you be a help to others by not depending upon your emotions, but by faith in the word of God Who cannot lie." And I said, "If it be true, and I am saved because God says so, I ought to act, like one who is saved; and the first thing is to obey. And so I am going to obey and be baptized." I made application for baptism, and I was interviewed by some deacons who probed me pretty deeply to find out whether I had any joy or not. I did have peace, and I was depending on God's promise that I was saved.

I shall never forget my baptism. I did not see the Spirit of God descend like a dove. I did not, with these outward ears, hear a voice from heaven saying, "I am well pleased with you"; but I had what I later found in the Scripture—for I was but a boy—the answer of a good conscience toward God. And I shall never forget that as I emerged from the water there came to me with overwhelming joy the thought that God in His infinite grace had made it possible for a poor sinner to do at least one thing which was well-pleasing to Him. And I would not have exchanged that consciousness of the divine favour for all the world could give. I have learned since that every time we do God's will, and especially when it costs us something, we may have the same joy. Every time we come to the Lord's Table and break the bread and drink the wine in remembrance of Him, we may have the same joy. And if we come with the same heart-preparation, the same passion to do the will of God, we shall have the same ecstatic experience, and then we shall be joyful because we are saved, and not know that we are saved merely because we are joyful.

Right in the midst of the journey, right on the spot the Ethiopian was baptized, and believing and obeying, he went on his way rejoicing.

Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? Come now, hear me! Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? Is your answer in the affirmative? Do you say, "Yes". Are you sure, on the authority of God's word that you are a Christian? And if so, have you been baptized? If not, at that point you are disobeying God. "Oh but, my minister—!" I am not interested in your minister. "But I was taught—!" I am not interested in what you were taught. "But my church practises—!" I do not care what your church practises. I summon you to the feet of Him Who is the "Head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all", and He commands you, and there is no authority in

the universe that can countermand His orders. Do as He tells you, or you will be disobedient, one or the other. What shall it be?

Let us pray: We thank Thee, Lord, for the simplicity of the gospel once again. Give us wisdom that we may not complicate it, we may not work confusion in our own mind by bringing in other authorities than Thine.

Help Thy believing people to rejoice in Thy word, and to obey it.

We ask it in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

## HOW ONE MAY KNOW HE HAS ETERNAL LIFE

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, March 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.

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God: that ye may know that ye have eternal life."—1 John 5:13.

Prayer by Rev. W. Gordon Brown.

Infinite God, Whose glory flameth in heaven, and Whose goodness mantleth the earth, we, the creatures of Thy hand, dare to approach Thee to-night—nay, to call Thee our Friend. We do so on no merit of our own, for all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, deficient and defiled. We come only in the merit of Him Who, in His infinite grace, hath condescended to be our Saviour.

We pray for Thy kingdom, as Thou hast taught us. We ask that in this dark age we may be given by Thy goodness men with a message, possessed of a passion for the gospel. We beseech Thee to use this and other pulpits which stand for Thine infallible word to the salvation of multitudes of souls in this sinful world.

We pray also for peace. Holy God, Who art the Lover of peace, and the Maker of all true concord, have mercy upon the nations at this time. Thou knowest how torn by strife and envy they are, how full of the lusts and passions of the unregenerate hearts of men. Truly its god is performing his evil will. The world lieth in the wicked one. Yet, O God, it is Thy world; Thou hast made it, and although we may not see with the eye, nor have a full understanding thereof, yet we believe that Thou art working out a purpose in this age. In Thy mercy be pleased to grant peace in our time, and to further those agencies which would make for that quietness in which we may live godly and peaceable lives to Thy glory.

We cry not only for Thy kingdom and for the nations of the earth, but also for the individuals about us here and elsewhere, those who are sick and afflicted, those who are especially distressed in these trying days. Minister to them as Thou alone canst, for Thou only dost understand their cases.

Thou Who art the object and desire of our faith, we bring to Thee those who, through the skepticism and apostasy of the hour, doubt Thy Word. In Thy grace have mercy upon them, O God; grant to them that faith which is Thy gift, so that they may be saved by grace, through faith, and that not of themselves, lest any man should boast.

Thou canst answer our needs only by giving us Thyself. Open wide our hearts that we may receive Thee, Lord, and in Thee find the solution of all our problems, the answer to all our difficulties, the realization of all our hopes, our glory and our joy. We ask these mercies through Jesus Christ, to Whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghost, be glory now and for ever, Amen.

Our friends in the United States have been greatly troubled of late by failing banks. Many have lost large sums of money. On this side we felicitate ourselves that our banks are sound—if only we had some money

to put in them! Of recent years people on this continent and throughout the world have learned the wisdom of the apostolic admonition not to put their trust in uncertain riches. Our Lord Himself told us that it was not wise to lay up treasures upon earth, for the reason that here moth and rust doth corrupt, and thieves break through and steal.

Surely we have seen the truth of that saying everywhere in these modern days. Long before men learned themselves to fly, a very keen and wise observer remarked, "Riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven." Though aviation has made great advances, I think there are many people who would tell you to-night that in the matter of flying away, riches have broken all speed records. We ought to learn something of the uncertainty of things in this mortal life by recent happenings.

But I shall tell you this evening of a bank that can never break. If you put your treasure in it you will never want to take it out again, for the good and sufficient reason that it pays interest in excess of the principal every day you live. You deposit a poor, broken, bankrupt, ruined life, useless to yourself or to anybody else, and it becomes immediately one of the King's treasures for the care of which He accepts special responsibility and on which He pays large dividends: "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

Dropping the figure, then, let me come to the plain and simple statement of this text which is designed to give the believer absolute assurance of his interest in heaven: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God: that ye may know that ye have eternal life."

### I.

We have in the Bible AN INSPIRED RECORD OF THE SON OF GOD, writings that were inspired of the Holy Ghost, and that are therefore true—truth unmingled with error. That is true, not alone of John's writings, but of all other writings in Holy Scripture. We are somewhat oldfashioned in this place, but we make no apology whatever for believing what the fathers believed, that in this holy Book we have "the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever".

I shall not argue that point this evening, but merely suggest, for the consideration of any who may be somewhat doubtful in respect to this matter, two or three simple principles. There is no question about the fact that *the Bible is a human book*. John said, "These things have I written." Thus could all the writers of the New Testament have spoken, and the writers of the Old Testament. The Bible has never claimed to be a book let down from heaven. It is the work of human hands. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" that which is here recorded. No one can read the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, without being impressed by—what shall I call it?—its humanness, with the fact that it is our fellow, that it speaks our language, that it understands our thoughts. It is, indeed, a "discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart".

And yet *it is equally divine*, even as was He of Whose life and death and resurrection it is the record. We

repeat, "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." And this man John speaks with significant authority, with an authority which no wise man could reasonably at any time assume, when he undertakes to write for the express purpose of letting people know something about the heavenly state.

I remind you that *the Bible never grows obsolete*. How interesting it is to see the theories of men fall into desuetude by the mere passage of time. I think sometimes it is scarcely worth contending against such theories of science as seem to be in opposition to the divine word; one has but to wait a year or so, and the scientists will destroy their own theories; for they turn their sword each man against his fellow until there is a fearful slaughter among them. I think it was Spurgeon who said that, when they had got through with each other, he felt like saying to them, "You have not been half so kind to each other as I should have endeavoured to be." The theories of men in respect to natural phenomena vary with the years, and men are ever destroying that which their predecessors have built.

But the Bible survives. There is not a word in it that is obsolete. You may laugh at it, mock at it, as much as you will, but the fact remains that the old Book, undivided, still goes on its way, still speaking the message of God after all the centuries. That is not true of any other book that ever was written. Those who oppose themselves to this Word have to account for its manifest indestructibility, for its inherent immortality. The Book survives the passage of time.

And it survives the attacks of all its enemies. How it has been tried in the fire! How it has been assailed in the name of scholarship, and in the name of religion, from every possible angle of human thought and investigation! And yet, in spite of all that men have said against it, and written against it, the old Book remains uninjured by all the assaults of the enemy. Other books have been driven from circulation. Other books have died because they were mortal. Some have been destroyed by enemies of that which they taught. But the Bible—never! It is exactly the same book as our fathers read and believed. The Old Testament is the same scripture which the Lord Jesus Christ Himself expounded. That is a problem for the skeptic. Turn it over in your mind, my friends, and account for it if you can.

The Bible is still *preeminent in all languages*. It is translated into more languages than any other book that ever was written. In nearly seven hundred languages of earth it now speaks the word of God, and in every language it occupies the supreme place, for the reason that it is the record of Him Who has in all things the preeminence. It is the record which God has given us of His Son. He is to be found in every book, in every chapter, upon every page. It is "the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever".

This epistle from which our text is taken is an integral part of the Bible as a whole. John writes that the Holy Ghost speaks through him. We have, I dare to assert, in this text a divinely inspired word.

### II.

Here is A MESSAGE THAT IS ADDRESSED TO PARTICULAR PEOPLE. The text, as other similar texts, is, as they are, addressed to such as "believe on the name of

the Son of God". It is especially and peculiarly directed, addressed, to believers on the Name. What does it mean to "believe on the name of the Son of God"?

It means to receive Him as God, as the Son of God. That is His name. He is the Son of God. The Bible has no message of hope for anyone who does not first of all believe on Jesus Christ as the Son of God. That is what He is everywhere proclaimed to be.

Never was there a day when it was more evident that men need God. We need a salvation that is more than human. Hitler, Mussolini, McDonald, the Premier of France, the President of the United States, the premiers of the self-governing dominions of the British Empire, all put together, have neither the wit nor the wisdom to lead this world out of the morass into which it has fallen. We need God to do something for us. We need something done for us which no one but God can do. We need something to be said to us that no one but God can say. The world is in imperative need of a word from Heaven.

We have it in the Bible, and it is the word of the Son of God. I insist, as I always insist, and I say nothing new, that Christianity can never be understood apart from that fundamental verity that Jesus Christ, from everlasting to everlasting, is God. Nothing less than that will do. It is folly for men to say, "I believe in Jesus," when by that they mean a mere man. You do not believe at all in the Jesus unless you receive Him for what He really is, one with the Father and the Holy Ghost, God.

I say, we need just such help as God can give. I read some years ago of a man who had difficulty in getting up in the morning. He bought an alarm clock—but that did not help much, for, while it woke him up, it did not get him up. He needed a bed that would throw him out in the morning—and then I suppose his next requirement would have been a machine that would dress him. He set about to invent such a bed, and when he had progressed far enough to believe it was ready for trial he set the alarm clock that was attached to it, and went to sleep. In due time the alarm went off—and so did the bed. But instead of throwing him out of bed on the floor, it shut up—and shut the inventor inside so that he could neither get out nor get up; and someone, in response to his cry, had to release him from the machine he had made for himself, and in which he had become imprisoned.

That is a picture of the modern world. Men have been busy thinking thoughts and making machines that would defy God, until now, the machines of their own invention, their political and economical systems have so locked them up that the wisdom of the world is non-plussed to know what to do to extricate them. There is only One Who can help. This is a message written to those who believe on the Son of God.

What a blessing it is that we have a Superman! That is what all the nations are looking for. We have much to be thankful for in this country, but I dare say room could be made for a superman even in the government of Canada, and in old England. I hope the Premier of Britain will be successful in his negotiations with the Premier of Italy, that war may be averted, and that the world will be brought to a better state of mind. Even so, such measures are of but temporary value, and scarcely is the ink dry upon the covenant until some new exigency arises, and we need a man of still greater wisdom and skill to undertake for us.

I have referred several times to the new head of the great nation to the south of us since his inauguration. So far as I am able to judge, he is a great man, and

I trust he may be used of God to help that nation. But he is only a man. There are problems before him which defy all human skill. Surely everybody must admit that. What a condition exists in Germany to-day! Perhaps the Germans think they have a superman in Hitler. I do not know what he will prove to be—nor does anybody in the world. But even were he to outclass Napoleon it would still be true that this world needs Somebody greater than any of these statesmen, or greater than all of them put together. There is no hope for us, either as individuals or as nations, apart from the intervention and help of the limitless power of the Son of God.

But what if some man who hears me should say, "I have little knowledge of world conditions. I am as a mother whose sick child so monopolizes her time, that she is ignorant even of the weather, and is all but unconscious of everything, but the trouble in her arms, and the fear that grips her heart. My soul is sick and my will is unfeebled, and my whole spirit is imprisoned—and I cannot break my bars."

I think I understand you, my friend. The weight of your personal ills, the intensity of your personal concern, blind you to all that lies beyond the world of personal trouble in which you are imprisoned. But this I know everyone, but the Son of God, is as impotent to help you in your world as in the wider world without.

Do you believe "on the name of the Son of God"? Do you believe that that is what Jesus Christ is, the Son of God? Then I have a message for you if you believe in Him. To believe in the name of the Son of God is to believe that which He has spoken here. John says in this same epistle, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." That is what the Son of God is, the propitiation for our sins.

I come back to the age-old story. I have no new thing to tell. I say, the world needs a wise man, but it needs a rich man, too. The nations need somebody to pay their debts for them, and most individuals would be glad to meet somebody who would be willing to exercise such a beneficent ministry. What a needy world it is! I talked with someone last night who said he believed in the oneness of things. Speaking of a certain man he said, "He is what I call a oner." "What is that?" I enquired. "One who believes in the unity of things." "You mean," I enquired, "that you believe in a unity of the created order? A universe as distinct from a multiverse?" "That is what I mean," he said. I replied, "That is what the Bible teaches. There is a oneness in the creation, in the Creator, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God. There is one Mediator, there is one Creator, there is one Preserver, there is one Ruler. We are part of the universe; there is unity in it all. But," I said to him, "the only note of discord, of dissonance, in all the created order is that horrible thing which the Bible calls sin. That has spoiled the universal harmony, that has interfered with the music of the spheres. When the worlds were made the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. There was music everywhere. Sin introduced the one discordant note. And is it not simple, is it not inevitable, is it not all but axiomatic, that nobody can put this universe right and restore the lost harmony but He Who made it?"

How foolish it is for any man to think he can retune the thing that is out of harmony with God! No one can do it but God.

To believe on the name of the Son of God is to believe that He took our sins upon Him, that "he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him", that He balances the books, that He restores the moral equilibrium, that He eliminates the discord and retunes the life of individuals, and ultimately of the whole world, to His own perfect will. No one but God can do that. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." Hence "we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." To believe that is to "believe on the name of the Son of God"—not only as a Teacher, not as a mere Ideal, but as One Who communicates Himself to bankrupt humanity, and remakes men in His own image and likeness, bringing them back into fellowship with a holy God. Nothing less than that is involved in faith in the Son of God.

John uses the name "Jesus" in this epistle as one of the names of the Son of God. "Thou shalt call his name JESUS, for he shall save his people from their sins."

I read the other day an article on the war debts by a certain European statesman. He explained that Britain sponsored her Allies, and became responsible for their obligations. The title of the article was, "They Hired the Money". It was a commentary on the saying of the late President Coolidge who said, "They hired the money; let them repay it." This man said, "We did not hire the money. What we did was to receive goods of a certain value, and those goods were for destructive purposes. They were munitions of war of various sorts. We received them; we used them; we destroyed them; and, in destroying them, all but destroyed ourselves. We never got the money, nor have we the money now. We cannot repay what we have not got."

All that you and I ever received from God we have used in fighting against God, so that we have nothing wherewith to pay our debts. There is no hope for any of us unless the Son of God steps in and accepts responsibility and pays the debt in our behalf.

I remember being in Old London some years ago, and going to a certain bank on the Strand, a branch of Lloyd's, to do business. I had a letter of credit from my Toronto bank—not a very big one—but when I needed money I presented my letter of credit, and drew upon my bank at home. I got to know the cashier fairly well, and found him to be a Christian man. We had a few brief but very happy conversations together. While there I received three or four cheques drawn on a London bank. I said to myself, The place to cash these cheques would be at Lloyd's on the Strand where I am known. I went and presented the cheques duly endorsed—"heartily endorsed"—but the cashier smilingly handed them back, saying, "I am sorry, sir, but I cannot cash those cheques". "But what is wrong with them?" I asked. "They are crossed, and that prevents my cashing them." I used to know that years ago, but I had forgotten all about crossed cheques in Canada.

Then I said, "I suppose I shall have to take the cheques to the bank upon which they are drawn?" "You cannot cash them there," he said. "That is a cumbersome business," I replied, "what bank will cash them?" "No bank, sir. You will have to pass them through somebody else's bank account, or else open an account of your own, and put them on deposit, then draw upon the account, after the bank has had time to verify them. The

best thing for you to do is to pass them through somebody's account who will accept them, and become responsible for them." I said, "I am an Englishman; I was born here; but that irritates me, I think I will go back to Canada." "But," said my friend the cashier, "how would you do in Canada under the circumstances? What procedure do the banks follow?" I answered: "They would assure themselves that the person issuing the cheques was good for the amount, and that he who sought to cash them was duly identified as the person in whose favour they were drawn." "Not in England when they are crossed", said the banker. "It is a wonderful land, this old land of my birth," I said, "up-to-date in some things, and out-of-date in lots of things." He smiled and said, "That may be, but I remind you of one thing: it would be as hard for anybody else to cash those cheques as for you."

I did not want to bother anyone else to cash the cheques so I put them away to deposit when I should arrive home. When I was ready to leave I looked for my cheques, but could not find them. I searched my pockets, but they were not there. I turned my trunks inside out, but they were not there. I looked in the books I had used—but I could not find my cheques anywhere. I was almost prepared to reckon them as lost, when suddenly I remembered what the cashier had said, "Remember when you blame John Bull for his slowness, it is as hard for anybody else to cash those cheques as for you", and right out loud in my room I said, "Hurrah for Old England! She may seem slow but she is always sure."

Somebody whose name was a synonym for integrity in the bank had to accept my cheque, and say, "I stand for that man; you may safely cash his cheque." All the cheques drawn on Heaven's bank are crossed. You cannot cash them anywhere but by passing them through the account of the Son of God. He has a large account, even "the unsearchable riches of Christ". When you bring your poor prayers stamped with His name, you will find access to all Heaven's wealth.

The message of our text is written to those who "believe on the name of the Son of God". Do you believe? You, my radio friends, do you believe "on the name of the Son of God"? I have been greatly encouraged and inspired of recent weeks, and led to praise God, by the number of letters I have received telling of people who were either converted or brought to a closer walk with God through our radio ministry. I summon you in the name of the Lord this evening, away from earth's broken banks, away from the "broken cisterns" of which we spoke a week or so ago, to the one sound and solid Bank, Heaven's exchequer, of which the Son of God is Lord and Master. I beg you to come to Him, to find salvation in Him, even the cancellation of your debts through the application of the merit of His infinitely precious blood. Whosoever shall believe on the name of the Son of God shall be saved.

### III.

Here A SPECIAL TRUTH IS COMMUNICATED. "These things have I written unto you", said John, "that ye may know that ye have eternal life." Of what value, for our comfort at least—I was going to say, of what value is it to be saved if you do not know it? There is, of course, much value. For it is quite possible for one to be saved, and not to be sure of it. A lady came to me once to ask me to baptize her. "When were you converted?" I enquired. "That is my difficulty," she said, "I do not



know. I came to your predecessor, Dr. So-and-So (this occurred before my coming to Toronto), requesting baptism, and when I could not tell him the particular time and place of my conversion he said he thought I had better wait until I knew. I was brought up in a Christian home, I attended the primary class, and I know from a study of God's Word that there must have been a time when I passed from death unto life, but I do not know when. I cannot date the particular time. I know I am saved. Will you baptize me?"

"Let me ask you a question", I said. "Do you remember when you were born?" "No." "Are you alive?" "Yes." "Well, that is more important than remembering your birthday."

It is quite possible that some may pass from death unto life and not know it at the time. There are three cases in the Scripture where our Lord raised the dead to life: the daughter of the ruler, the son of the widow of Nain, and Lazarus. The little girl of twelve years of age (the age of the little lad whom I had the joy of baptizing this evening) was still in her father's house, still in the chamber where she had died, and perhaps still in the bed where she died. Very probably the neighbours came in with words of sympathy, and said how beautiful she looked; and some would say, "She looks as though she were only asleep." Then a Voice was heard which she scarcely understood; she opened her eyes and saw her father and mother. Perhaps she thought she was only waking out of sleep. Perhaps it was not until later she learned she had been dead and quickened into life by the voice of the Son of God.

The son of the widow of Nain was being carried to his grave. When he heard the voice of the Son of God he was on the bier, and no doubt said, "This is a strange place to wake up." He would know without anyone's telling him that he had been dead, and was now alive again.

Lazarus had been in the grave four days, and the Author of life commanded them to roll the stone from the sepulchre, and cried aloud, "Lazarus, come forth"—"And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes", perhaps leaving others in the grave. Lazarus also knew that he was raised to life. But the miracle was the same in each case. The little girl of twelve was as dead as Lazarus, and was as truly brought again to life as Lazarus or the widow's son. No one but the Son of God could have quickened either of them. This lad of twelve needed—and needs—the Lord Jesus as much as the eldest brother who takes a father's place in the family.

It is possible for one to pass from death to life, and still be lacking the assurance of salvation. "These things have I written unto you that believe . . . that ye may know that ye have eternal life."

It is a good thing to have a fortune in the bank. I dream of it often—but my dreams, alas! will not come true. I wish they would. It would be a good thing to have a fortune. When I read sometimes of executors chasing all over the world to find the heirs of some vast estate I say to myself, "They would not have to look long for me; I would be glad to help them to find me!" It is a great comfort to have money in the bank. Perhaps you have not much, but if you have some it gives you a sense of security to take out your bank-book and say, "There it is. I know it. I have the proof of it right here."

The Lord says, "You made a deposit with me. You gave me that poor ruined life of yours, and I received it,

and now you are wondering what is going to happen to you. Through My servant John I send you a letter that you may know you have eternal life. I want you to know. I want you to be sure. I want you to enter into the joy of it." I pray that some may be led thus to examine their bank book this evening.

*There is no other way of knowing it. The church cannot assure you of salvation.* No priest was ever authorized to absolve you of your sin. You cannot trust to your own emotions. Your heart may often condemn you, and even the weather may lead you to take rather a gloomy view of life. I have seen people when they did not know whether they were glad to be alive or not. Such moods usually last only a day or so, but when the voices of nature are silenced, and the clouds hang low, on what the Scriptures call a "cloudy and dark day", it is hard to be cheerful. Even the birds fold their wings and hush their song; all nature is silent. Thus even the Lord's dear children succumb to the tide of despondency sometimes. It is our privilege to live above it, but if you trust to your emotions, when you are down you will not know whether you are saved or not. You must have one assuring—and reassuring—word, and that can be only the word of God: "These things have I written unto that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life."

If you were to get a letter from a banker here in the city saying some friend had made a deposit to your credit, and I were to meet you after the receipt of the letter, and find you singing a song even on a dark day, and say to you, "You seem very happy to-day?" You would reply, "I am." "What is the cause of your joy?" "I have news of a considerable fortune." "Have you seen it?" "No." "And yet you say you are richer than you were yesterday? How do you make that out?" "I know I am richer." "But what is your authority?" You take from your pocket a letter written on the bank's stationery, signed by the bank manager, saying that a certain person made a deposit in the bank to your credit, and you say, "If that letter is true I have that amount of money to my credit. If I have not that amount to my credit then the man is a liar."

Listen: "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son." The Manager of the bank sends you a letter to tell you of that deposit of infinite value, and says it is yours for ever: thus we may know that we have eternal life. What more do you want than that? It bears the signature of the Son of God.

I told the story once or twice, and it got into "*The Witness*", and was translated into Chinese. It is the story of a little girl with whom I talked at the close of a service. She wanted to be saved, but could not be sure. I said to her, "If the Lord Jesus were sitting in the pew with you, and told you you were saved, would you be sure?" "Oh yes, sir, I should be sure then." "If the Lord Jesus were to say, 'I have forgiven you, and saved you', would you be sure?" "Yes." "Suppose He were to send you a letter instead, how would you like that?" "I would rather have the letter," she said, "for if He were to send me a letter I could keep that, and I should always know." Somebody interrupted then, and the shy little girl slipped away. I could scarcely sleep that night, but I asked the Lord Jesus to send her back.

As soon as the service was over the next evening, without waiting, she came to the steps of the platform and said, "Last night you told me that the Lord Jesus had

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## Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

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No. 2

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 15

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### SECOND QUARTER

#### DEMANDING A KING

Lesson Text: 1 Samuel, chapters 8 to 10.

**Golden Text:** "And the Lord said unto Samuel, Harken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them."—1 Samuel 8:7.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

Monday—Eccles. 2:18-26.

Tuesday—Jer. 23:1-8.

Wednesday—Ps. 25:1-11.

Thursday—Ps. 25: 12-22.

Friday—Luke 19:11-27.

Saturday—Luke 23:1-8.

#### I. ISRAEL DEMANDS A KING, (8:1-22).

With this lesson we are introduced to a new form of government in Israel. From henceforth we study this nation under kings, the first of these being Saul, the son of Kish. The incidents attending the inception of the monarchy are interesting and significant. First, there is the failure of Samuel's sons to judge the people justly. They walked not in their father's ways, but "took bribes, and perverted judgment", (vs. 1-3). Such conduct is difficult to understand, being manifested by the sons of such a godly man, and yet we are not without similar examples of the same thing these days. Children of good parents are not immune from temptation, and sometimes go very far astray. The cause of such declension is at times parental, in the neglect of training, at other times due to outside influences, and inherent tendencies. There is always the necessity for securing the conversion of the child at as early an age as possible. Note the heinous nature of the young men's offence, and emphasize the necessity for strict honesty in all business relations, in the light of the judgment.

The conduct of Samuel's sons was one of the causes underlying the demand of Israel for a king. The elders of the nation came to Samuel and complained about them, but they also intimated another reason in their expressed wish to be "Judged like all the nations", (vs. 4, 5). The desire to be like others inspired their request. They failed to consider the fact that they were chosen to be a peculiar people, separated unto God for His service, (Ex. 19:5), and the danger and consequences of departing from this standard, also the blessedness of adhering thereto. The proposal of the elders was displeasing to Samuel, and he prayed unto the Lord about it, (v. 6), receiving an answer to give heed to the voice of the people, but informing him at the same time that in seeking a king Israel had rejected her Lord. He is then bidden to

warn the Israelites concerning the consequences attendant upon the granting of their request, in the attitude of the king toward them, (vs. 7-9). The warning is given very clearly, wherein the autocratic rule of the king is shown, and the ways in which he would oppress the people are stated, leading them eventually to cry out against him, (vs. 10-18). But they gave no heed to such warnings, and demanded a king to reign over them, a request which was granted, (vs. 19-22). In this attitude the Israelites gave evidence of a determination to have their own way, and as is usually the case, they suffered the consequences thereof. Note the danger of seeking our own way instead of God's way, (Prov. 29:1), also the certainty of God's word being fulfilled, and the wisdom of obeying it.

#### II. SAUL MEETS SAMUEL, (9:1-27).

It is very interesting to note the steps leading up to an outstanding event, and in this chapter we are favoured with an account of those preceding the choice of Saul as king. As herein depicted, he meets with Samuel the prophet of God, who anoints him as the chosen monarch of Israel. The circumstances were simple. Saul's father's asses were lost, and with one of the servants he set out to find them, (v. 9). They traversed considerable territory in their search for them, but without success, (v. 4). Saul suggested that they return home, (v. 5), but the servant mentioned the fact of Samuel's being in a nearby city and suggested that they visit him, and receive his help in locating the animals, (v. 6). To this Saul agreed, after arranging the nature of the offering to be presented to the seer, (vs. 7-10). On arrival at this city they met with Samuel, who had been previously instructed by God concerning the visit, and invited to dine with him, (vs. 11-19). Assurance is given that the asses have been found, (v. 20). Saul dines with Samuel, and in the morning arising early prepares to depart for home but is detained by the prophet for the purpose of anointing, which is recorded in the following chapter, (vs. 20-27).

Several things are of interest in relation to this historic meeting. First, there is the omniscience of God. He knew the meeting would take place, as indeed He knows all things, (1 John 3:20). Then there is the revelation concerning the meeting given by God to His servant, Samuel. God revealed His will unto His own, (Gen. 18:17), as in these days He enlightens His servants respecting the teaching of His word, (Eph. 1:18), which is the record of His revealed will. Note in this connection the fact that Samuel was in touch with God, and living in daily obedience to His will. The disobedient servant of God is denied the privilege of fellowship with God, and the consequent intimate knowledge of His purposes. It may further be observed that the omniscience and grace of God are manifest in the choice of Saul as king. In the divine relationship and service it is always a case of God's choosing man. Salvation is of grace not of works. There is therefore the fact of the choice, as well as the purpose of the same. It is also well to note that God knows the circumstances of each one. He knew where Saul was, and understood the occupation

in which he was engaged, and called him while he was pursuing the ordinary pursuits of life. Our duty is to be obedient to Him, diligently to carry out the duties nearest to us, hold ourselves at His disposal, and leave the future with Him, walking thus before Him in faith, (Heb. 11:6), unto all pleasing, (Col. 1:10).

#### III. SAUL ANOINTED AND CHOSEN, (10:1-27).

According to eastern custom Samuel, the prophet of God, anointed Saul to be king over Israel, (v. 1), reminding us of the anointing of the One Who is termed the Messiah, (Acts 10:38), although Saul is not a good type of Him, as later he was set aside by God on account of his disobedience. We may also think, in this connection, of anyone called into the service of God, and receiving the anointing of the Spirit, (2 Cor. 1:21, 22). Saul is thenceforth instructed concerning his future movements, and informed as to certain things which would occur. He would meet two men who would assure him of the return of the asses, and inform him of his father's anxiety on his behalf, (v. 2). He would afterwards meet three men going to Bethel to sacrifice, (vs. 3, 4), then proceeding on his journey he would meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place, and he would unite with them in prophesying, due to the Spirit of God coming upon him, (vs. 5, 6). He is then enjoined to act as occasion served him, for God was with him, (v. 7), and instructed to go down to Gilgal and await the coming of Samuel, (v. 8). Such instructions were given for the guidance of Saul, and on the fulfilment of the prophetic portions they would confirm his belief in the divine source of the whole.

The new life to which Saul was being introduced was in great contrast to that which he had formerly led. He had probably been instructed concerning its nature, but he required divine aid in the undertaking of its duties. This God was gracious to grant him, and he received from the Lord another heart, (v. 9). Note the necessity for a new heart in the present-day service of God, (Eph. 4:24; Ezek. 36:26). The unregenerate person cannot give God acceptable service, (Rom. 8:8). The signs predicted by Samuel came to pass and the Spirit of God came upon Saul and he prophesied, (vs. 9-13). Note the person and work of the Holy Spirit. He was the source of Saul's power, and He is the same in the present day respecting the servants of God, (Acts 1:8).

On arrival home Saul was questioned concerning his experiences in searching for the asses. He gave an account of the same, but said nothing about the kingdom, (vs. 14-16), manifesting thus his humility of spirit. This is again evident in connection with his public choice for the kingdom, (v. 22). Concerning this event we note the assembly of the people at Mizpeh (v. 17), the statement concerning the rejection of God inherent in the demand for a king, (vs. 18, 19), the choice of Saul, (vs. 20, 21), his presentation to the people, (vs. 22-24), the record kept of the manner of the kingdom, (v. 25), and the contrast in attitude of the two companies of men, (vs. 26, 27).

# The Union Baptist Witness

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## YORK ROAD, GUELPH.

In Stanley Avenue Baptist Church, Hamilton, on Friday evening, March 17th, eight believers from the York Road Regular Baptist Mission, Guelph, were baptized by Pastor H. H. Chipchase.

On Sunday evening, March 19th, the evening service at the Mission was honoured by the Lord in the conversion of a mother of four children.

Twenty-one have followed the Lord in baptism from the York Road Mission since Mr. Chipchase took up his residence in Guelph in January.

## THE ANNIVERSARY NUMBER.

The Anniversary Number of the Missionary Bulletin has made its appearance. The March 15th issue marks the beginning of its fourth year of service and as that issue is of special importance and emphasizes the need of co-operation in every department of the work that missionary endeavour may be carried forward, we want it widely distributed. We are rather anxious also to know what the prayer helpers think of the style adopted for this special number.

## MISSIONARY PROGRAMMES.

There is much information which can be used by our churches and the societies of the churches to develop interesting missionary programs. The presentation of the work for which the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec is responsible and the progress which has been made at home and abroad should be known by everyone connected with the work.

We are anxious, therefore, that enthusiastic, interesting programs be presented and as there have been many enquiries some suggestions are made.

It is presumed that meetings are planned with a view to fostering missionary interest and instructing those who might otherwise be ignorant of the extent and importance of our work.

A program covering twelve meetings throughout the year can be prepared in such a way as to keep the interest from waning and, indeed, many more meetings could easily be planned with the information which is available and at the disposal of any program committee.

The first meeting will naturally cover the history of the work. It may serve as an introduction to both the home and foreign study and this meeting is most important. The Lord called out the churches of the Union for specific service. His hand has been upon us during the years and the heritage of our people lays upon them a great responsibility.

The story of the days of conflict and of the necessity for the separation of those churches standing for the verities of the Word of God must be taught, that none may feel that there can now be compromise. The story of the organization of our work should thrill every listener. The conviction which stirred the hearts of those who realized the peril of modernistic teaching must

not be lost sight of and prayer must continually be made that virile Christians may be found in this day, while a teaching ministry must be exercised that Christians will have a keen discernment. Missionary meetings present marvellous opportunities for instruction and intercession.

A meeting of a Young People's Society, or a meeting of any department of the church where the missionary interest is presented, may be less formal than other meetings and after the information is presented by those in charge, there may be a review in the form of questions. If such a review, or quizz, is conducted somewhat after the style of the old spelling match, it will be greatly enjoyed and the information given will be remembered because of the necessity for careful listening and alertness. A contest might easily be arranged for such meetings, sides chosen and the records kept of the number of correct answers to missionary questions.

It will be found wise to refer to the information given in the introductory meeting again and again, that those absent from one meeting may not be deprived of the information, or lose the thread of thought linking one meeting with another, but after the first meeting, step by step the work undertaken in the homeland, or in Liberia, as the case may be, will be followed. As a background for the foreign mission study, there should be supplementary reading, and such books as "The Life of Livingstone"; "In the Heart of Savagdom"; etc., will be found of the greatest interest.

Then the call of our homeland and the necessity of building up and establishing home causes must not be overlooked. No missionary meeting need drag with the story of what our Union has been permitted to do from the standpoint of Home Mission work to draw from, and under the Home Mission study is included the Western work, the French work, and the work among the Indians, as well as the very definite work of bringing the Gospel to the people at our very doors. The contribution which is made to the whole work by the Toronto Baptist Seminary must be remembered, and there is, therefore, no lack of material for the planning of missionary meetings.

In this article, it has been possible to give only a few suggestions, but from time to time suggested outlines will be given. Those who are interested will carefully preserve each issue of "The Gospel Witness" and follow closely the reports from the missionaries in Liberia, and be cognizant at all times of the progress being made in the homeland.

## AN AFTER CHRISTMAS JOURNEY.

The story of the after Christmas journey made by Rev. and Mrs. Mellish and Miss Florence Stacey has already been referred to and yet there is much that remains to be told. Each missionary felt his responsibility in a very peculiar way

and each letter expresses the burden of their hearts as they looked upon the fields. Mrs. Mellish's letter reads, as follows—

"Christmas is over, the New Year is here, and we haven't written a line, but we must set to it now. We certainly pray God's richest, fullest blessing upon your life and work this year. May He who has encouraged and kept hitherto, keep you until the end and give you great joy in Him!

"As we enter our third year of service for Him in Liberia, we cannot but praise His Name and pray that if He tarries it will be our privilege to labour for Him many, many years. We look forward to this year, not in our own strength but in His and we know that we shall be conquerors in His Name.

"We have had the privilege these last few days of telling forth the Word in many different towns. Last year when we went on our trek we held one service and we felt it was our duty as His workers to go back and give the Word again, and so we have been as far as Trobe, over to Tappi Town (known by Mr. Lewis and Mr. Davey from their first trek in Liberia) and to-day you find us a couple of days from 'Home, Sweet Home'. We have enjoyed our walk and we pray the Lord will give fruit in return.

"Miss Stacey has been with us and I believe she too has enjoyed it. We cannot explain to you the deep feeling of utter helplessness that comes over us when speaking to these dear people for the first time and we realize it may be the last. We all felt alike and longed to say in the simplest, clearest way, something they could remember. It is not easy and we have just had to leave it with Him.

"Can you imagine one hundred and fifty to two hundred and fifty people seated before you and you are the messenger entrusted with the Word of Life. Perhaps for the first time there is an awakening in their hearts and minds and they feel a need. We have such a great deal to tell them, but the question is, 'What shall we say?' You have no idea how small we feel under such circumstances, but we remember that all at home are praying for us and are strengthened for we know that prayer is answered. Do continue to pray that we may give forth His message in true sincerity and that many precious souls may be the result of our visit to Tappi Town. Truly the labourers are few and yet we sometimes wonder how our few churches support six missionaries on the field and two at home, nevertheless when we see these poor benighted souls, we wish with all our heart that it were possible to be in four or five places at once. We have been given the grace to go as far as we have gone, the people have heard, and responsibility is not ours as it was before. May the day soon come when someone will be privileged to go back in His Name to live among the people and teach them. The more I see of the need, the greater is the burden upon my heart."

## TO OUR UNITED STATES FRIENDS AND SUBSCRIBERS

Owing to the banking situation in the United States many of our friends who usually send us a contribution toward the end of The Gospel Witness Year, March 31, have not written us as yet.

We are writing this note to all our United States friends to say that Canadian banks will now accept all United States cheques on deposit. If anyone should be using a United States bank not yet reopened, a cheque on such bank will be welcomed, and will be held by banks here until such time as the situation in respect to that particular bank is cleared up.

We should greatly appreciate the continued help of our friends in the United States.

Please let us hear from you before March 31.

## TO ALL OTHERS

JARVIS STREET CHURCH books, the SEMINARY, THE GOSPEL WITNESS, and the RADIO, FUNDS, all close March 31.

Let us hear from you.

### HOW ONE MAY KNOW HE HAS ETERNAL LIFE

(Continued from page 9)

sent me a letter; please may I have my letter, Mr. Shields?" We sat down, and I asked her, "Do you ever go to the post office for the mail?" "I go for my daddy's mail every day." "Do you ever get any mail yourself?" "Sometimes, but not often." "What do you say to the postmaster?" "I give him my father's name, and he hands out the mail." "Did you ever get anybody else's mail by mistake?" "Sometimes. But I always look to see that it is my daddy's mail before I leave the wicket." "And if you get a letter for yourself, what do you do?" "I open it and read it, of course." "All right, we will look for your letter. Listen: 'These things have I written'—there is the letter—'unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God'—that is the address on the envelope. Is that for you?" She thought a moment and said, "Yes: that is for me. I believe on the name of the Son of God." "Then open the letter and read what is on the inside." I handed her the Bible and let her read it for herself—"THAT YE MAY KNOW THAT YE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE." "Oh, I see it," said she, "I know now that I have it because Jesus Christ has said so. I will keep that letter as long as I live."

That is better than all your moods, better than all your feelings, better than all the opinions of your friends, just to have the word of God that cannot lie, that you are saved with an everlasting salvation. May God save everyone who hears within these walls, and all who hear by the radio.

Just this word. The great need of the hour is a restoration of faith. It is unbelief, a want of confidence, that has wrecked the world. We do not know whom we can

trust. What a wilderness this world would be if there were not Someone enthroned above of Whom we could say, "Thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." If there is no one else we can believe, we may trust Him. Will you say to-night, "I will stake the interests of my soul for time and for eternity upon the word of God that cannot lie." That is faith!

(Many responded to the invitation and came forward confessing Christ.)

### THE FIRST SERMON THIS WEEK

For several Sundays there have been showers of blessing in Jarvis Street. The sermon beginning on the front page of this issue was preached Sunday morning, March 12th, and was blessed to the conversion of many, and used to lead a good number of others in the way of obedience. Although it deals with the most elementary matters, its publication has been requested by a large number of people. Last week was examination week in the Seminary, therefore the regular lecture course was suspended, leaving us free to publish this sermon. We hope our friends will not be surfeited with sermons.

### THE WEEK END IN JARVIS STREET

There was a crowded prayer-meeting Saturday evening. In the Pastor's Class Sunday morning, instead of the usual lesson, the entire time was given to prayer for the rest of the School and the morning service. Following the sermon well over twenty came to the front in response to the invitation. Some of these were workers, but there must have been fifteen to eighteen enquirers. Sunday evening marked a repetition of the blessing of the morning. Although traveling on wheels or on foot was extremely dangerous because of the sleet storm which had made the streets like glass, there was a large congregation. The second sermon appearing in this issue was preached, and the pastor baptized seven candidates.