

TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY
GRADUATION EXERCISES, TUESDAY NEXT, MAY 16, 8 O'CLOCK

The Gospel Witness

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

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

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Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada.

Vol. 11, No. 52

TORONTO, MAY 11, 1933

Whole No. 573

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"THE CHURCH OF GOD"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, May 7th, 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 Daylight-saving Time.

"The church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."—Acts 20:28.

I direct your attention to the latter part of the verse I have read, "The church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

Last Sunday evening I spoke to you of the great truth of the essential Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He took on Him our nature, and was made in the likeness of man, He "thought it not a prize to be grasped at to be equal with God". He and the Father, He declared, are one. We shall follow this evening a little farther some of the implications of that great truth, that Jesus Christ is God.

The Apostle Paul was on his last journey to Jerusalem, and he summoned the elders of the church at Ephesus to meet him at Miletus. There he delivered to them his parting admonition. In the verse from which my text is taken he admonishes the elders—that is, the pastors, or bishops, for they are all one—to take heed to themselves, to be careful how they lived, and how they walked; in other words, to cultivate their own spiritual lives, and to be examples to the flock. He bade them also take heed to the flock over which they were made overseers, for that is the central idea of the pastor. The pastor is a shepherd. He is not to "occupy" a pulpit, he is not to interest or entertain a congregation, nor primarily is he to take the place of the schoolmaster and become merely an educator. Nor is he to usurp the position of the politician, nor to assume that he is expert in economics. He is made overseer, or bishop, or shepherd, of a flock; and his chief duty is to feed them, to care for his particular flock as a shepherd cares for his sheep, or as a mother cares for her children.

That flock is particularly described: it is called "the church of God". It is said that that "church of God"

has been "purchased"; and it is further stated that the purchase price was a price of blood, "his own blood". That is a strange statement. It is a profound mystery, I know, but we are told that "the church of God" has been "purchased" with "his own blood". Thus the blood that flowed from Calvary is here described as the blood of God.

I have no hope of exhausting the meaning of this profound text, therefore this evening, as on all occasions, I can be only suggestive, suggesting to you the plain and simple elementary principles which are embodied in the text.

I.

First of all then the church, *the* church, is described as "THE CHURCH OF GOD". Not a Baptist church, nor a Presbyterian church, nor a Methodist Church, nor an Anglican church, nor a Roman Catholic church; or what-not. Here the church is given a divine name: it is said to be "the church of God". This must, of course, apply to that church whose members are enrolled in heaven. Not necessarily does Paul here speak of the entire body of God's elect, although that body is not excluded, for he is addressing himself to the elders of a particular local congregation. And he describes that local assembly of believers as "the church of God".

Possibly even in the Ephesian Church, as in all other churches, there were some false professors, some who were deceived in themselves, and some who possibly were deceivers of others. But the church generally was composed of those who professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The epistle to the Ephesians would indicate that it was a church of unusual spiritual stature.

But it was not described as "the church of God" because of any spiritual superiority. That is the ideal. That is what every local church ought to be, a church of God. All true believers are, by virtue of the fact that they have received Christ, and have received His Spirit, and are partakers of His life, members of His body, and therefore members of the church of God.

The church, then, is *the peculiar possession of the Lord Himself*. He owns it. He is its Lord and Master. We have read recently that the church in Germany is to be reformed. How true the report is, how accurate as to detail, I cannot be sure; neither can you. But it is reported that it is to be rather a church of Hitler than a church of God.

How important it is that men who hold office in the church, and who have to do with directing its affairs, whether of a local assembly or of the church generally, should recognize this principle, that in all matters relating to the church, God Himself is to be consulted, for as much as it is "the church of God", His own peculiar possession.

It may be likened to *the private residence of the king*. The church is made up of those who have been called out by the "effectual call of grace", as the old theologians were wont to describe it. They have been separated from the multitude; they have been made to differ from those who are still in a state of nature. Something has been done for them, and in them, which marks them as the possession of God Himself.

The church is comprised, not of people whom a minister has put upon a list of names, not of those who have been invited to join an organization by any human voice; but the true church is made up of those who have been effectually called by God Himself. As Lazarus was called from the grave, as the dry bones of the valley responded to the life-call of the word of God, so any true church is made up of vital elements, of men and women who have been effectually called and separated from the world about them.

And they are being built into an holy temple of the Lord. The Lord owns everything. He is the Proprietor of the universe, but the church is His peculiar dwelling place, His earthly mansion. He dwells in the midst of His people, dwells in the hearts of those who have been regenerated by divine grace. Any true church should be distinguished by the manifest presence of God. Buildings are necessary, but you may have a very elaborate cathedral, costing a great sum of money, and there may assemble in it a company of people who have no relation to "the church of God". The only people who belong to the church of God are those "living stones" which the divine Master-Builder has taken from nature's quarry, and is fashioning and polishing for their place, according to the Architect's plan, in this great spiritual structure in which God is to have an abiding residence.

How it would revolutionize the life of many so-called churches if this great principle were to be recognized, that its affairs are not to be ordered according to the caprice of a few people, that it is not to be subject to the domination of any sort of committee or board, nor to any man who may be looked upon as the overseer of that particular flock! The supreme consideration must always be that inasmuch as it is the very house of God, where God dwells, the word and will of God are to be the sovereign rule, determining its behavior, and fashioning

the characters of all those who are built into that heavenly structure.

The church of God may be described too as *the Lord's masterpiece in which He delights to display His greatest skill*. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." The whole universe is the work of His fingers. He has ordained the things that are. And yet of all the things that God has made that which is nearest to His heart, and upon which He has displayed His greatest skill, is His own church.

If you ask an author who has produced many books if he has any favourite among them, almost invariably he will tell you that while he has an affection for all these children of his brain, yet there is one particular book in which he finds greater pleasure than the others. Ask an artist whether of all the pictures he has painted there is one that is more to his mind than the others, and almost certainly he will tell you that there is one that he has never been able to equal, one that more perfectly approximates his ideal than the others, one that exceeds all the others in the display of his artistic skill. Ask the architect if, of all the buildings he has erected, there is any one that gives him greater delight than the others. He will be sure to tell you that there is one building in which he has expressed his soul as he has never been able to express it anywhere else, and that that one building is his supreme monument.

In St. Paul's Cathedral roundabout the walls there are monuments to the makers of the British Empire, particularly to those who have served the Empire in the army and navy. But just under the dome there is a tablet that says there is no other monument needed to the architect who erected the Cathedral than the building itself, and that you may find his monument in the structure in which you stand. So while "the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead"; and while the power and wisdom of God are displayed in the heavens above us, in the mighty ocean, in the earth beneath us, and in the flowers of the field and in the birds that sing above us, yet God has supremely manifested Himself, has revealed what He really is, has displayed His divine skill, if I may with reverence say so, in the church which is His own, and to which he has given His name.

"God in the gospel of His Son

Hath all His mightiest works outdone."

The church of God has been chosen that it may show forth the praises of Him Who has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light. What a wicked sinner that preacher is who uses the church, or uses his pulpit at any time, under any circumstances, to magnify himself, to display his learning or ability, if indeed he has any to display! What sinners they would be who, in gallery or choir stall, would ever sing in order to display their artistic ability! How wicked the whole thing must be! And how grieved must God be when He comes into a temple where almost everyone is honoured but Himself! How surely will His Spirit depart from such organizations!

Let us endeavour to exhibit the grace of our glorious Lord. Let us resolve anew that as often as we worship here Jesus Christ shall be exalted in sermon and song. And particularly as members of the church of God, let

us take care that in our daily life, as the power of the Holy Ghost shall rest upon us, we may be witnesses to the Lord of grace, and show to all around, not only what a *dear* Saviour, but what a *great* Saviour we have found. What a tremendous responsibility rests upon the humblest member of "the church of God", and particularly upon every officer of such a church, inasmuch as God has chosen it that through it His praises may be made known!

Then the church of God is *the favourite instrument of God in the world*. A skilled workman will have many tools, some of which he uses occasionally; but you will usually find that there is some one particular tool that no one could buy. It may be a hammer, a saw, or a chisel, if he is a carpenter; a particular pen if he is a writer; a particular instrument if he is a musician, a piano, a violin. But he will have a favourite instrument. He may be able to play anything, or to use anything, but he is more at home with one particular instrument. I know well that the Scripture is full of teaching to the effect that God uses the ungodly to effect His purposes. He called Cyrus by name before he was born. He was pleased to lay his hand sovereignly upon Artaxerxes the king, and in effect made him a servant to Nehemiah in order that His will might be executed. Nothing is excluded from the sovereign power of our gracious God. He can use men and nations to effect His purposes, but the special instrument, the peculiarly fitted channel of His grace, the one great vessel which He has chosen unto honour, is His own church. How He delights to use her! How He delights to manifest His power through her! Oh that we may ever be as vessels in His hand, as instruments yielded to His service because we belong to "the church of God"!

Then very especially, my dear friends, the church is described as *the bride of Christ*. "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." God loves this world: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." But surely He has a peculiar and special love for those who are His own in Christ, who are members of the body of Christ. You remember how our Lord Jesus said, "For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." The church of Christ is the bride of the King of glory.

There are men of large affairs, and of versatile minds, who display their ability in many directions: the statesman, in the ordering of the affairs of state; the master of legal science, in the court; or the judge, in his fine discriminations as he rules from the bench; or the singer; or the soldier upon the field of battle. But they are all human, and when the day's work is done, whatever the work may be, and the man repairs to his own home, and he finds someone there awaiting him in whom his heart finds rest and satisfaction, although there may be an intellectual affinity, an understanding and sympathetic interest on the part of that one with all that he does outside his own home in the world of affairs, when he comes home he wants something that he does not find in the shop, or in the office, or in the halls of state: he wants something in which his heart can rest, which will give nourishment and repose to his affectional nature.

The Bible tells us that in the beginning it was said that it was not good that man should be alone. The marriage state is not an antitype: it is a type of something better. It is illustrative of the great truth that God made man in His own image and likeness for Himself, and while He finds delight in all the works of His hand, He finds special pleasure in those who comprise the church, who constitute the bride of His well-beloved Son. So ought the Lord Jesus ever to find in our redeemed spirits rest for His spirit, a peculiar affinity for Him Who is the Centre, and Source, and Author, of life, and light, and love.

What meaning is wrapped up in that suggestive phrase, "the church of God"! Carry it in your mind, and think of all that is involved in it; I leave those few suggestions with you.

II.

Next we are told that **THE CHURCH OF GOD IS A PURCHASED POSSESSION**.

The idea of purchase abounds in Scripture. You will find it in the Old Testament. There is the principle of redemption, of buying back the dedicated thing, redeeming for one's own use that which was not rightly his. In the Book of Ruth Boaz redeemed the inheritance of his deceased kinsman, and by that redemption purchased Ruth to himself to become his bride. In the New Testament it is said of believers, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." The Holy Spirit is given unto us as an earnest of our inheritance, "until the redemption of the purchased possession". We are not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with something else which is of far greater price. The idea of purchase, of redemption, I say, is common to the Bible.

But here *the purchaser is God Himself*. God is said to have purchased something. It would be very easy to nurse that figure, and we might find in it many instructive and interesting and profitable suggestions. God, as a rich man, for instance Who goes abroad to buy for Himself that which He desires, purchasing priceless jewels that He may lavish them upon one He loves; purchasing an elaborately equipped estate, that He may give it to someone whom He would make His heir. That would be a legitimate use of the figure, but would be inadequate, it would not lead us to the heart of the problem, for there is a problem here. The duty of the expositor to be satisfied with nothing less than the truth is involved in the Apostle Paul's saying, "We are not as many which deal deceitfully with the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we of Christ."

The idea of a sovereign holy God necessitates a holy law radiating from Himself. If God be sovereign over all, if He is the Creator and Preserver of all, if He be able to make all things work together for good to them that love Him, then there is nothing in the universe that is not subject to His sovereign power.

How then can God purchase anything from Himself? If He be the Proprietor, if He be the Owner of all, and if He made all things for Himself, in what sense can He be described as a purchaser? Why did He purchase?

From whom did He purchase? Some of the old theologians spoke of God as purchasing His redeemed from their master the devil. But I am sure there is no biblical warrant for that, for the devil is ever regarded as an outlaw. He is never recognized as having any right whatever; and the Lord would never admit that the devil had any rights anywhere by paying him a price for anything. If you pay a price you recognize the ownership of the person to whom you pay that price. When a generous man has had a motor accident, in order to avoid trouble he often pays the other party a sum of money to cover the expense of having his car repaired. But he should be very careful, because if he pays any money it involves a recognition of an obligation, where perhaps there is actually neither legal nor moral responsibility involved. This necessitates great caution in such matters.

How then can God purchase, and from whom? The idea of universal sovereignty involves the necessity for universal law. If God be holy, then He must ordain that all things about Him shall be holy. He cannot allow himself to become an accessory after the fact by tolerating evil anywhere in His universe.

There are parts of this great Dominion that are still but imperfectly organized. I met a man a few weeks ago whose home is some twelve hundred miles north of Edmonton. He said, "I am a Canadian, and have lived up there for twenty years. I suppose I am a Canadian, at least. Certainly I do not escape the obligation to pay taxes. But so far as our rulers are concerned, very few of them know anything about that remote country." There are remote districts in the Dominion where the population is very sparse, where it might be easy for a man to resort to crime, and to do that which is right in his own eyes with impunity. But the arm of the Law stretches out even beyond the Arctic Circle, and insists that righteousness must be done, and that men must obey the law even in those remote districts. Canada has long been proud of that incomparable force, the Canadian Mounted Police, because of their courage and fidelity in enforcing the law in the far-flung stretches of the Dominion.

We cannot conceive of God's having some remote provinces that are not subject to His sovereign power. God, being Himself the Source of all true holiness, necessitates there being a holy law that must radiate from Himself, that is universally applicable to all His immeasurable dominions. If He be an holy God—as He is, if He be the Centre and Source of all law—as He is, then any infraction of that law by anybody involves the necessity of the payment of a penalty.

And men have violated God's law. They have done that which is wrong in the sight of God, that which is evil before God. The church of God "which he hath purchased", is made up of such people, for "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God". So that we have all become guilty of the violation of His law.

The fact that the law emanates from God, and that it is in accord with His own nature, that it is a transcript of His own nature, means that He cannot ignore His law without violating His own nature. Hence not only His government, objectively considered, but the requirements of His own nature, His holy personality, must demand the payment of the penalty where law is violated.

Mystery as it is, I think it is supported by the general teaching of Scripture, that God has purchased His church from Himself, and for Himself; for "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." That is to say, in order that law as a system of government, and law as inhering in the divine nature, in the essential holiness of the Godhead, might be honoured, that there might be no discord anywhere in the universe, that every note of dissonance might be put away, God's mercy supplied what His justice demanded, and "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself". He has supplied, out of the resources of His own infinite nature, the infinitely exacting requirements of His holy law. He has satisfied the requirements of the moral constitution of the universe, so that He may be just, and yet the Justifier of such as are members of "the church of God."

III.

That brings me, then, to a further consideration. WHAT IS THE PRICE THAT HAS BEEN PAID? The church of God, "which he hath purchased with His own blood". Let me repeat it. "The church of God"—in this particular instance it is not called the church of Jesus Christ, it is not called the Christian Church: it is called "the church of God"; and the blood by which that church has been purchased is said to be "His own blood," that is, the blood of God. How strange, how startling, a statement that is!

But *what do we know about blood?* In the Old Testament we read, "The life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." Long before medical science discovered it, the Bible declared that the life of the flesh is in the blood. I suppose the most advanced medical scientist would tell us that even in our day science knows comparatively little about the blood. It knows very much more than it used to know, but when it is put under the microscope, can you find the life that is in the blood? I know that the elements of which it is composed can be analyzed, but there is something in the blood which eludes the vision of the most careful investigator, and which no microscope that ever was invented can possibly make manifest. That is true even of the blood of an animal. You may take the blood, and in so doing you will take the life; but you cannot find the life, that spirit that is there—for there is an animal soul, the life that gives the creature vitality, whether it be the horse, or the bird that flies, whatever it may be, the life is in the blood.

It is true of humans as well. Our physical life is in our blood. The life goes with it. Yet nobody ever saw the life. Nobody can see it. Nobody can possibly discern it.

Science tells us there are differences in the quality of blood. Men have long been experimenting, with a view to acquiring ability to distinguish between animal and human blood. How important that is in the detection of crime! If they find blood at the scene of crime, how important it is that they know whether it is the blood of a human or not! While it may be difficult to distinguish I think I am correct in saying that it has now become possible to isolate human blood from all others, and say, This is human blood.

But even in the blood of humans there is a difference. You have all found that out when some friend of yours had to have a transfusion of blood. The doctor said, as several of you presented yourselves, "I shall have to type you to find out whether you are the right type, whether you are type one, two, or three." When the experiment has been made perhaps he has said to you, "The patient is of another type; it would not do to use your blood for the transfusion."

I wonder what else there is in the blood? I wonder why some people have black hair, and some red? When I was a boy I used to wish it would make mine black. It was so light in colour I suffered much at the lips of my schoolmates. What is it in the blood that gives us different form? Where there are men and women who seem all alike, the man of science says, "Your blood is of one type, this man's of another, and this man's of still a third."

Then they have discovered that many kinds of disease are in the blood. They submit the blood to various tests to discover whether or not the disease is there. Who knows what cancer is? Oh that someone would find out! But even in the present stage of advancement there are men who are able to tell some diseases that are in the blood.

If disease is in the blood, may it not be possible that virtue is in the blood also? Perhaps that is why some people—a few, are naturally amiable, while the many are the reverse. How wonderful that God should have stooped to our humanity, that He took "not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham"! He became like unto His brethren. He became, so to speak, our type, one with us, our Fellow, so that it is said, "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."

Who is He? He is God. What is in Him? All wisdom, all power, all truth, all righteousness, all faithfulness, all love, all mercy; all justice—eternity itself, for He is made "after the power of an indissoluble life", a life that defies dissolution, that cannot be terminated. That is what Jesus Christ said, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom instead of many." He gave His *life* when He gave His blood.

And what was in His blood? There was all in His blood that there was in His life. His Deity gave to Him an infinite capacity, and as someone, I believe Spurgeon, has said, "infused a boundless degree of compensation into all the pangs he bore." He purchased His church with His own blood; which means that He gave His life for us, to satisfy the demands of justice, of righteousness, and of truth. He balanced the books, made up the deficit, paid the utmost farthing of our indebtedness, and redeemed us to Himself, to be His for ever.

What a gospel! What a revelation, that God should have come out of the unknown, should have clothed Himself with our flesh, in order that He might manifest the invisible; for "no man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Said one of His disciples, "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us"; to which our Lord replied, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Jesus Christ, I repeat, is God. The blood of Jesus Christ is the blood of God. The cleansing foun-

tain that is filled with blood was drawn from Immanuel's veins. Immanuel means "God with us." The blood of Jesus Christ, blessed be His name for ever, cleanseth us from all sin. May we rejoice in the assurance of that cleansing, for His name's sake, Amen.

Let us pray:

We thank Thee, O Lord, for the cross of Christ, for the meeting-place between Deity and humanity, for the mercy-seat, and the overshadowing cherubim, for the place that is sprinkled with blood. We are all Thy debtors. We are all sinners, and we have nothing to pay. We cannot obtain release from the law; we cannot meet its severe exactions; we can by no means discharge our obligations to the law of the infinitely holy One. But we bless Thee that Thou hast done it for us. Our hearts would rest in Thee. O Lord our God, come to us this evening!

If there be any in this house who have been trying to save themselves, trying to pay off the debt of a world with their few poor pennies, trying, with the filthy rags of their own righteousness, to make to themselves robes fit to wear in the white light of Thine awful holiness—if any have been guilty of that folly, show them to-night that there is salvation nowhere but in Christ. Salvation belongeth unto God. So would we come with the faith of little children, and put our trust wholly in Thee. Bless those who have heard this service by radio this evening. We thank Thee that Thou canst take the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and the things that are not to bring to naught the things which are. Therefore, we pray Thee, use our poor words this evening, for verily we believe the truth of God has been in them. Be pleased to take the message of the hour, and use it to bring conviction to heart and conscience in many places. Then, by the further illumination of the Holy Spirit, help them to see, in the Lamb of God, the only One Who can take away the sin of the world. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

SAUL AND AMALEK

A Lecture by Dr. T. T. Shields

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto,
Thursday Evening, May 4th, 1933.

*Concluding Lecture in a Series of Thursday Evening
Lectures on Biblical Theology which is included in
the Curriculum of Toronto Baptist Seminary*

(Stenographically Reported)

Lesson Text: I Samuel, chapter 15.

We conclude this evening for this Seminary term our study in the Biblical Theology course, but from now on to the Fall term, we shall turn to some other portion of Scripture for consecutive study. Some of the students here this evening will be graduating in a week or so, and some of us feel very much like parents when their children get married and go away from home. It is a very happy time for the young people, but not quite so happy for the home where the family circle is diminished. Next session we shall begin where we leave off this season, and if the Lord should tarry, and spare us to continue our study right to the end of the Book, we shall ultimately have in print, though not bound, a commentary on the entire Bible. Then when the preacher is gone perhaps some generous soul will have them put into volume form, and sell them for the profit of the Seminary—who knows? At all events I hope those of you who leave us will keep in touch with us, and will read THE GOSPEL WITNESS, so that if we are permitted thus to continue, even when you have left us, you will be able to go through the Bible with us week by week, to the end.

These historical portions of Scripture are most interesting and extremely important. I have tried to show you in all our studies, from Genesis forward, that our God is not a Sunday God. "He dwelleth not in temples made with hands." There are people who are so very spiritual in their own estimation, and so utterly other-worldly in their outlook, that they have no interest whatever in mundane affairs. They do not go to the poll to vote. I fear we all fail at that point, feeling possibly sometimes that there is nothing to vote for. But our ultra-spiritual friends assume that a Christian should be so entirely separated from all earthly things as to have no interest in matters of human government.

Nothing, it seems to me, could be farther from the teaching of Scripture. Our God is related to His world which He has created. If it be true—as it is—that the hairs of our head are all numbered, that He still watches over the sparrow, that He still clothes the grass of the field, and makes the lilies to grow, and the earth to bring forth and bud—if God is so directly and intimately—and how shall I put it—and effectively related to all the affairs of this world, then history, ancient and modern, sacred so-called or so-called profane, ought to be of interest to the child of God.

I think I can say without irreverence, and certainly without any sort of hypocrisy, that I read the daily papers to see what God is doing in the world. There are many things, of course, that are not of value, but the enlightened mind will be able to trace the divine hand in the affairs of the individual, in the history of nations, and of the world.

I heard a man say—and I think it was not original with him—apologizing for what seemed to be a pun, "History is simply His story." And so it is. God is present in the lives of individuals and of nations. "He 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?"

Once more I direct your attention to this principle, and I would have you keep it always in mind, that the Bible is not written from the standpoint of one whose interests are temporal and transient, but the Bible, in every part of it, views events in the light of the time to which these events refer, and in which they occur, as from the standpoint of One Who is contemporary with them; and though the great characters of earlier history have passed, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, have been gathered to their fathers, and Joseph has died in Egypt, and in due course his bones have been carried, in fulfilment of his desire, by the migrating nation from Egypt toward the promised land; then in turn Moses and Aaron have passed, and Joshua, then the judges, Othniel, Deborah, Gideon, Samson; we have seen God working in Ruth also, and now we come to the first of Samuel—but it is still the same God.

We began with Samuel as a child. We heard his mother's prayer for him before he was born, and now he has become an old man, and is about to retire from the scene of action. Yet whoever wrote this Bible wrote of these events as He wrote of creation, as though He were there, an eye-witness of it all.

I would again remind you of a principle that we discussed some months ago, but that is germane to the subject before us this evening, that the opening verse of Genesis challenges the surrender of heart and intellect

to the Spirit of infinite wisdom. It speaks of "the beginning", and of the creation of the heaven and the earth; and one cannot help asking, Who is the speaker? Who is the writer? Who was present in the "beginning"? No modern scholar, nor ancient sage, nor any human personality. Who was there "in the beginning"? Only God! Nobody else was there. Either the first verse of the Bible is written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and is really *the* word of the Spirit that "moved upon the face of the waters", or it is not worth the paper it is written on. It can have no possible authority unless it be the word of God, for no one but God was there. But He was there! And the Spirit of God might have said of the first verse of Genesis, as our Lord Jesus said to Nicodemus, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness."

I.

So that whoever may have been the penman, the Spirit of God here connects a chapter of history here recorded with something that has gone before. Samuel reminds Saul that he had been sent to anoint him king over Israel, and bids him hearken to the voice of the Lord. Then there is a passage relating to Amalek. Amalek was one of the early enemies of Israel, one of the most ancient enemies of Israel; and the Lord says, "I remember that which Amalek did to Israel." He always remembers, save only when the blood of Jesus Christ His Son has blotted out our sins. Then He delights to say, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

But He remembers, and He remembers the sin of Amalek when His people came up from Egypt. If we lose our conception of a sovereign, holy, God, Creator and Ruler, Who is incapable of the violation of His law either objectively, or of the law of His own nature, of which all laws are but a transcript, I say, if we lose sight of the fact that the Judge of all the earth must do right, we shall have difficulty in the interpretation, not only of ancient history, but equally in our interpretation of our own history.

I read an editorial in a morning paper about the death of those two little children who were struck by lightning out in the open road. Can you explain that? No! And there are many other things in your life and in mine that we cannot explain. We shall be in endless confusion unless we can believe that at the centre of an ordered universe there is a Judge Who always does right. That is the essence of faith.

Hundreds of years have passed since Israel came out of Egypt. There is no living Amalekite who had any personal responsibility for what Amalek did in Moses' day, and yet there is a kind of persisting collective individuality, and we observe the operation of the principle, that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children; and that the continuity of the influence of every human act, whatever it may be, persists through successive generations.

I called in a radio man to try to take the thunder out of my radio—or the lightning, I do not know which it was. He said the radio is one of the most sensitive things that has ever been made by human hands. I do not know anything about it. I suppose it is. But this universe is sensitive. It is not only sensitive in the physical sense, so that the voice uttered here may be

heard around the world, but it is sensitive in the moral realm. I read the other day of a man who spoke in Schenectady, and his voice was transmitted from station to station around the entire globe, and came back to him in a fraction of a second. You say it is very clever? But who made the transmission of the human voice possible? Who ordered this sensitive universe that such things are possible?

And the universe is just as sensitive morally as it is physically; and just as a physical vibration can register itself around the world, so every attack upon the integrity of the moral law makes itself felt everywhere. I do not know whether it is true, but it was in a radio magazine that repeated it as a fact, that someone was reported to have picked up a programme that had been broadcast two years before, and that had been drifting around in space somewhere for all that time. It came back within the range of the radio, which picked it up and made it audible.

That is a physical illustration. What tremendous significance a simple fact of that sort, if it be a fact, attaches to the saying of our Lord, "But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." The programme—where has it gone? Drifting around, is it? Yes; and there will be some radio that will pick it up in the day of judgment and say, "You said that."

Amalek is spoken of as though it were a continuous national entity. It had an existence of itself, and it was held responsible for the sins of the past. Is it not a solemn thing to live? Does it not make one almost afraid to live? I read somewhere of the investigation of certain criminologists who traced the posterity of one evil pair, and found that over a period of years the direct descendants of that father and mother to the number of nearly six hundred were found to have been criminals who had come under the law. Their evil progeny included all sorts of wicked men and women, even some murderers.

The Lord had said, "Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi: for he said, Because the Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." Some of our modern friends will say, "I will not believe in a God like that." Meanwhile they are trying to destroy a good many people themselves! We are supposed to be somewhat removed from the cannibal stage, but modern business is a form of cannibalism, men eating each other up!

God is the Judge. And remember when you read history as here recorded you have not merely a chronology of events. They are not mere chronicles: you have here a philosophy of things. God is not only telling you what happened, but why things happened. He removes the veil and tells us why one particular nation was blotted out. You remember the principle?—"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee."

As we go through this Book we shall learn much of great kingdoms, of great empires, of world powers. Of Egypt, then Babylon, Medo-Persia, Rome. But they all vanished. Why? The divine Surgeon performed an operation. There is a continuous process of moral sanitation going on in the world. At this time of year you go out and clean up, do you not? You burn a great deal of refuse. We read of a man a few weeks ago who had been overtaken with leprosy. He was transferred to the leper colony at the coast, and it was said that the car in which he travelled was to be burned immediately on his arrival. There are many things in this world that ought to be burned, that should be destroyed.

In this particular instance Saul was divinely commissioned to destroy Amalek. Let us see what came of it.

II.

He fought and obtained the victory, took Agag prisoner, and reserved "the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs"—in fact, all that was good. It would have been too bad to destroy that, so he kept it all. Presently the old seer appeared on the scene, and Saul greeted him by saying, "Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord." Samuel was an old man. Did you ever see an old man trying to sharpen his hearing? One can almost imagine Samuel's cupping his ear, listening a moment, and then saying, "You say you have destroyed them all? What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?"

Ah yes, that which is reserved from the deserved mortality of the cross, that which is not crucified when it ought to be crucified—it may be hidden away back there, but a keen spiritual ear will detect the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the oxen. I have met not a few people who have told me exactly what Saul told Samuel. "I have performed the commandment of the Lord. The 'old man' is no more. I have arrived at perfection at last. I have not sinned for some time." I never heard a man say that that I did not hear the bleating of the sheep. I have felt like saying, "You consummate hypocrite. You are as proud as Lucifer even now. Why did you not kill that?" You cannot keep the sheep quiet. You cannot muzzle the oxen so that their lowing cannot be heard. They will give the lie to your perfectionism if you have not done as the Lord has commanded.

It is amazing how very often people wrap up their disobedience—and I suppose we have all done it—in a religious cloak. There are some sheep, some oxen, some fatlings, and some lambs—but only the best. We reserved nothing but the best, and our design is to offer them as a sacrifice to the Lord. I do not know how many people have told me of the great plans they have for getting rich. I have had people ask me to pray that they might get rich! I have had them tell me of some wonderful thing that is just in the offing, and now "will you pray for me?" They propose to institute a kind of conjurer's trick, as though if one prayed long enough he would get the prize out of the box, and draw the winning ticket. What is it all for? It is for the Lord! Of course, it is for the Lord! "I do not want any money for myself. I do not want to be rich simply for the sake of being rich. I should like to have a great deal of money for the sake of the good I could do with it."

Is it not absurd? O foolish men to talk after that fashion! God knows very well what you would do if you had it; and if He could trust you He would no doubt have given it to you, for He is far more desirous of doing good than you are. We are always sparing the sheep and the oxen, the fatlings and the lambs, the best of everything, to bring to the Lord!

There is a very important principle enunciated here. *Poor Saul could not help it!* He was the victim of circumstances! And while he himself, of course, would have executed the Lord's commandment to the letter, the "people" would not have it so! "The people"! "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree", etc., etc., etc.! I think the most popular sort of business in the world is that of excuse-making, excuse-mongering. But it is of no value. The Lord knew who was responsible.

I have been reading the report of an investigation—I will not tell you where: you may judge for yourselves. But I am always interested in a verbatim report of a cross-examination, in seeing how some men dodge, and try to lock this door and the other door; and all with the purpose of concealing the truth. But in spite of it all the truth is like a little dog I have: it will get out! When you have shut all doors, lo, there it is in the garden! You cannot keep it in! Of what use is it to try? This is Saul's excuse, his attempt to conceal the truth: "The people"! "The people"!

When you students become pastors of churches you will have many trying experiences in the ministry. You will have some of the most peculiar people to be found on earth in the church. Alexander Grant, in the days when people burned cord-wood, talking to a company of farmers, said, "When you are piling cord-wood, how easy it is when you have all straight sticks! You have no difficulty at all. But when you come to one of these crooked things that will not fit anywhere, and you cannot pile anything around it, you do not know what to do. That is just like some of your brethren. You are so crooked you cannot fit in with straight people."

You will find crooked sticks, peculiar people. If you are disposed to excuse yourself, you will find many people upon whom you can lay the responsibility for your failures. I long ago learned the injustice of threshing those who attend a service for the absence of those who failed to come, and I think those of you who come here will bear me witness that I am not guilty of that folly. We do not deal in whips, but try to give people oats. If a man will walk with God, and be true to Him, God will bless him, and give him some measure of success in spite of the opposition of men and devils. The most difficult customer in all the church that I have ever had to deal with, the man who has given me more trouble than all the deacons—and I have had deacons who gave me trouble—who has given me more trouble than all the deaconesses, and all other men and all the women—the man who has given me more trouble than all of them put together I have always found to be the man in the pulpit where I preach! He is an awkward customer. I do not like him a bit. I see him every morning when I shave!

But what are you going to do? There you are. Put up with him, and do the best you can. If you fail as ministers, do not blame anybody else. I do not care how difficult your situation. You may sometimes be forced

in the providence of God to go from one place to another, even as our Lord found it necessary: "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." Some men have appeared to be failures on one field who have been eminently successful somewhere else. You cannot grow all plants in the same soil, and under the same conditions. But if you are true to God He will direct you to the right place, and will give you some seals for your ministry, and will show that He is with you. Do not be like a man whom I once knew, who complained to me of the way he had been treated in one church. He said, "I had a wonderful time there, and there was much blessing. I ought never to have left; in fact, I ought to be there now, and I should be were it not for the fact that there was a considerable majority against me." That does constitute a bit of a handicap, it must be admitted!

But do not fall into Saul's error of trying to lay the responsibility on somebody else. If things are languishing, going down, and there is no fruitage anywhere, then face it like a man; ask God where the trouble is; do not say, "The people did this or that", or, "The Sunday School and choir are at fault." I once said to a dear brother whom I greatly loved, a magnificent man in many ways, when he complained that his deacons did not do certain things, "When you get into the driver's seat and sit behind the wheel, and have somebody at your right side, and the back seat full of people, what do you do? Do you turn around to the back set and say to its occupants, 'Why do you not start the car?' You know you must start it yourself, or get out and let somebody else start it." Do not lay upon other people responsibility which is properly your own. Accept it, with all its implications, as a trust from God, and do the best you can with it. When the sheep and the oxen begin making a noise, remember Professor Brown's parrot of which I told you. I went up to see it one night, and it put on a programme for my benefit. It said, "What's the row What's the row? You make the row your own self, and then ask, What's the row?"

How many people there are like that! They make all the trouble themselves, and then say it is "the people" who did it. When the sheep are heard bleating, and the oxen lowing, say to Samuel, "I am the man who is to blame. I know it—and God knows it."

Samuel asked Saul, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burn offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." That does not mean that we are saved by our doing, but that we are to show we are saved by our doing. It means that any amount of religious observance, and all the preaching and prayer-saying that may engage our energies, have no value before God if there is not a direct relation between the sacrifice we offer and the life we live.

When you become pastors of churches you must be examples to the flock. You have no right to expect any member of your church to do more than you do. You must work as hard as they work; you must give as generously as they give. I do not mean in amount: you may not have it to give. But God requires of every one of us, little or much, the best. He will accept nothing else than that. When we come before our people it must be apparent to them that we not only offer sacrifices, even "the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is,

the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name"—we must, of course, offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ—but there must be evidence in our daily lives of the fact that we are endeavouring, by the grace of His Spirit, to do the will of God from the heart.

There is another important matter in connection with Saul. He admitted he had sinned—*when he was found out!* Many people do that. It is an evidence of grace when you admit it before you are found out. "I have sinned . . . because I feared the people"—still an excuse—"and obeyed their voice. Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord. And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel. And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent. And Samuel said unto him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou."

The Lord can always find somebody to fill your place. Do not let any man suppose he is so important that God cannot do without him. We are pretty small, but if we were a million times bigger than we are we should count but little with God. He can always find a neighbour of ours to fill our place. We ought to walk humbly with God, and thank Him that we have some place in the work of His Kingdom. When you become pastors of churches, do not get the idea that the church cannot do without you. Any church can do without any man. The church cannot do without God, but it can do without a man very easily. It is well always to remember that.

That applies, not only to ministers, but to everybody else. You will find one of the biggest jobs of your life will be to learn how to get on without people. You will have to learn how to get on *with* people, and after a while to learn how to get on *without* people. It will help us if we keep in mind how well God could get on without us. When C. H. Spurgeon died, Dr. A. T. Pierson said, "When God made Spurgeon He broke the mould; there has never been a second." But if God willed so to do He could make a greater preacher than even Spurgeon ever was. He can make a better preacher than you are! Never get the idea that we are important.

Then Saul said this very significant thing: "I have sinned: yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord thy God." What a tragedy that was! Saul said, "I know I have sinned. I have thrown away the greatest opportunity God ever gave to any man. My life is a wretched, tragic, failure. But please do not let the people know it. Honour me before the people. Do not hold me up to contempt before the people."

I can almost imagine there was a look of scorn and of half contempt upon Samuel's face as he turned again with Saul. How many of us might have experienced a world of blessing, and recovered ourselves from all our mistakes, if only we were not so anxious to be honoured before the people! I know some people—I hear of them directly and indirectly—good people, genuine Christians, who would like to come back to Jarvis Street

Church. Some went away from us, and have been sorry ever since they went. They would like to be back, but will not acknowledge they were in the wrong. To retrace your steps and go back again is a fearful humiliation. A wise man or woman, a really gracious soul, in whose mind and conscience and heart the Spirit works, whose intellect is enlightened, whose conscience is quickened, and whose affections are moved—when a genuine believer is thus wrought upon by the Spirit of God he or she will not care anything about being honoured "before the people". He will be so supremely concerned to get right with God that he will suffer any kind of humiliation if only he may come back to God. It is not a little man who says, "I am sorry." It is not the part of a small soul to acknowledge a mistake. To admit that you were wrong yesterday is only to confess that you are a little wiser to-day. When we make mistakes, even as pastors, we must acknowledge it. For you will make mistakes. You may recommend things to your deacons which further consideration will prove to be unwise. Do not say, "I am a leader, and it would never do for me to admit that I made a mistake." Would it not? Not even when you are headed straight for the precipice? If you give wrong counsel, if you see you are on the wrong track, whoever you are, and wherever you are, be man enough to admit it and say, "Let me get right with God and man."

Do you remember what I told you about this shrinking, retiring, modest, man, who was so humble that they had almost to get out a search warrant to introduce him as king? Could anybody believe that a man so modest, so humble, could be so exalted that at last, when the judgment of God was pronounced upon him, he would dare to say, "Please cover it up"? He was as proud as Lucifer: "Honour me before the people."

Agag was brought before Samuel, when he said, "Surely the bitterness of death is past." The "old man" sometimes thinks that. But if you allowed Agag escape yesterday, you had better make an end of him to-day. Give him up to the cross. The "old man" must be crucified. Agag was destroyed.

GREAT BLESSING AT LACHUTE AND DALESVILLE

The letter published below was not written for publication, but we feel sure our readers will appreciate reading it. Mr. Fraser is not only a man of the Book, but he has a very pronounced evangelistic gift, both for public work and for personal dealing. Our readers will greatly rejoice at this news of blessing. Mr. Fraser is Pastor, as many of our readers know, of the Ambassador Baptist Church, Windsor, Ont.

Dalesville, Que., May 7th, 1933

My dear Doctor:

It has been on my mind for the past few days to write you a few lines about the meetings down here at Dalesville and Lachute. When I arrived three weeks ago I found everything in readiness for a real effort. Brother Dyson has been doing a magnificent work on the three fields here since he came. He felt the time was ripe to reap a harvest from the ploughing, planting, harrowing, and watering, which had been going on, especially during the last few months. The results have proved him to be a good husbandman.

Night after night for three weeks now with scarcely an exception we have seen the arm of the Lord made bare in the salvation of souls. The power of the Holy Ghost has been mightily accompanying the word preached, and conviction of

sin has been upon sinners. We have seen them night after night broken down before God, and weeping as they came out confessing their acceptance of Christ as Saviour and Lord. The whole counsel of God has been proclaimed, and already thirty-one have been baptized. To-day Brother Dyson gave the right hand of fellowship to twenty-seven new members. Forty-two have made profession of faith in the three weeks, and we have still a week to go. The work seems to be spreading throughout the whole community, and hardly a day passes that we do not receive word that others are under conviction and enquiring the way of salvation. Brother Goldsworthy publicly acknowledged that he never thought he would live to see the day when many who have already been saved would be converted. We hear this same confession from many others of the most faithful members of the churches, showing that the work has been manifestly the work of the Spirit of God. It would take volumes to tell you of the remarkable conversions. In some cases whole households who previously were entirely out of sympathy with the testimony here, and living godless lives, have been gloriously saved, and are among the trophies of God's grace.

I cannot speak too highly of the work which has been accomplished by Brother Dyson. He has the confidence of the people, and of the whole community; and is held in high esteem for his work's sake. As a pastor, I have never seen his equal. The way in which he has met the problems and numerous difficulties, leading the people steadily forward, and at the same time preserving the unity of the spirit, is inspiring. The three churches are one hundred per cent. with the Union in its testimony and various enterprises,—and that without apology.

I have preached every night for three weeks, with an open-air service each Saturday night, and three services each Sunday. We shall be glad of your continued interest, and of the prayer of your people for this last week, that the blessing of the Lord may be still more mightily manifested in the salvation of yet many more. The unity of the Spirit here is as near perfection as I have ever witnessed it anywhere. Your friends here are legion.

I knew you would be glad to have a line, so am hastily penning this letter that you may be informed of the good news of the blessing we are having.

Affectionately yours, (Signed) WM. FRASER.

P.S.—We have been crowded out night after night, with numbers standing around the walls.—W. F.

NO MODERNISM IN THE OLD CONVENTION!

The Editor of this paper first publicly warned the Denomination of the drift toward Modernism in 1919. The subject of his protest on that occasion was an editorial in *The Canadian Baptist*. From that forward, the war for the Book raged fiercely.

Our charges of Modernism were met, not by argument, but with a flat denial, the Governors of McMaster University repeatedly tacking on to their report to the Convention the Doctrinal Statement from the Trust Deed, declaring their agreement therewith. Having done so, they continued in the class-rooms of the University to teach the very opposite of all the Trust Deed required. We have repeatedly affirmed that they looted a legacy, to quote a phrase from one who writes of similar conduct in the United Church of Canada. But at Convention after Convention we were put in the pillory, denounced as a trouble-maker; and when we had proved our case up to the hilt, and in such a way that our argument would have secured a verdict in any court of law in the Empire, we were greeted with hissing, and called by the ugly word, "liar".

Of course we never told the half of what was going on in McMaster University, and anyone who denies that McMaster University has utterly sold out to the unbelieving philosophy called Modernism must either be a knave or a fool. With Professor Harry L. MacNeill and others of his school established there, the last principle of Evangelical Christianity will soon be forgotten.

From time to time we read of events which are merely symptomatic of the wholesale drift toward Unitarianism. We quote below from *The Toronto Daily Star* of May 6th, 1933. The item is as follows:

TO HAVE 20 ARTISTS ON BRAHMS PROGRAM Centenary Concert To Be Given By Musicians of Many Nationalities.

"The Brahms centenary program at the Unitarian church to-morrow evening—the 100th birthday on May 7—will be a definite link between musical Toronto to-day and musical Vienna of last century—from Luigi von Kunits back to Brahms. The two leading forces in Toronto music—British and Germanic—will be emphasized in the brief remarks of the program director, who will show how these two leading motifs have worked side by side in the development of music here.

"The artists on this all-German program will be Canadian, English, Danish, Bohemian. The music will represent as many aspects of Brahms' work as is possible for one program. Joyce Hornyansky and Scott Malcolm will play one of the cello-piano sonatas. Prof. Count de Bystrice and Simeon Joyce will do the A major piano-violin sonata. Poul Bai, with Weldon Kilburn at the piano will sing two groups of songs. A corps of singers from Yorkminster choir will sing three choruses from the Brahms' Requiem, with D'Alton McLaughlin at the piano as conductor. A brief postlude of short lyric works by all the artists will close the program, which begins at 8 o'clock."

Our readers will observe from the above that a corps of singers from Yorkminster choir (formerly Bloor Street Baptist Church) will sing three choruses from Brahms' Requiem, with D'Alton McLaughlin at the piano as conductor—and all this in a Unitarian church, on a Sunday evening. This corps of singers from Yorkminster presumably sang last Sunday evening in Yorkminster Church at its regular service, and then immediately proceeded to a Unitarian church to give a concert.

It may be some of our Baptist friends will think there was no impropriety in this proceeding, and nothing that could be construed as inconsistent with the profession of evangelical principles. But let us ask a question: What would be said, even by members of the old Convention, by the most "liberal" and "broadminded" of them, should they read in the paper that the choir of Jarvis Street Baptist Church, at the conclusion of the regular Sunday evening service, had gone to assist in a concert held in a Unitarian church?

We cite this, not as proof of the quality of the theology of the Yorkminster pulpit, but merely as a symptom indicating the drift from the old moorings which is so generally characteristic of the Old Convention. A few years ago Rev. Oliver Horsman, who had for a brief period been Pastor of Walmer Road Church before the incumbency of Rev. John MacNeill, came to the Walmer Road pulpit as a summer supply during the Pastor's absence. After having preached, we believe, once, the Deacons of Walmer Road relieved Mr. Horsman of further duty. We published at the time, the correspondence on the subject, and we need not repeat it here; but quite recently the Walmer Road pulpit was occupied by Professor Harry L. MacNeill, of McMaster. Thus Walmer Road strained at a "Horsman", and swallowed a "Harry MacNeill". Who knows but a church's throat becomes enlarged by use?

But these are some of the indications of the Old Convention's drift. And yet, less than ten years ago, when we told the Convention that the cancer of Modernism was at work in the body, we were greeted with cries of, "Liar". Ah, well, Wisdom is justified of her children, and the day will declare it, for "the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."

HOW THE GOSPEL WITNESS CIRCULATES ITSELF

We have often wished we had a little money to advertise THE GOSPEL WITNESS. We feel certain there are thousands of people who would gladly subscribe did they but know about it. It has often been a matter of wonder to us that we should have so many readers in non-English speaking countries such as Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, Switzerland, France, Germany, Italy, Greece, Latvia, and other places.

We publish herewith a postcard which has just come to hand. How this brother in Budapest heard about THE GOSPEL WITNESS we do not know. He must have seen a copy somewhere or heard from others about it. Of course we shall send

(Continued on page 12)

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 8

No. 2

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 22

May 28th, 1933

**SECOND QUARTER
JONATHAN AND DAVID**

Lesson Text: I Samuel, chapters 18 to 20.
Golden Text: "And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." 1 Samuel, 18:1.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

Monday—Song of Solomon 2:8-17.

Tuesday—Ps. 125:1-5.

Wednesday—Is. 43:1-13.

Thursday—I John 3:1-10.

Friday—I John 4:10-21.

Saturday—John 21:15-25.

**I. JONATHAN'S LOVE FOR DAVID
(18:1-4).**

The love of Jonathan for David is one of the outstanding examples of pure disinterested affection, "passing the love of women", (2 Sam. 1:26). Jonathan loved David "as his own soul", (v. 1), and undoubtedly his love was returned as fervently. Such love is somewhat rare between men, and because of its unusual nature it attracts attention, and leads to reflection. The relationship of these two is worthy of consideration, from both the historical and typical viewpoint. Jonathan was the son of the king, and belonged to the highest family in the land, while David, though but a humble shepherd lad, introduced into the service of the royal family, was in himself the Lord's anointed. Typically, therefore, we are presented with the picture of the love of man for the Redeemer, Jesus Christ. God's love for us is manifest through Him, (John 3:16), His love is also expressed, (John 15:9) and our love is desired, (John 21:17). David was the Saviour of his nation, and he had within him the qualities which draw out the love of others, and in a higher sense the same may be said of our Lord. Note what He has done for us, and what He is in Himself. Observe also the characteristics of true love, as unselfish devotion, wholeheartedness, and self-sacrifice. Jonathan gave of his very best to David, and not until we reach that stage can we really claim to be true lovers. His love also withstood the trials of life, with its misunderstandings and evil reports, and therefore gave evidence of its enduring character.

**II. SAUL'S JEALOUSY OF DAVID
(15-30).**

The story of Saul and David makes painful reading, due to the attitude of the former toward his successor. It would have been well for the father if he had followed the example of the son, but he allowed jealousy to eat into his heart, and govern his actions toward the one who was anointed of God, and he suffered the evil consequences thereof. Note the cruel nature of jealousy, (Song of Sol. 8:6), and the foolishness and danger of allowing such a spirit to animate us. Saul's jealousy was aroused through

the women in their song of welcome, attributing greater deeds of valour to David than to him, (vs. 5-9). He attempted to murder David, (vs. 10, 11), then he became afraid of him when he saw the Lord was with him, and that he acted wisely in all his ways, (vs. 12-16). A good life will bear its influence even on enemies, although it may not compel them to desist from their wicked ways. Saul's animosity continued and he concocted a scheme for the ruin of David, in suggesting that he should become his son-in-law, as a reward for valiant behaviour against the enemies of Israel, the underlying expectancy being that he would be slain in battle, (vs. 17-19). On the surface the plan seemed to manifest the favour of the king, and be in the highest interest of David, but the motive governing the scheme sought the downfall, and not the exaltation of the victim. The plans of enemies require careful scrutiny, particularly when they profess to seek our highest welfare. Note our chief enemy the devil, (Matt. 4:3). David was reluctant to receive the high honour from Saul, but eventually agreed to the conditions attached to the acceptance of Michal as his wife, gained a victory over the Philistines, and supplied the necessary present, much to the disappointment of Saul, and the increase of his hatred for the innocent cause of it, (vs. 20-30). Note his punishment in his fear, hatred, unhappiness, wicked thoughts, and loss of esteem, and David's reward, in peace of heart, clear conscience, and high esteem. We reap that which we sow, (Gal. 6:17).

III. SAUL'S ATTEMPT TO MURDER DAVID, (19: 1-24).

Truly the way of transgressors is hard, (Prov. 13:15). Saul chose to think of David as his enemy, and sought his destruction, plotting and planning to accomplish the same, thus disturbing himself, making his life miserable, and preventing the possibility of happiness, either in his heart, or his royal abode. Such an attitude was without justifiable cause, manifested base ingratitude, and was a transgression of law of God and man. David should have been treated kindly, and generously, by the king after that which he had done for the nation, but like many another human saviour of his fellows, and similarly to the Great Saviour of men, he was cast out, and treated as the enemy of his ruler. Note the attitude of the wicked toward our Lord.

Saul's hatred burned within his heart, and he gave command to Jonathan and to all his servants to slay David, (v. 1). Jonathan would not obey such a command, but instead warned David, and advised him to hide, (v. 2), promising to speak to his father about the matter, and inform David of the result, (v. 3). This he did, and appealed to his father on David's behalf, extolling the work of his friend, emphasizing the national consequences of the same, and pointing to the innocence of David respecting evil doing, (vs. 4, 5). The appeal was successful. Saul relented in his evil purpose, and David was restored to the service of the king, (v. 6, 7). In this incidence there is another evidence of the reality of Jonathan's love for David. He braved the anger of his father, put him-

self in danger of misunderstanding, unpleasantness, and personal loss, and took the side of the rejected and unpopular one. Note the conditions necessary to following Christ, (Matt. 16:24), and the reward of faithfulness to Him, (Matt. 10:32).

David's conduct continued to be exemplary, (v. 8), but Saul soon returned to his evil ways, and sought again to slay David by throwing his javelin at him, (v. 9). Fortunately David escaped from the presence of the king, (v. 10), but messengers were sent after him to watch him, and slay him in the morning, (v. 11). Being warned of this by his wife he fled to Ramah the abode of Samuel, his wife, by a ruse, putting off pursuit for some time, thus giving him a better chance of escape, (vs. 11-18). To this place Saul sent his messengers, and when they failed to apprehend the young man, he went himself, but like the others he was overcome by the Spirit of God and prophesied before Samuel, (vs. 19-24). Note his determination in wickedness, the evidence of the fact of his opposition to the will of God, and the power of God manifest in the prophesying.

IV. JONATHAN'S PROTECTION OF DAVID, (20:1-42).

After the incidence in Ramah David returned to Jonathan desirous of finding out the reason for Saul's attitude toward him, (v. 1). Jonathan sought to assure him that his father did not intend to slay him, (v. 2), but David was not convinced of his pacific intentions, and stated his belief that Saul was hiding something from his son, (v. 3). To this Jonathan offered the suggestion that David should state his plan of action, and he would co-operate with him in its prosecution, (v. 4), and the proposal was put forth that Saul should be tested in relation to David's absence from the feast of the new moon, (v. 5), the details being given in the following verses, (vs. 6-24), and thence carried out, (vs. 25-42).

In connection with this test, and the circumstances of its proposal, observe several things. First, the nature of the test. It was simple, effective, not discernible on the part of Saul, and capable of speedy proof. Second, the attitude toward each other of the two friends: "They went out both of them into the field", (v. 11). There Jonathan prefaces his task with an invocation to God, (v. 12), manifesting his devout nature, makes a covenant with the house of David, (v. 16), and outlines the procedure to be followed in making known the result of the test, (vs. 1-22). Note Jonathan's realization of David's future position, and his wisdom in making provision for the protection of his house, also the secrecy attached to the disclosure of his information, (vs. 21, 22, 39). Jonathan ran a grave risk in thus communicating with David, and the latter was in danger in being in the vicinity of the royal residence. Note further the beauty and practical nature of the affectionate relationship existing between these two men, and the typical lesson to be derived therefrom that in love we should serve our Lord, even though such service should mean for us persecution at home and abroad.

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 LEAFLET WITH AN IDEAL

From time to time, we take the liberty of mentioning in these pages *The Missionary Bulletin* because that messenger has a real place in the missionary programme of the Union and is being used of the Lord.

For several weeks, suggestions for presenting missionary news have been given and along with these we would ask that *The Missionary Bulletin* be given consideration, not altogether from its news interest, but from the standpoint of its preparation and field of service.

It has been the purpose of the Bulletin from its first issue to place before the constituency at home and abroad that for which thanksgiving and prayer should be made. Each Bulletin is prepared with some definite object in view. It aims to be—

Inspirational and Interesting
Comforting and Confronting
Enterprising and Emphasizing
Championing and Challenging
Evangelistic and Encompassing

A MISSIONARY AGENCY

A friend from Central Regular Baptist Church, London, tells us about their Missionary Bulletin Board and other churches may like the idea. A request for some missionary pictures was the occasion of our hearing about it, for in reply the following letter came:

"Many thanks for the pictures which I have just received. They are just what

I wanted. I intend to put one each week (along with other missionary items) on our Bulletin Board.

"Last night we put the Wedding Pictures on the Board and so many asked me for copies that I am sure I could use at least twenty-five of each picture.

"And while I am writing I would like to thank you for the fifty copies of *The Missionary Bulletin*. They are splendid and keep us in touch with the many needs for prayer and remind us to give thanks."

THE SEMINARY STUDENTS

Wednesday, April 26th, was Seminary Night at the Mount Pleasant Road Regular Baptist Church. It was a great night for the Church and a happy night for the Seminary students who were able to be in attendance.

The evening was one of many parts. It was a prayer meeting and a praise meeting; a meeting of testimony and a meeting of instruction, and withal a meeting of fellowship providing an opportunity for a social time.

Some twenty-five students from the Seminary were welcomed and Dr. Olive Clark brought a deeply inspirational message speaking of the work of the students and the Seminary's ideals, then Miss Jean Matthews spoke representing the lady students and Mr. Arthur McAsh on behalf of the men. The Seminary Quartette contributed its quota and added much to the enjoyment of the evening. An offering was taken for the

work of the Toronto Baptist Seminary, and refreshments were served by the ladies of the church.

CENTRAL, LONDON

After many months, Rev. James McGinlay, Pastor of Central Regular Baptist Church, London, was permitted to again occupy his pulpit on Sunday evening, May 7th. He was welcomed by a congregation taxing the capacity of the building and the Lord honoured the service with the salvation of souls. As his strength permits, Pastor McGinlay will take up his duties and for the present he expects to take the Sunday evening services.

REV. H. L. DAVEY'S VISITS

Beginning with April 27th, a short itinerary was arranged for our missionary-on-furlough, Rev. H. L. Davey, but that itinerary has been added unto until it promises to extend into the month of June. Mr. Davey has visited Brownsville, London, Niagara Falls, Kitchener and many of the churches in Toronto and he is scheduled for Hespeler, Cannington, Bobcaygeon and Miner's Bay before returning to Ottawa.

On Monday evening, May 8th, the Willowdale Regular Baptist Church held some three hundred and twenty-five people to hear Mr. Davey's message. Guelph and Willowdale must be vieing with one another for first place in a contest to accommodate crowds by the power of expansion.

(Continued from page 10)

THE WITNESS to this brother "free of charge". Doubtless our Baptist brethren in some European countries are having a very difficult time. We count it a great privilege to be able to visit this brother every week, and in some measure to minister to him the word of the Lord, and through him to reach many others.

But who among our readers would like to subscribe to THE GOSPEL WITNESS for this brother? We receive requests similar to his from many parts of the world, and we have never yet failed to put the name of such an one upon our free list; because we look upon THE GOSPEL WITNESS as a missionary enterprise. Can you think of any missionary channel in which \$2.00 would be likely to do more good than in sending THE GOSPEL WITNESS for fifty-two weeks to this Baptist minister of Hungary? If any of our readers feel like helping us to send the paper to him, we shall appreciate it. Of course, we shall send it whether we receive the subscription price or not. Following is a copy of the postcard:

"My dear Dr. Shields: Budapest, Hungary, April 24, 1933

"Excuse me that I trouble you with this card as a stranger, but your fellow-worker in Christ. Our Protestant literature is poor in Hungary, and I should like to read and to study your great paper which is rich in news and good articles.

"May I ask you with deep respect, is it possible to get from you THE GOSPEL WITNESS free of charge? I am sorry I am unable to pay for it. Thank you very much for your Christian love and kindness. God bless you and your great work. I am,

Faithfully yours,

(Signed) IMRE SOMOGYI."

THE EDITOR'S 23rd ANNIVERSARY

Next Sunday will mark the 23rd anniversary of the beginning of the Editor's pastorate in Jarvis Street Baptist Church. We began May 15th, 1910. For the multitude of God's mercies which He has shown us through the years we give Him humble and hearty thanks.

THE 11th BIRTHDAY OF THE GOSPEL WITNESS

Next week will be an anniversary number of THE GOSPEL WITNESS. The first issue appeared May 20th, 1922. Next week we shall try to tell something of the romance of THE GOSPEL WITNESS,—how it has spread itself over the earth. We think we can promise our readers an interesting issue.

SEMINARY CLOSING

The Graduation Exercises of Toronto Baptist Seminary have usually been held on a Thursday evening. This year we shall put this service forward two days and hold it on Tuesday, May 16th, at 8 o'clock. All friends of the Seminary are heartily invited.