

# 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. 12, No. 9

TORONTO, JULY 13, 1933

Whole Number 582

## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"HAPPY—BECAUSE I SHALL ANSWER FOR MYSELF"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, July 9th, 1933

(Stenographically Reported)

"I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews."—Acts 26:2.

For a considerable time now the world generally has been suffering from unemployment; millions of men have been out of work. There are hopeful indications of some turn of the tide, and of better conditions that are soon to come. But I fear that has been—I will not say for some years past, but always perhaps—a chronic condition of the professing church. We hear of commercial and industrial establishments operating with but a fraction of their full complement of workers, and in some instances doors have been closed altogether; but in normal times it is expected that every man who is an employee of the organization, and who expects when payday comes to receive a wage for his labour, will be found working.

It ought to be true of every local Christian church, that every member in that church—not some of them, but every member in that church should be employed. In this church particularly—for that is our responsibility—we ought all to be engaged in the Lord's service. I understand, from the newspapers, that in some cases two churches are uniting for the summer, holding union services. Surely that is not because they are unusually active in the summer, nor because they have changed their religious views, nor because their convictions have been modified: it is only that their diminished congregations may make a somewhat more respectable showing.

But why should any of us cease from our labours as Christians? Is there any justification whatever for a redeemed soul, one who has really passed from death unto life, and has a vital personal experience of the saving grace of God—can there possibly be any justification for such an one failing to bear witness to that fact at any time? Is it not the duty of every one of us, every man and woman, every young man and young woman, every boy and girl—everybody without any exception—

who knows the Lord, is it not an obligation resting upon every one of us constantly to be making Christ known?

It is too commonly assumed that no one can be an effective worker in the Lord's vineyard until he or she has had some special training. I believe in training; the mind must be trained. We do not suddenly, by any miraculous means, acquire a knowledge of the Book. We shall know the Bible only as we study it. And we shall know the fullness of life in Christ Jesus only as we submit to the discipline of the Spirit, and are willingly led forward in the way of the Lord's appointment for us. I would not be understood as discounting the value of mental discipline and thorough biblical training; but there are degrees of efficiency and effectiveness in Christian service. Some will be better able to serve than others. Some will be able to accomplish more than others, even though all be equally yielded to the Spirit of God. There are differences of gifts, as there are differences of operation. Not all are equally qualified, nor equally called to public service. But we are all called to something. As members of the body of Christ we each have our special and divinely-appointed function.

I shall direct your attention this morning to a very simple and fundamental matter, as I speak to you of the value of Christian testimony. The Apostle Paul was a great scholar. He was a scholar before he was converted,—and, in the letter of it at least, he was a biblical scholar before he was converted. He knew the Old Testament. He was a man of great natural capacities, of unusual natural powers. I think he was a man who would have been distinguished in life, and would have challenged attention even as a natural man. He was no ordinary man. He became afterward the chiefest of the apostles. To him were granted such revelations that it was necessary he be given a thorn in the

flesh to keep him humble, lest he should be exalted above measure. He was chosen of God to write a very large part of the New Testament. Our Lord Himself excepted, the Apostle Paul was the greatest theologian who ever lived. I do not suppose any man ever lived who knew more of God ultimately, before he was taken home, than this man.

But this has not to do with any profound theological treatise. Paul here speaks in such a way as any Christian ought to be able to speak. He is brought before a judge, and he is told that he will be permitted to speak for himself. This man for whom God has done so much replies, "I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself."

And I say that every true Christian ought to be happy to have an opportunity to speak for himself, to bear witness to the power of divine grace.

### I.

And this, first of all, because CHRISTIANITY CONSISTS IN A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF THE SAVING GRACE OF GOD. Christianity is *not a theory about a book*. I think we may well have a theory about the Bible. You cannot examine it too carefully, nor analyze it too minutely. You need not be afraid that it will ever suffer from the closest inspection. And as years are added to your experience, and you become more expert in the knowledge of the Book, you will inevitably form, in your own mind, some theory of the Bible.

But I do not speak of that at the moment because one may be a genuine Christian without any theory of the Book at all—unless it be simply this, that it is the word of God. How it came to be, how it was inspired, how it has been providentially preserved, how we now have it in our own hands in a language which we can understand; the young believer may not know. He may have no theory whatever about the inspiration of the Bible, but he may know in his own soul that it is the word of God because it has spoken to him.

We all use the telephone, and yet if it were to get out of order I suppose few of us could repair it. We may know nothing about the science of it, we may have no theory about it, yet we can use it; just as I turn on this light. We may know very little about electricity, and yet make use of it all the time. It will be all the better if we do know something about it, all the better if we have a true theory about it: we shall use it more expertly. But we do not need to remain in the darkness because we do not know how light is produced. A baby can turn the switch and get light. So a babe in Christ may see the light that shines from heaven, and know he has passed from darkness to light, though he may know very little else. But it is a personal experience. The Bible must speak to the individual. God must have spoken to us through the Bible: "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

That is my question of you this morning, What has the Bible told you about yourself, and about God? What experience have you had of the value of its promises? You may not know anything about the mint where money is coined, or the place where notes are engraved and printed, but you know whether the money you have will buy you a meal. Have you put the Bible to the test? Have you had the meal? Do you know that by believing the Word something happened, and that you

became a new creature? Saul of Tarsus heard a voice from heaven calling him by name, and he answered. He knew at that moment that Jesus Christ was not dead but alive, because he heard Him. He had spoken in his soul. Do you know that? Have you had a real experience of the saving grace of God in Christ?

Christianity *does not consist in a theory of the atonement*. I think the mature Christian will almost certainly have a theory of the atonement. He will come ever more clearly to apprehend the truth that somehow God made it possible for Jesus Christ to die in his room and stead. He will know that he is out of debt, that his debt is paid, because he will have the witness of that fact in his own soul. And yet he may not have a very clearly defined theory of the atonement in the beginning.

I should be sorry to ask young believers to wait until they had taken a theological course before they submitted to baptism, before they made confession of their faith in Christ. You may not understand the atonement. I do not suppose the Apostle Paul understood, at the moment of his conversion, all that he afterward knew, all that he so profoundly sets forth in his epistles. That was a matter of later knowledge and development in Christ. But he did know that the death of Christ was indispensable to the remission of his sins. He did know that he was saved by the death and resurrection of Christ. He knew that from the beginning.

Do you know that? Let me put it this way. *Christianity consists in an experience of the atonement*. Whatever theory you may have—you may have a theory, and not be saved. You may know all that the theologians have ever written about the atonement, and not be saved. You may be yourself scientifically and theoretically a believer in the atonement, and yet not be saved. On the other hand, you may have an experience without any elaborate theory: you only know that you have passed from death unto life. Do you know that? Do you know that whatever Christ did when He died and rose again it removed all that estranged you from God, that He took account of your sins, and somehow put them away so that it was possible for you who were by nature alienated from God by wicked works, whose mind was enmity against God—have you found that the atonement effected the removal of every obstacle between your soul and God, so that through Jesus Christ you now have access by one Spirit unto the Father?

Do you know the way to God? Do you know how to pray? Do you pray? Do you get answers to your prayers? Do you know that the Holy Spirit has come because He dwells within you? Have you been made one with God, so that "both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one"? Do you know that? If you do, then you are a Christian.

But do not stop there. By birth we become members of a family, but the baby must grow up and go to school. Babes in Christ must go on to know the Lord. Thus they will come at last to have very clear views of what was accomplished when Jesus Christ died in our behalf. But even though you know nothing of that, the great question is, Have you had that experience of divine grace which assures you this morning that you have passed from death unto life? If you have, then you will be like the Apostle Paul, happy to answer for yourself.

I do not understand the man who calls himself a Christian but who never, under any circumstances, has a testi-

mony. I do not understand the man who, being a Christian, counts it the proper thing to keep his religion to himself. It ought to be the most natural thing in the world to speak of our identity with Christ, our union with Him. I should feel very uncomfortable in the presence of a man who was ashamed to acknowledge his wife, or in that of a woman who was ashamed to acknowledge her husband: they are no more twain, but one. And the believer is married to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Bridegroom of our souls. We are joined to Him in an indissoluble union: He is ours seven days of the week, and we ought always to be able to speak for Him and for ourselves; and we ought to be happy to have the opportunity so to speak. The fact is, all Christianity ever asks is an opportunity to speak for itself.

## II.

EVERY TRUE BELIEVER HAS SOMETHING TO SAY: "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so". I saw an advertisement once of a meeting at which a certain number of men were announced to speak. The advertisement said, "There is a vast difference between the speech of a man who speaks because he is asked to say something, and that of a man who speaks because he has something to say." We are not asked to "say something": we have "something to say".

I remember as a young Christian how I used to cringe when I heard the exhortation so frequently given to young people to "take part" in a meeting. Do not "take part" in any meeting unless you have first become a partaker. If you have a part in Jesus Christ, if you know what He has done for you, and you have had a real experience, then you have "something to say". You may say it stammeringly, you may do violence to the king's English while you say it, you may make a great many blunders, but that is only one phase of your spiritual infancy. You walk fairly well to-day—although if we keep on riding I fear we may forget how to walk! But most of us can walk a little—it is so long since we learned how to walk that we have forgotten all the tumbles we had. We made many mistakes learning to walk—and more in learning to talk. But if we had waited until we could speak with the eloquence of an Apollos we should never have spoken. We tried a syllable at a time, which no one but father and mother could understand—but they were certain it was the finest word that was ever spoken. What a day it was when the baby uttered his first word!

If we are Christians we have something to say. What have you to say? What have you to say for yourself? In this summer time, are we going to pull down the blinds and shut the doors, and advertise that the church is closed for the summer? Some will take a vacation—I am not quite sure whether I shall or not. I may for a change—but what of it? Are we to leave our religion at home? Are we to have no testimony when we are abroad? Are we to be out of work? There are some people who, religiously, are like some mechanics. There is a man who works in a certain factory, and he makes fine furniture. His wife goes down the street and sees a piece of furniture in the store. She finds it is of a certain make, and says to herself, My husband works in that shop; I wonder if he made that? I wish he would mend the leg of that chair at home if he can make such fine furniture as that. When the good man comes home at night his wife says, "I saw some of your work down-

town to-day, and was rather proud of it. I saw a piece of furniture from your shop, and wondered whether you made it?" "Very probably I did," he replies with a tinge of pride. "I wish you would mend that kitchen chair for me." "Oh, my dear, I made what you saw in the factory. I had all kinds of tools and machines for that piece of work. I cannot do it at home"! They say the shoe-maker's children nearly always have their feet on the street! Their father can mend other people's shoes, but not those of his own children.

I wonder if we are like that? We can be very religious at home; we can work in the church, sing in the choir, teach in the Sunday School, but when we go away from home do we check our religion? You have heard the old story of the little girl who, when the household were all packed for the seashore, on the eve of their departure added a sentence of her own to her evening prayer, "Good-bye, Lord; we are going to the seaside to-morrow; we will be back in September."

Is that what our religion is like? Look at the Apostle Paul. He was always about his Master's business publicly and privately. He always had a testimony.

I knew a man in Chicago some years ago who employed a great many men. In one office building he had a staff of nearly four hundred clerks and secretaries—the rest of the building was let to other companies—and once a year he gathered them together for a dinner, and gave each a present in the form of a bonus. At the banquet it was his custom to call upon some of the employees for a speech.

In reporting the incident he said to me, "I was coming down in the elevator one day with an operator who had been in charge of his elevator for twenty-five years, and I said to him, 'John, will you be at the dinner to-night?' 'I expect to be there, sir', John replied. 'Well, I am going to call on you for a speech.' 'No! No! Please do not ask me. There is nothing I could say.' 'Yes, you can say something; I am going to ask you.' 'But I do not know what to say.' 'I will tell you what to say. Just say you have been running this elevator for twenty-five years, and that you never took anybody up that you did not bring down again.'

"That night when I called on John he rose and said, 'I am not a public speaker, but you people all know me. For twenty-five years I have run an elevator in this building, and I have never yet taken anyone up that I have not brought down!' He sat down amidst a tempest of applause. That was all he could say—and he said it. Running an elevator was what he had been doing."

What can you say? The blind man said, "I do not know much, but one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." Do you know beyond all possibility of doubt that Jesus Christ can save, and does save? There is a rule in every court that hearsay evidence is not admissible; the witness must speak for himself. It will not do for you to say, "I will believe in the Christian religion because my father was a Christian." That is well enough as far as it goes: "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us." There are a great many things we may learn from other people, and we may be morally sure that a certain man would not tell us those things if they were not true. For ourselves, hearsay may be of value; but it is of no value in court. It will not do to say, "My father taught me", "My wife told me", "I heard my pastor say", "I read it in a book".

You would soon be called to account. The judge would say, "Tell what you know yourself."

Do you know why a great many churches decline? It is because the preacher in the pulpit and members in the pews are giving hearsay evidence. He may be perfectly orthodox, and may be expounding the principles of the gospel, but he is telling all that he tells as a matter of theory. It is not until we can tell what God has done for us personally that we become effective witnesses. I have read hundreds of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons, and I have noticed that in his sermons again and again—and he was not wont to repeat himself—but frequently you will find that he tells his own experience, how he was saved. Talking to his students one day he said something to this effect: When I want a really irresistible argument, when I want to climax my reasoning, I ram myself into the gun and fire myself off.

That is what Paul did. Put yourself into the gun. Stand up as a witness and say you know Whom you have believed. "But I have read"—"I do not care what you have read: I know." "That is quite unpopular in these days. My minister does not teach me that. He doubts the Bible." "I care not what your minister teaches: I know." "How do you know?" "Because I have proved it. I count myself happy to speak for myself."

That is all any Christian asks, an opportunity to tell his experience. "I had a burden of sin upon my heart and conscience, and I found that the blood of Jesus Christ purges the conscience. My load is gone. I tried a thousand times to do certain things, and failed. But I opened my heart to the Lord Jesus, and I found I was a new man; I have power to do that which is right. I count myself happy to answer for myself."

There is no weapon like that of Christian testimony. Someone asks, "What about the sword of the Spirit? I thought we should use that." The sword of the Spirit is the word of God.

We live in a day when there are many political theorists, men who have all sorts of economic theories. It ought to be easy to make this world a better place if one-thousandth part of what some of the public orators say be true. I could name a dozen men who are now before the public, who, if what they say is true, given a chance, would make us all rich over night, comfortable and happy—and there would be an end to all our pecuniary troubles. But few pay attention to their theories. I do not care what the theory is, politically, whether it be Fascism, Communism, or any other political system, it will do neither harm nor good so long as it is propounded by a nonentity. But when that theory finds its incarnation in a Mussolini, the whole nation wakes up. Why? Because all these principles have been vitalized by a human personality, and now they are not in a book; they are walking on two human feet, they are expressing themselves by a pen in a human hand, they are finding voice through human speech, they are being driven forward by a human will. Then you must take account of these principles.

That is the principle of the Christian religion. What of the Word? It had its effect—and it had its effect in Old Testament times through the influence of men in whose lives its principles were incorporated. But turn to the New Testament and you read, "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod

the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" Turn to John, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God . . . And the Word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

It was when the Word was "made flesh" that God accomplished His purpose chiefly in human life. The Lord Jesus did not say, before He went home to heaven, "I will write a book." It was His will to write a Book, and He did write a Book through His inspired apostles. Do not misunderstand me. We in this place believe that from Genesis to Revelation the Bible is the inspired and infallible word of God. Notwithstanding the Lord Jesus did not say He would write a book, but He did say, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." That is God's way of spreading His gospel, through men and women in whose hearts and lives He has accomplished the miracle of regeneration and transformation, who have had an experience of His grace, who have something to say, and who are happy to have the opportunity of saying it:

Do not go about with a long face. A brother said something to me last night, and it was quite true. I shook hands with him and said, "How are you, Brother So-and-So?" "I am pretty well, but as long as I escape hell I have nothing to complain of." I said, "That is true", and quoted someone as having said that everything short of hell is mercy. But let us dwell upon the other side of that truth. Why speak, as Job would have said, of escaping by the skin of your teeth? Salvation is not only escaping hell: it is gaining heaven; it is being made heirs of glory. Men come to me sometimes saying they have had only a sandwich in the last two or three days. Well, I do not want to board where they board. If we elongate these faces of ours, we shall not commend the religion of the Lord Jesus.

I remember boarding at a place some years ago, and in the home was a daughter, a clever girl, and as caustic as she was clever. She was a sour piece. She would have been good looking if she had not drunk so much metaphorical vinegar. You could see it in her face. One Sunday at lunch she was looking as sour as usual, but on learning the reason I did not blame her very much. I said, "You were at church this morning?" "Yes, I am sorry to say." "Sorry? What was the matter?" (They were very high class people with whom I boarded. They delighted in that euphemism of reduced respectability—they did not take boarders, they "entertained paying guests". I was not a boarder: I was a "paying guest". I was there, with a few others, to help out the family income, for they were having rather a hard time.) The daughter said of the sermon she had heard, "The minister talked about debts, urging the people to pay up, and pay off the church's debts. I have debts enough without going to church to hear about them."

We all have difficulties enough without going to church to get a further load. I see in my mind now a brother. He was a great theologian, and could have been a professor. He used to sit in the front seat. How sad he looked! It was enough to make one ill to look at

him. A friend of mine supplied for me one Sunday, and wrote me an account of the service. "I got along very well, and had a good time and I think the people had also, except for a good brother in the front seat. He seemed to be suffering from severe pain induced by his religion!" It was such a solemn thing, such a melancholy thing, such a gloomy thing, to be a Christian!

The Lord brings people to Himself by the power of His grace, but He works through natural channels supernaturally. He uses winsome personalities to bring people to Himself. Paul had his full share of injustice. If ever a man suffered from the injustice of his fellows it was he. Yet I can see him standing before Agrippa when the king said, "Thou art permitted to speak for thyself." And I am sure he smiled his way to victory as he said, "I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews."

When you go on a holiday, try to look as though you are enjoying it. If you bear testimony for Christ, as I hope you will, do it with a smile. Be happy to answer for yourself. This old world needs a religion of happiness, a happy religion. It is no sign of superior piety to be unable to laugh. We have a prayer meeting every Sunday night in this place, and one brother, fond of offering long prayers, included in his petition on one occasion that the Lord would mercifully preserve the Pastor that evening from saying anything that would make people laugh! I do say things at which people laugh sometimes—I cannot help it; and would say more if I could. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones." The religion of the Lord Jesus ought to make us happy, and it ought to make us happy to speak for ourselves. Let us go out as men and women who have received a fortune.

Old Father Bone, before the days of motor-cars, used to "hitch-hike"—never because he wanted a ride, but because it might afford an opportunity of speaking for the Lord Jesus. One day a man picked him up, and was very curious to know who this man was with a stick and leather bag. "What is your business?" he enquired. "I have an interesting business", replied Father Bone, "I am hunting for heirs." "Hunting for heirs?" "Yes, a Friend of mine has left a great fortune, and in His last will and testament He has named certain people, and many of them do not know anything about it." "That must be an interesting business. I wish somebody would leave me a fortune," said the man. "That is why I asked for a ride," said Mr. Bone. "I wanted to tell you that you are one of the heirs to this great fortune." "I am? Tell me about it." Then Mr. Bone told him of the riches of our inheritance in Christ Jesus; he preached the gospel.

And that is the way to preach the gospel—not as though you were hunting for victims, but for heirs, for somebody to be made happy in the fortune of the Lord Jesus Christ.

How many of you are saved? (Hundreds in the congregation lifted their hands.) How many of you are sorry because you know Christ? Do not say it unless you mean it, but how many have had real joy in the assurance that you "are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God"? (Chorus of "Hallelujah!") Then count yourselves happy to go and tell it!

## SUPPOSE THERE WERE NO JESUS?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, July 9th, 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.

"And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things:

"Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him."—Luke 11:53, 54.

### Prayer before the Sermon

We rejoice, O Lord, that Thou art not a God Who is afar off. We have all gone astray, we have gone to the far country; but we who sometimes were afar off are now made nigh by the blood of Christ. We thank Thee for the removal of every obstacle, that it is now possible for us to use the words of the Psalmist, Bow down Thine ear, O Lord, and hear us; for we are poor and needy. We bless Thee that Thou art within reach of needy souls. This evening we would cry unto thee in a time when Thou mayest be found. We would stretch out hands of faith to touch Thee, that we may but touch the hem of Thy garment. Then shall we all be made perfectly whole.

Look upon this congregation in its varied needs this evening. We cannot pray for each other intelligently, for we do not know what we need. We cannot even pray for ourselves, for we know not what to pray for as we ought. Only as the Spirit of God maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered is the voice of prayer made to be heard on high. May every one within these walls be made aware that the Spirit of God is here this evening. Help us that we may come into personal contact with Thee, make us forgetful of the presence of each other, that we may think only of the presence of God, that His word may come to us with power, with healing and saving grace.

Thus also would we pray for our radio hearers. We thank Thee for the opportunity thus afforded of reaching multitudes who are in need of Thee, many of them Thine own children, aged and infirm, lying upon beds of pain in hospitals and at home, shut off from fellowship with the saints of God. Yet they are able to join in these songs of Zion, and to breathe a fervent, Amen, to the petitions which are presented to Thy throne. May their faith be confirmed! May they be more firmly established upon the rock Christ Jesus!

We pray also for those who do not know Thee, some of them religious people, amiable people, good people, many of them, whose outward lives are without stain or blemish, but whose hearts are not right with God. Lord, save them every one! Make every one to feel his or her need of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus alone. So use this service here and beyond these walls for the honour of Thy name in the salvation of souls, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

Our Lord Jesus had been invited by one of the Pharisees to dine at his house, and He accepted the invitation. The Lord Jesus was separate from sinners, but He was not separated from sinners. He mixed with them; He exemplified the principle of His own prayer when later He prayed for His disciples: I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. We who are Christians cannot choose the time of our exit: we must await the Lord's call. We are here, and we cannot escape the obligations involved in our presence in the world. We must mix with people; we must do business with them. We are not called to a monastic existence, to be separated from our kind. But we must be separate from them in the sense that we must live an entirely different life; and in the

midst of a crooked and perverse generation we must endeavour to shine as lights in the world.

Our Lord contrasted His own life with that of John the Baptist, and likened the people who criticized both of them to children sitting in the marketplace and saying, "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners."

This world was determined to be displeased with Jesus Christ—as it will be displeased with us if we are true to Him. The Pharisee who invited the Lord to be his guest was impolite enough to call attention to what was regarded as a serious omission in social life: he had not washed before dinner. And the Lord took occasion from that criticism to preach—even when He was invited to a social meal.

A minister, of course, must be on duty in the pulpit; he ought to behave himself in a becoming fashion, with proper religious dignity, while he is engaged in his holy calling; but sometimes surely he ought to be off duty! When he goes to the golf club, or somewhere else with friends, he must not be righteous over much! He must not spoil the pleasure of the hour by being too religious. So say some people who have a very mistaken conception of what true religion really is.

I remind you that our Lord Jesus, even on a social occasion, when a guest at dinner, did not hesitate clearly, boldly, to declare the truth to those who were about. I think it would be a safe rule for all of us who are Christians, if we were here and now to resolve that we will never go anywhere, that we will never associate with anyone or with more than one, we will not allow ourselves to be put in any circumstances where it would be inappropriate to bear witness for the Lord Jesus Christ. As a matter of fact, the Lord Jesus was never off duty. And the Christian who is really a partaker of the grace of life should be always about his Master's business—not on Sunday only, but on every other day, all the time, and in all circumstances. His religion ought to be such a joyous experience, his spiritual life so exuberant, that it would become perfectly natural—inevitable indeed—for him to speak of the things which he has made touching the King.

When our Lord thus spoke the lawyers who were His fellow-guests, learned men, especially learned in the law, said unto Him, "Thus saying thou reproachest us also." Then He addressed Himself to them, and taught them concerning righteousness and unrighteousness; and when thus He spoke plainly He unmasked their hypocrisy, He revealed their true attitude, for He knew why He had been invited. He knew what was the motive behind the whole transaction.

"And the Pharisees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things: laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him." That is descriptive of a common attitude toward God and the things of God. Let us look at that for a few minutes this evening.

#### I.

THE ATTITUDE HERE DISCLOSED IS A VERY ACCURATE DESCRIPTION OF THE ATTITUDE OF MIND OF MANY PEOPLE

TOWARD CHRIST AND THE THINGS OF CHRIST. They lie in wait, they eagerly listen, trying to get hold of something upon which they may base an accusation against Christ, and against the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

First of all, these people were *critical of His word*: they sought "to catch something out of his mouth". They were not careless hearers, they were not indifferent to His speech; but they listened with the closest possible attention, not allowing a syllable to escape them. They weighed His words—and all with the intention of criticizing them, of finding fault with them.

That describes a very common attitude toward the Word of God. There are some people who are professing Christians, who live in constant neglect of this holy Book; but there are others who are open antagonists of the Christian religion, who yet cannot be charged with neglect of the Bible. I have on my shelves a great many critical works, and when I turn to them occasionally to hear what the enemy has to say, I confess I am amazed at the industry displayed, staggered almost at the amount of work that has been expended on an examination of the Bible—not to appreciate it, not to get men to lean upon its promises, but with a view to destroying men's faith in it.

Our universities and colleges are manned largely by those who thus employ their time. They are students of the Bible. They examine almost every word microscopically. They know much about the letter of it, but their purpose is to find fault with it.

You will readily recognize that when one assumes an attitude of that sort toward anybody, or any thing, it is very difficult to view the matter impartially and without prejudice. Such an one comes to an examination of his subject with a set bias in his mind, he comes with his own preconceptions, and tries to wrest the Scriptures that he may find fault, he tries to prove that the Bible is no longer worthy of credence, and that they are unlearned and ignorant who submit heart and intellect to the principles and precepts of the Book. Do you not see, dear friends, that human nature, through all the centuries, has been always the same? It does not change. It listens to the word of God with a view to opposing it, and with a desire to reject and repudiate it.

That, I venture to say, is *the attitude of a great many people toward the church*. You will find people to-day who speak of the church, of any church, of organized religion, as though it were the enemy of society. You have not to go to Russia to discover that anti-religious attitude. It is not peculiar to Russia. It is not peculiar to people who have adopted the tenets of Communism or Bolshevism: it is characteristic of the natural mind. It is perhaps somewhat more manifest in places where restraints are withdrawn, and possibly under some circumstances the opposition of men is a little more outspoken, a little bolder; but at heart it is always the same.

Men are glad to find fault with the church. The critics of the church—I do not speak of a particular church, but of that which the popular mind conceives as the church of Jesus Christ. They care little about the distinctive doctrines of this denomination or that: but of that body of people who are looked upon as the representatives of Christ. There are men in all walks of life, who speak "vehemently" in opposition to all organized religion, and with bitterness in their speech, with evident animosity toward all who name the name of Christ. Here it was

in the house of the Pharisee, and still that attitude obtains.

What is true of the church *is true of the individual Christian*. If we are really Christ's we are living in an enemy's country. This vile world is not a friend to grace to help us on to God. The Psalmist prayed, "Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies" or "because of those who observe me". If you are a Christian you are a public character. Everybody observes you; your profession challenges attention. You are a Christian, you are Christ's man or Christ's woman, you profess to be a witness to His saving power; and the attention of many is focussed upon you. You cannot go to dinner without being observed. You cannot go into a restaurant, or drive your motor car, without being criticized. Be impolite on four wheels, and someone will say, "There is one of your professing Christians: he is not even a gentleman on the road." You cannot move anywhere but you will be surrounded by people who are your critics, observing every word you say, weighing each sentence, estimating your speech, to see whether it be with grace seasoned with salt; always "lying in wait," seeking to catch something out of your mouth. That is the attitude of the world.

Why? "*That they might accuse him.*" What lies at the basis of modern criticism of the Bible? A passion for truth? No; the very opposite of that. Devotion of scholarship? By no means. What is it? Just this: "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us—we want none of this limiting, restricting, narrow, religion: we want to live our own lives, to do our own wills, to do our own pleasure; we want to live in a world where no one will say, 'Don't!'"

Why? What is the matter? "*That they might accuse him.*" Wherever you begin in your critical attitude toward these matters, you always ultimately level your protest at Christ Himself. Somebody says, "I want everybody to come back to Christ. Of course I believe the Bible—not all of it. But I think if we all came to Christ that would solve our difficulties"—and some profound scholar takes a passage which this Bible says fell from the lips of Christ, and says, "That is what we want, to get back to Christ."

We are shut up to the Bible for everything we know about Christ. If the Book be not true, what do we know about Christ? If Christ is infallible, the Bible is true. If Jesus Christ be indeed God Incarnate, Himself the truth, then every word of this Book is true. But why is it that men criticize the Bible? Poor Book! I suppose the Bible I have in my hand has a morocco cover, and I believe the paper is India paper. But it is not paper and ink that men hate; it is not the abstract truth that men are opposed to. All that is but an expression of the native antagonism of the human heart toward the person of a holy God; and because Jesus Christ is the express image of His person, and the effulgence of His glory, men, until they have repented of their sins, by their sins are filled with fear of His presence, and hate the very name that brings conviction to their souls. It is because men want to accuse *Him* that they criticize the Bible.

You say, "But that is not true of our great scholars in the universities?" Yes! Ten thousand times, yes! That is the philosophy of the destructive higher criticism. It is a native opposition to God. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." It will not help if you invite Jesus Christ to dinner. It will not mitigate your offence if you ask the bishop to bless your banquet. Bring your Pharisees together if you like, all denominations if you like, and have some notable among them say grace—they are all there unchanged of heart; they are all "laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him."

It is not complimentary to the church when the world approves of it. In the measure in which this or any other church truly, faithfully, represents Jesus Christ, in that measure it will be opposed, as He was opposed. Our Lord told us that: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." He promised us that; He predicted that we should all be persecuted. When any church can exist in any city—yes, in Toronto,—I make no apology for saying it, I care not what the name of the church, Baptist, United, Presbyterian, Anglican, or whatnot—when any church that bears the name of Jesus Christ can exist in any community without calling down upon itself the animosity of an ungodly world, it is because that church is compromising, and is not bearing witness against the sins of the world.

Our Lord Jesus spoke to these religious people, and tore the mask from their profession, pronouncing woe upon them. The Bible is a most uncomfortable guest sometimes. Often it has many severe things to say. I suppose we should all like to discredit the people who discredit us. That is why men, untouched by the Spirit of God, are in opposition to the Word of God, to any spiritual interpretation of the Word, to any spiritual exemplification of it in an organization called the church. And equally is it true of an individual who, by God's grace, adorns the doctrine of God's grace in all things. Try it! Accept an invitation to the Pharisee's house, and be hailed as a Christian—and see what will happen to you before you get away.

"*That they might accuse him.*" *You cannot find fault with the Bible without finding fault with Christ.* You cannot discredit the Bible without discrediting Christ. You cannot discredit any true church, made up of regenerated people, without bringing reproach upon the name of Christ. You cannot hold up to contempt an individual Christian who is genuinely the Lord's, without discrediting the Lord Whom he professes to serve. He and His Father are one, and He has identified Himself with His people, and with His Word. They are all one. That, I say, is the common attitude.

## II.

Let me pause to ask you to consider for a moment WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE PHARISEES SHOULD SUCCEED? What if the Pharisees had succeeded in catching some word from Christ which they could have shown to be contradictory of something else that he had said? In other words, what would have happened could they have disproved the truth of anything He said? That would have been a serious situation.

Suppose our critical friends were to succeed by their disparagement of the Bible, in removing it from the

confidence of men and women everywhere? Suppose it were possible so to discredit the Bible (Thank God it is not), that no one would buy one, and no one would read one, and no one would preach from it; until it should be removed from our law courts, and no one would take the Bible as the word of God and swear to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth"? Suppose there were no Bible, no message from Heaven, no communication with the Skies? Every man's guess in respect to the things of the future would be just as good as anybody else's guess—and all a guess; no certitude anywhere. What would happen?

I sometimes wonder if the enemies of the truth have really carefully thought of what would follow were they successful in their project? Surely we see enough of it to-day, but if they could really succeed, if God the Holy Ghost were not with us taking care of His word, as Jesus Christ was able to take care of His speech in the house of the Pharisee, what would follow? What sort of a world would it be? Talk about the decline of stocks and bonds! If it were possible to take away this Book, the foundation of all that is of value in our civilization, and leave men without any word from God, society would crumble.

What if they should succeed in discrediting the church? There are some people who read of the alleged doings in Russia. I suppose the reports are true, I do not know. I am always afraid to pronounce upon a matter concerning which I am conscious of a prejudice in my own mind, because I know how easy it is to be mistaken, or to entertain an exaggerated view. But assuming it to be true that desecration of holy places has taken place throughout the land, a wholesale desecration bordering on sacrilege? It shocks the sensibilities of even irreligious people. Some man will say, "I do not go to church, but I suppose, in spite of all its faults, in spite of the criticism and denunciation of other people as well of myself, I suppose if we had no churches life would be more difficult." Would you like to live in a city without a church? Would you like to live in a place where the voice of prayer never ascends to Heaven, and where the testimony of the gospel is never heard?

Perhaps you are doing as they do in Russia. What if you were to succeed? What if people by the thousand, by tens of thousands, by hundreds of thousands, in this city could be persuaded to take up the attitude of the people described in the text and say, "I am not going to church. I should like to see all the church buildings destroyed or turned to something other than places of prayer?" Suppose hundreds of thousands of people were to take that attitude, how shocking it would be! Suppose our critical friends—and it is no fault of some of them that they have not succeeded—I boldly declare, while I mention no names, that there are theological professors whose every breath, every utterance, tends to destroy the faith of men in Jesus Christ as the Son of God: suppose they were to succeed? What then?

I wonder did you ever read a book entitled, "When It Was Dark"? I read it many years ago. The scene was laid in England. Conspicuous among the characters in the book, there was an old minister, as I recall, a clergyman of the Church of England, a very devout man; and he had a curate. There was also a third man in the story, a man of great wealth who was

antagonistic toward religion. The old minister was wont to tell his colleague that he always felt uncomfortable in that man's presence, for he felt in his soul that he was an enemy of the cross of Christ.

I cannot tell you the whole story, it would take too long, but this was the culmination of it. There came news to London that the holy sepulchre had at last been discovered, and that within men had found, unmistakably, the body of Jesus of Nazareth, and inscriptions upon the trunk which proved beyond peradventure that what the soldiers had said was true, that His disciples came at night and took the body of Jesus away; they had stolen the body of the Lord Jesus, and buried it elsewhere, concealing the fact, and then published the story of His resurrection. Now after all the centuries men had found the sepulchre, and had found the remains of the Lord Jesus, unmistakably the body of the Lord, which was said to prove that He did not rise from the dead. There was no Easter, there was no value in the cross, there was no visitation from Heaven. The story of the star of Bethlehem was all a hoax. The foundation of the Christian religion was entirely destroyed. The whole world was rocked, as a section of it is rocked by an earthquake, by the terrible news. The report was verified by newspaper correspondents. The inscriptions were examined by men who were renowned for their accurate scholarship. There was no doubt about it: there was no Jesus!

But somebody was suspicious, and ultimately discovered that this man of great wealth had employed scholars to prepare the sepulchre, to cut the inscriptions, to prepare the whole series of deceptions, in order to discredit the Christian religion. But before his despicable plot was revealed, civilization was shaken to its foundations. Banks closed, governments failed, iniquity broke out everywhere. There was no voice from Heaven, and no responsibility to God. We were all going down to death, so let us eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die. But when it was discovered to be a hoax, and when it was discovered who was responsible for the terrible tale, countless thousands surrounded the house where the man was in hiding in London, and it required an army to save the life of the man who had so shocked the world.

If Jesus and the Bible were discredited, where should we be? When that heartbroken mother sends for me saying that her child is dying, I must leave my Bible at home, and say to her, "I am sorry. Once I had a message, but I have none now. Once we sang, "Jerusalem the Golden", but we know nothing about it now. Once we used to sing, "There's a land that is fairer than day", but we have no prospect now. Once we used to sing,

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds

In a believer's ear!

It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,

And drives away his fear",

but alas! mother, there is no Jesus. He did not come to earth. He was born as other men, and died, but did not rise again. We are all mistaken. The scholars have proved that it is not true, and you will have to let your little child go out into the darkness—and follow him into the darkness, for we know nothing of life beyond the grave."

How horrible it would be if we were compelled to

such a confession! He is no friend of mine who would rob me of my Lord Jesus Christ, who would leave me without a Saviour. That would leave me without any power that could rectify the past. How terrible a world this would be if there were no Lord Jesus Christ! And yet to all that, men are moving to seek to "catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him".

### III.

Let me commend to you A MORE EXCELLENT WAY. I beg of you, by all means, invite Him to your home as Simon did—and to your heart as well. Let Him talk to you, and seek to catch something out of *His* mouth. His Word is worth listening to. The gracious words which proceed from the lips of Incarnate Deity are worth pondering.

Let me tell you what to do: catch something out of His mouth, *that it may accuse you*. When you are ill you consult your doctor, and ask him what is wrong with you. Do you want him to say, "Nothing"? If you had not believed that there was something wrong you would not have gone to him. You know there is something the matter with you, and you consult your doctor, saying, "Tell me the bald facts of the case. I am not a child; tell me frankly what is the matter with me."

I recommend you to go to the Lord Jesus in the same attitude—not that you may accuse Him; let Him accuse you. Ask Him what is the matter with you, and He will tell you. "Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe the mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God . . . Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them—Woe unto you religious people who make clean the outside of the cup and platter, whose religion consists in forms and ceremonies and the externals of life, but never touch heart and conscience." Let the Bible speak to you, and tell you what true religion is, that it involves a miracle, an act of regeneration on the part of the Spirit of God. Beg Him to tell you the worst. Let Him tell you what your sin is.

I know your polite preacher will say, "Yes; we are morally eccentric; we are a little off centre. You must not expect perfection. We are weak and frail, but not bad after all. And beside, that is part of the evolutionary process. If you could look forward a million years you would see that all this will be sloughed off." Do not listen to that nonsense. Go to the one Physician Who will tell you that you are sick—and "sick unto death"; that sin has the germ of death in it; that if the fires of hell were extinguished, there is enough sin in every one of us to light them again. Let Him accuse you. Let the Bible accuse you. Use it as a mirror; look into it. His word is the perfect law of liberty; behold yourself in it. Talk about having your face "lifted"! You need something lifted! See yourself as you are before God. We are an ugly crowd morally. There is nothing of the divine image in us naturally. Look in the glass and see for yourself. You may find an ecclesiastical or ministerial photographer who will take the ugliest picture the camera can produce, touch it up, and say, "There you are." But it could not be beautiful and faithfully represent you!

Look into this perfect law of liberty; but do not go away and forget what manner of man you are.

There is a way of becoming beautiful: "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." It is possible to get a new robe from Him. Robed in His righteousness we may walk in the presence of the angels unashamed, unabashed. Let the Bible accuse you that you may thereafter be arrayed in garments more beautiful than Solomon's glorious apparel.

Listen for the word of pardon and acquittal. Seek to catch something out of His mouth. Listen until you hear Him say, "Thy sins which are many are all forgiven; go and sin no more." The woman who heard Jesus Christ say that was no critic. She could have repeated that saying as long as she lived. I have no doubt she told hundreds of people, and I dare say some of them said, "Tell us over again: what did the divine Master say?" "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven; go and sin no more."

Can you say it? "I am sure I listened, and I caught every word He said. They burned themselves into my soul, and I can never forget it for time or eternity." Then though the tempter suggests a doubt, you will turn his fiery dart with the shield of faith. You cannot destroy the faith of a redeemed soul. They tried it with the man whose eyes had been opened. "What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet." "Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner." "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." The doctors of the law tried to rule him out of court, and the man who had never looked upon a flower, nor seen the sun, nor read a book, answered like a philosopher, "Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.—Answer that!" They could not answer it. You cannot make any headway with the man whose heart has heard the voice of the Spirit of grace in this Book, speaking pardon and peace. When once one hears the Good Shepherd say, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand," it puts an end to carping criticism.

Listen to the word that promises power. Go and talk with Peter. Listen to that vainglorious man say, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." Then ask Peter what the Lord meant when He said, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me . . . in Jerusalem." "That is not true, is it, Peter?" I think Peter would say, "Did you ever hear of Pentecost? To the praise of God I say it, Did you ever hear of the man who preached at Pentecost? Have you heard of the three thousand souls who were saved? Did you see Annas and Caiaphas in the congregation? And did you hear this same preacher say, 'Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God

(Continued on page 12)

**Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf**

Vol. 8

No. 3

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 31

July 30th, 1933

**THIRD QUARTER****THE GREATNESS OF DAVID**

Lesson Text: II Samuel 8 to 10; I Chron. 18, 19.

Golden Text: "And David reigned over all Israel: and David executed judgment and justice unto all his people." II Samuel 8:15.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS:**

Monday—Deut. 31:1-8.

Tuesday—Ps. 20:1-9.

Wednesday—Gen. 15:7-21.

Thursday—Mark 12:1-12.

Friday—John 8:1-11.

Saturday—Rom. 5:1-11.

**I. DAVID'S VICTORIES (II Sam. 8; I Chron. 18).**

The greatness of David is brought vividly before us in this section of our lesson in the record of his victories over his enemies. In previous lessons we have noticed the somewhat precarious position of the Israelites in their location in the midst of enemies. They were virtually surrounded with them, and lived in constant danger from their attacks. It was not for them to live at all times peaceably under their vines and fig trees. They were compelled to be ever on the alert prepared to defend their land from invasion or advance into the territory of the foe. When they were obedient unto God they had nothing to fear but disobedience brought with it, sooner or later, the humiliation of submission to their opponents. Such a position is typically illustrative of the condition of the Christian in the spiritual realm. He is surrounded with enemies who are seeking in every way to overcome him, and with whom he must engage in conflict if he desires to live for God, (Eph. 6:11, 12). To gain the victory over them he must be fully armed, and remain alert at all times, (Eph. 6:13-18). He is not alone in this conflict, however, for just as in the time of our lesson the Israelites fought under the command of their great leader David, so he engages in conflict under the leadership of the great Son of David, the Lord Jesus Christ. Note the fact of the spiritual conflict, the weapons of spiritual warfare (2 Cor. 10:3, 4), the necessity for spiritual power and aggression, (Acts 4:29-31), also for keen watchfulness, (I Thess. 5:6), and the blessed consciousness of the certainty of victory here and hereafter, (Rom. 6:14; I Cor. 15:57).

The victories of David recorded in this section were evidently of a most complete nature, effectively subduing the enemies opposed to him. Such results were not arrived at merely by the power and strategy of David, but were accomplished by the might and wisdom of God manifest through human instrumentality. The Lord was fighting for and with His

people. This made victory certain. It may further be observed that these victories were not gained without hard fighting. In the spiritual realm there are many who expect victories to be gained without their participation in the conflict. Like the armchair, and corner stone strategists of the last war, they freely criticize the active participants, but they themselves will not lift a finger to help. Such an attitude is far from helpful, and never aids in the defeat of the foe. God expects works as well as faith, (James 2:26). Note also the fearlessness of David and his men, the location of their enemies, (vs. 1-15), the extent of Israelitish territory, (vs. 6, 14), the dedication of the trophies unto the Lord, (v. 11), the result of the victories, (v. 13), and the first home government of the king, (v. 15). The lesson may profitably be studied from the standpoint of David, the type of our Lord Jesus Christ, noting, among other things in this respect, his relationship to his people, his remarkable power, wisdom, and fearlessness, his clear, decisive leadership, and the overwhelming success attendant upon the carrying out of his plans. The aggressiveness, and expansion of territory of the king may also be mentioned.

**II. DAVID'S KINDNESS, (II Sam. 9).**

We have before noticed the lack of spitefulness in David's disposition, and we are again made aware of this as we study his attitude toward the remaining members of the house of Saul. He had suffered much from the head of this house, but he held no grudge against anyone on account of this. He sought, instead, to do good unto those who had done evil unto him, thus heaping coals of fire upon their heads, (Prov. 25:21, 22; Rom. 12:20), and gaining the best kind of victory over them. Emphasis should be laid upon the necessity for the adoption of the right attitude toward those who treat us spitefully, (Matt. 5:44). Saul and his three sons had departed this life, (I Sam. 31:6), but David, desiring to show kindness to this family, made enquiry as to whether there were any members of it left, (v. 1), and learning that there was a son of Jonathan, named Mephibosheth still living, (vs. 2-4), he sent for him, gave him land, and established him in his own household, (vs. 5-13).

Several precious lessons of a typical nature may be derived from this incident respecting Christ and the sinner, David being typical of our Lord, and Mephibosheth of the sinner found by Him. We notice, first, that the initiative in the finding of Saul's son was taken by the king, and in salvation our Lord takes the first step. His own are chosen in His eternal counsel, (Eph. 1:4), sought by Him in his great plan of redemption, (Luke 19:10), and brought to Him through the power of the Holy Spirit, (John 16:7-11), and manifest generally through His servants, (Acts 1:8). It is quite clear that salvation is of God, the sinner's part is his response to this divine appeal. This typifies too, and magnifies the grace of God, the wonders of which we shall never fully understand. Mephibosheth wondered why David should consider him so favourably. (v. 8), and each child of God must have similar

thoughts regarding the divine choice of himself, for all are so unworthy of the bestowment of such favour. Throughout eternity we shall never cease praising God for His grace manifested toward us.

The purpose of David in seeking for the members of Saul's family is manifest in the blessing bestowed upon Mephibosheth as well as stated in the first enquiry. He wanted to show them kindness, and to Mephibosheth he restored all the lands of Saul, (v. 9), and invited him to eat bread always at his table, (v. 10). The king was thus giving of his very best, the son of Jonathan had no claim upon him, yet he blessed him to the utmost of his ability. He accepted him as a member of his family in addition to restoring to him the land of his fathers. The child of God has become what that term implies, a member of God's family, (John 1:12), and he is blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, (Eph. 1:3). The love and mercy of God are manifest in His wondrous gracious attitude. The surprise is that there should be any hesitancy on the part of the sinner to respond to the call of God. The helpless condition of Mephibosheth is also worthy of consideration portraying, as it does, the state of the sinner before God. He was lame in both his feet, and consequently unable to walk. The sinner is affected in every part of his body, (Rom. 3:12-18). Note the nature and way of salvation, and the necessity for the same.

**III. DAVID'S FURTHER VICTORIES, (II Sam. 10; I Chron. 19).**

Kindness is not always rewarded by a gracious response. There are times when it is misunderstood, and its offer is rejected. It occurred thus in David's approach to Hanun the king of Ammon. David sent his servants to comfort that king on the death of his father, but his gesture was misunderstood by the princes of Ammon, who attributed an ulterior motive to the act and influenced the king in rejecting in a very mean manner the kindness proffered (vs. 1, 4). It is difficult at times to judge of the motive inspiring even an outwardly kind act, but whether we are favourably impressed or not, we should always act decently about the matter, and manifest a courteous attitude toward the one who approaches us. Hanun's attitude was small, aggravating, foolish, evil, uncalled for, unworthy, due to misjudgment of motive, to the testimony of evil counselors, and fatal to himself and his country. Warning should be given concerning those who seek to influence others by stirring up their prejudices.

The insult of the Ammonites was resented by David, and for the sake of his countrymen he quickly punished it by sending an army against them which gained a complete victory over them and their Syrian allies, (vs. 5-19). Note the counsel of Joab, (v. 12), the religious patriotic feeling underlying it, and its probable effect on the people as an incentive to brave conduct in face of the enemy. Observe also the spiritual lessons relative to the attitude of the world toward the Lord's kindness, the manner in which many of His servants have been treated, and the judgment which will fall upon the disobedient.

# 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.

## PICTURES AGAIN

The Union Office has been without pictures of baby Daniel for several weeks, and during that time there were many requests for them. We are happy to announce that the pictures have arrived and those who have been disappointed on other occasions should order without delay as when this supply is exhausted we do not anticipate placing another order. The pictures in post card size are 10c each.

Another order for the post cards on which is depicted the first Christian Wedding on the Geah Bar Zondo Station, Liberia, makes it possible for us to supply requests. These pictures are sold at 5c each.

## A SKETCH MAP

The interesting map as sketched by Rev. Gordon D. Mellish has been reproduced, and proof copies may be obtained upon application at the Union Office at cost—printing, postage and paper, about 5c each. The Map is one of the Republic of Liberia. It shows the location of the Regular Baptist Mission Stations, other Missions, and the towns visited on the recent trek.

## THE MISSIONARY BULLETIN

It was regretted that the June issue of the Bulletin had to be omitted, but the combined edition which will serve for the months of June and July promises to be interesting. It will be a departure from the regular issues, and we trust that the Lord will very definitely bless it.

## A WEDDING OF INTEREST

Recently there was solemnized in the Regular Baptist Church (Ottawa) a wedding of more than local interest for the Pastor, Mr. Roy Hisey, was united in marriage to Miss Katherine Lean.

Mr. Hisey is a graduate of the Toronto Baptist Seminary, son of Mrs. Hisey, and the late Mr. Samuel Hisey of Stouffville, Ontario. He is well-known as one of the Hisey Brothers, and among Regular Baptists of Ontario and Quebec for his work's sake. On the St. Amedee field under his ministry the Lord gave blessing, and established year-round services while a new church was erected at The Gore. Mr. Hisey begins his pastorate at Westboro with a helpmeet, and it seemed very appropriate that his friend and fellow-labourer in the Lord's work, Rev. James Hall, should be the officiating minister. Pray that the Lord will abundantly bless this young couple and use them mightily at Westboro in His service.

## NEW FIELDS OF LABOUR

From time to time it has been the pleasure of the Editor to report the progress being made at Belleville under the ministry of Pastor John Armstrong, who for the past year has carried on the work in that city established by Rev. H. E. Buchner, but nothing has been said about the work carried on at Sydney, in a country community about nine miles north of Belleville. In this place a service is held each Sunday afternoon and on Thursday evening there is a Bible Study Class. The attendance at the Sydney meetings have been gratifying and last Sunday when Rev. W. E. Atkinson visited the Trenton and Belleville churches and also spoke at the afternoon service, at Sydney, there were thirty-three who gathered there. Pray for these outlying works carried on with but one purpose, the glory of God.

At Silver Lake some miles from Bobcaygeon there is being carried on by Rev. M. B. Gillion another Sunday School where formerly there was no place for the children and adults to go. Much interest has been shown and prayer is asked for this endeavour also.

## EMMANUEL, VERDUN

God's blessing is resting upon the preaching of the Word at Emmanuel and a deep spirit of conviction seems to be settling down upon the people. The church is looking forward to the coming of Professor Whitcombe and the Seminary Four who commence services with the church on June 11th.

Prayers of all interested that a time of blessing may be experienced are asked.

## MORE PICTURES AVAILABLE

The Office has been out of copies of Danny's picture for some weeks but will now have them for the supply of requests at the usual rate of 10c each. Those that have been on order for some time will be forwarded without delay and if any should be overlooked may we ask that they notify us immediately.

The pictures of the First Christian Wedding at Geah Bar Zondo Station are also in hand now and can be had at 5c each.

Copies of the Liberian map as sketched by Rev. Gordon Mellish and showing the route taken by the missionaries on their trips of exploration will shortly be available either in photostatic proof form, or on lantern slide. No Sunday School Class, Young People's Society, or Missionary Meeting interested in Liberia should be without one and while all information necessary is not in hand we believe these can be supplied at a very nominal cost. The map with the story of the trip taken by Rev. and Mrs. Mellish and Miss Stacey, as published in these pages some weeks ago, is a very interesting study.

## HISTORY OF THE LIBERIAN WORK

It has been many months since the last article giving information covering the establishment in Liberia of the Union's missionary endeavour appeared. It seemed to us that such a story as we have continually becomes more interesting and might well be called, "The Acts of the Librarian Missionaries" for it is a record ever growing.

In our former series we traced the establishment of the Mission at New Cess to the place where Mrs. Davey began her work among the women. Something of the beginning of the medical work was told and we have scanned the school work with interested eyes, but even this survey has not acquainted us with that which is a missionary's portion and always attends the establishment of a new Station. We have spent little time in clearing the land, erecting the buildings necessary and making gardens.

## Isolation

From August, 1929, when Mrs. Davey arrived in Liberia, until January, 1931, our first lady missionary did not see another white woman. It was a time of real isolation for her and greatly was her heart cheered by the word that Mr. and Mrs. Mellish and Miss Lane were being sent forward to assist in the work.

## Appointing New Missionaries

As we are well aware, at the Convention held in the Central Regular Baptist Church, London, in October, 1930, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon D. Mellish and Miss Minnie Lane were accepted as missionaries to Liberia. A month later, November 28th, 1930, they set sail from Montreal. They reached the land toward which their eyes had been set for many days, the first day of the new year.

## The New Country

Possibly we need to refresh our minds concerning events following the new missionaries' welcome at the New Cess Station, or it might be well to "arrive with them". The evening shadows were closing in when the good ship "Edward Blyden" anchored outside Grand Bassa and the three missionaries who had been her passengers deposited on the Beach in the regulation manner via the surf boats and on the shoulders of the black boys. Owing to the fact that arrival of boats at any time is not according to schedule, Mr. and Mrs. Davey did not reach the Beach in time to meet the missionaries, but the agent of the Paterson-Zochonis Company at Grand Bassa kindly cared for them until Mr. and Mrs. Davey arrived the next day and the welcome of welcomes took place.

To record the impressions of the representatives of the Union who for the first time set foot in Africa and were introduced to the work which had been built-up New Cess would be impossible and we shall pass on to the time when

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### SUPPOSE THERE WERE NO JESUS?

(Continued from page 10)

hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.' Do you know who said that? I said it. I, the coward, the contemptible coward, who denied his Lord. But I listened after that, I listened until He said, 'Ye shall receive power.'" Peter had answered the Lord, in effect, "Let it come, Lord." And it came. When one has had Peter's experience of the gracious power of God, criticism ceases as creatures of the night flee from the morning sun.

I beg of you just now to listen to the whisper of the Spirit of God. Let Him promise you salvation. Go from this place in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie promises. Put yourself under His direction. Let Him guide you for the rest of your life. He will lead you on and on along the shining track, above the clouds, beyond the chambers of the sun, until the gates of pearl swing open, and you shall be for ever with the Lord.

Let us pray:

We thank Thee, O God, for a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God. We thank Thee for His faithfulness, but equally we thank Thee for His mercy. Had

He been faithful without mercy, or merciful without faithfulness, we must have perished. Oh Thou great Saviour, we would listen to Thee! We do desire to hear a voice calling from out the Skies, even as Saul of Tarsus heard it,—the whisper of Thy Spirit through the Word, saying to each of us, I am Jesus. Introduce Thyself, Thou sovereign Saviour, to every unconverted person within these walls, and to every unconverted person who has heard this message by radio; and thus glorify Thyself, for Thy name's sake, Amen.

### THE EDITOR GOES ON VACATION

The Editor is not often away from his desk, but will be away after next week's issue until the second week in September. The Deacons of Jarvis Street Church have very kindly urged the Pastor to take a vacation, and he expects to sail from Montreal July 21st for England. He may accept a few preaching appointments while in the Old Land, but at this writing no such appointments have been made.

If any of the readers of THE GOSPEL WITNESS in Great Britain or Ireland should see an announcement of the Editor's preaching anywhere within reach of them he would count it a great pleasure to have the opportunity of meeting them. His address while in England will be: c/o Rev. Percy Hicks, Editor of The Christian Herald, 8 Tudor St., London, England.

### THE UNION BAPTIST WITNESS

(Continued from page 11)

the establishment of another Station became the burden upon the hearts of Mr. and Mrs. Davey and those who later came to the field.

#### Possessing the Land

The historic trek made by Mr. and Mrs. Davey and Mr. Gordon Mellish convinced them that a Mission Station in the Geah Bar Zondo district would serve a large field and that there should be no delay in possessing that portion of the country for the extension of the work. Back at the New Cess Station the missionaries conferred and we are told that each of our missionaries coveted the opportunity of opening up a Station there. Each missionary was ready to go, but after prayer it was decided that

Mr. and Mrs. Mellish should go forward and that Miss Lane should remain at New Cess with Mr. and Mrs. Davey to assist in the work there.

#### Geah Bar Zondo Station

The story of the establishment of the Geah Bar Zondo Station is in itself worthy of much consideration. As at New Cess, land had to be cleared, negotiations had to be made with the Government and with the Chiefs of the District.

We must have some idea of life in Africa and the character of its people to appreciate in any small way what it meant for these two new and inexperienced missionaries to enter upon work in the bush country. They had to live with a people new to them, erect buildings and depend upon unreliable and sometimes treacherous interpreters and they had to live in an open house and put up with

many inconveniences during that time. After all the trying experiences of those first days, one finds in the Geah Bar Zondo District a well established work of which any Missionary Society might be proud. A large part of the land has been cleared, gardens have been planted, and all presents a pleasing appearance. To come upon the Station with its several buildings and become acquainted with life there where school work is carried forward systematically with but one object, to attend the many services and see the interest manifested, must be gratifying.

From April, 1931, to July, 1933, a little more than two years, there have been great things accomplished by the missionaries, through His power, at the interior Station for souls have been saved and a little church with ten members testifies to the glorious accomplishment.

(To be continued)

## A GOOD ADVERTISEMENT

We recently saw an advertisement of a trust company which read, "Make your will—and live." Doubtless allusion was made to the fact that many people seem to fancy that making a will is rather an indication of the approach of the end. The truth is, that when one has made a will he may live longer after making it than he did before—and may, indeed, have to make many wills before the end. But it is always well to have your will made.

You may not have much money to leave, but perhaps you have a little that you would like to feel would be employed in preaching the gospel after you are gone. We can suggest no more profitable investment than for you to leave something to Toronto Baptist Seminary. This Seminary is dedicated to the principle that the Bible is the inspired and infallible word of God. Students are trained for pastoral and missionary work at home and abroad. While the Seminary is about six years old it already has graduates preaching the gospel in Central America, Jamaica, China, Africa, Palestine, Ireland, the United States, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec.

Make your will to-day. Or, if you have already made it, add a codicil leaving something to Toronto Baptist Seminary. And in order that there may be no mistake, stipulate that what you leave is for "Toronto Baptist Seminary, connected with Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto."