

# The Gospel Witness

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

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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

**HALLELUJAH! SAVED FOREVER!**

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, January 21st, 1934.

(Stenographically Reported)

Broadcast over CFRB, 690 k.c., as is every Sunday evening service of Jarvis Street Church, from 7 to 9 o'clock, Eastern Standard Time.

"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.

"My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."—John 10:27-29.

Prayer by Rev. W. S. Whitcombe

Once again, O Lord, we come as supplicants to Thy throne. Nothing in our hands we bring: simply to Thy cross we cling. We have nothing wherewith we can win Thy favour, for we are all unclean; all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. Yet we come in confidence, and in the full assurance of faith, because there is One seated at Thy right hand, Who, having made one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. Because He intercedes for us, our great High Priest, we know that we shall be accepted in Thy sight.

We bless Thee to-night for the riches of Thy grace, for the fact that while we were yet dead in trespasses and in sins, God commended His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. We rejoice that the store-houses of Thy grace can never be exhausted, that neither the human mind nor experience can fully sound the depths of Thy love, nor explore the heights, nor measure the length and breadth thereof. We bless Thee there is a wideness in God's mercy like the wideness of the sea.

We worship Thee to-night by asking of Thee great things. We are coming to a King, large petitions we would bring; for His grace and power are such, none can ever ask too much. May we then, taught by Thy Spirit, give ourselves wholly to Thee. May we ask of Thee, not alone the bread which perisheth, but that Bread which endureth unto everlasting life. We bring to Thee, not alone our temporal needs, but our spiritual requirements! We would cast, not only the little burdens of life, but the great burdens of life, with all its perplexities, all its difficulties and trials and temptations, upon Thee, knowing that Thou dost care for us! Help us to give ourselves without reservation into Thy hand, committing ourselves unto Him Who is able to keep that which we have committed to Him against that day!

We bring before Thee to-night the varied needs of this great congregation. We thank Thee that Thou dost know each one of us by name, that Thou knowest all about us.

There may be here to-night some young man or young woman who seeks guidance, who knows not which way to turn. Let such an one hear Thy voice saying, This is the way; walk ye in it.

We remember, too, those who feel the weight of life's burdens. Be unto them a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. To all those who feel their need, and who have come seeking something greater and Someone stronger than they,—to such we pray that Thou wilt reveal Thyself in saving and keeping power.

We pray for the great radio audience that is invisible to us, but seen by Thee, who join with us in worship. We pray particularly for those who languish upon beds of pain. Place Thy hand, we pray Thee, upon the fevered brow and assuage the pain. Give comfort to those who mourn, and bestow the fulness of Thy grace upon those who are tempted and tried in any way. We pray, too, for those groups who look forward to this service as a time of blessing, as a time of feasting on the word of God and the Bread of Life. Unite them with us in spirit roundabout Thy throne. Then, too, we pray for those who have but casually tuned into this service. Thou dost order all things: speak to them through the reading of Thy Word, through the singing of the hymns, through the preaching of the gospel. Let Thy word run and have free course; may it be received, not as the word of man, but as it is in very truth, the word of God.

Meet each one of us at the place of our greatest need, and, as we have been singing, so let us know the healing of Thy seamless robe; for Thy word has not lost its ancient power, no word from Thee can fruitless fall. Touch us, we beseech Thee, and heal us with Thy divine salvation. In the name of Christ our Saviour, Amen.

This, it will readily be recognized, is one of the great texts of the Bible. It is indeed an epitome of the Bible itself; or, as Moody would probably have said, a little Bible in itself. It is the sort of text which defies expo-

sition. It is almost an impertinence to attempt it. It is a text that expounds itself.

When returning from England on one occasion our ship stopped in the midst of an ice-field in the fog. We were fog-bound for about nine hours. When the fog cleared in the morning, a little after four o'clock, I looked out. Then I went out on deck, and I counted between thirty and forty icebergs in plain view. I photographed them, but with a pocket-camera, and the result was not at all satisfactory. You cannot faithfully portray an iceberg with a pocket-camera, or for that matter with any other camera. To appreciate its grandeur you must see it for yourself, just as you must see the Rockies and a great many other wonders of nature.

So of this text. It is altogether too big for our adequate understanding. There is not a doctrine of the gospel that is not wrapped up in it. There is not a principle of divine grace that cannot be found within its compass. I selected it this evening for the reason that it is a good thing to call attention to great matters, even if you have no ability to explain them. A little boy can point to the sun, though he does not know much about it. We have accomplished something when we have directed anyone's attention to a great passage in the Book—and that is what I do to-night.

Furthermore, my mind is constantly exercised lest I should be unsymmetrical in my preaching, lest there should be some dainty morsel intended for the children's nourishment that I have left in the cupboard, lest there should be some revealed glory of the Son of God which I have failed to proclaim. Ministers may easily be lopsided in their preaching. One may play upon one string instead of upon all the strings of divine revelation. Some continually dwell upon one doctrine, instead of endeavouring to set forth the whole counsel of God. The doctrine of the second coming of Christ is a very precious truth to which we ought all to give heed, but there is something more than the second coming of Christ taught in the Word. Spurgeon was right when he said there was no doctrine that required more frequent treatment unless it be that of the first coming. To that we should give especial emphasis. When that is comprehended we shall be able to welcome teaching respecting His second coming, though we may not understand all the details of His programme.

I call attention to this text for what it contains, even though we may not be able to measure its infinite dimensions.

### I.

First, the text sets forth **SOME OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRIST'S SHEEP**. "My sheep", He says, "hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." The Lord's sheep are distinguished and differentiated from all others by the fact that they know, they recognize, the voice of the Good Shepherd. There is something in the voice that indicates personality. There are, I suppose, no two voices exactly alike. At all events there is something distinctive about the word of the Lord, and those who are really Christ's sheep recognize the word of the Lord. "Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound." There are some people who do not know the joyful sound. There are people who mock at the Bible. There are some who think they are very clever and who spend their time trying to tear it to pieces. Our Lord settled the philosophy of that attitude when He said, "Ye

believe not, because ye are not of My sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear My voice. That is how they may be known as My sheep, because they hear My voice."

I may perhaps before have related a little experience I had with a dear friend who is now in glory, a Presbyterian minister. I was seated with him one evening on a platform where a certain very prominent preacher was preaching the gospel gloriously. My friend sat beside me with the tears rolling down his cheek, overcome with emotion. At last, when he could contain himself no longer, he turned to me and offered me his hand, while the preacher was still preaching. I responded by grasping his hand. Then in a whisper he said, touching his breast, "By the response of my heart to that message, I know I am a Christian." That is the truth of this scripture, "My sheep hear my voice." My friend recognized the Shepherd's voice. The dead soul responds—not to the voice of the preacher, or of the teacher, or of some providential event, but in these he recognizes the voice of the Good Shepherd. That is what the old theologians used to call "the effectual call of grace", the call that is issued by the Good Shepherd that is irresistible. The sheep hear it, and they know it.

Have you heard the Shepherd's voice? Are you numbered among His sheep? Are you able to say, as did Peter, "We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God"? Have you responded to His voice? Has it awakened a responsive chord in your breast? Has He spoken to you as no one else could ever speak? If so, you may rejoice in the assurance that you are numbered among His sheep.

Further, He says His sheep *are known of the Shepherd*. Whether the sheep know Him or not, the Shepherd knows His sheep: "The Lord knoweth them that are his." Once, you recall, the Lord appeared in a vision to the Apostle Paul—I think when that great minister of grace was somewhat depressed—and He bade him be of good cheer, for said He, "I have much people in this city." There were many of the Lord's people there who did not know Him, but He knew them; and He was determined to call them so effectually that they would respond to His call and be numbered in the flock of the Good Shepherd.

There may be some of the Lord's people who are not much to look at. They may be black sheep, they may have got into the mire, they may be very dirty sheep; and perhaps few people would buy them for their fleece. But the Shepherd knows them, though they do not know Him. What a blessing that is! Were I to change the figure, I might say that we none of us knew our parents for some time. There was a time when we did not recognize anybody. But we were known of our parents, though we did not know them. Thus the Lord knows His own children.

I knew an old man once who called in to see me to tell me something about his family. He was past ninety years of age, and his memory was failing. He told me of all the children he had, calling twelve of them by name. I said, "That is all your family?" "Yes; that is the whole family." He told me where they were, and what they were doing. Then he went away, but in a few minutes he returned. After greeting me he said, "I forgot. There is another one"—and he told me of the thirteenth child living far from home. I do not wonder that he found it somewhat difficult to keep them all in mind, with such a family as that.

But this Good Shepherd knows all His sheep. Though there are many of them not one is lost in the crowd. There is no place in the world where one can be quite so lonely as in a great city. There may be somebody here this evening away from home, who imagines that nobody knows—and nobody cares. If you are numbered among the Lord's children, He knows you, and you will never be lost sight of by Him.

There is another scripture which says, "He calleth his own sheep by name." He names them. I often wish I could call my congregation by name. I can easily name a few hundred of them, but occasionally I forget. To keep the name and the face together, and make no mistakes, is not easy. Years ago, when I became Pastor of this church, I met someone on the street-car one day, a lady, who said to me, "Good afternoon, Mr. Shields." "Good afternoon." "You do not know me?" "I do not know your name, but I think I have seen you." "You ought to know me; I am a member of your church. Now guess"! She put me to a memory test. That was hardly fair.

Few people have perfect memories, but the Good Shepherd calls His people by name. As He passed through Jericho one day there was a little man who had climbed into a tree that he might see the passing Stranger. When Jesus came to the place He stood under the tree and said, "Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house." There was a man called Saul of Tarsus who went towards a certain city, and on the way he was arrested by a light that shone from heaven. When the Lord commissioned Ananias to go and call on him in Damascus, he had not only his name, but his address. He knew where he was staying, in the street called Straight. The Good Shepherd had kept His eye on Saul: he was never out of His sight. Nor are we ever out of the sight of God: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them."

But the proof that they are His is that they follow Him: "And they follow me." That is the only way by which anybody else can know whether you are a Christian or not, that you follow Christ. There are some who follow Him rather reluctantly, but they follow. Some follow rather slowly, but they follow. Some loiter by the way, and graze here and there by the side of the road, and seem as though they would become separated from the flock altogether; but, being His sheep, they too follow. Some, like Peter, follow afar off, but if they are really His, their faces are heavenward, the uppermost thing in their hearts is that they know God. Weak they may be perhaps, carnally-minded possibly, they may stumble and fall, but if they are really His, they follow Him. They are going in the same general direction. All the trend of their lives is Godward.

I commend to you the practice of walking very closely with Him. Get as close to Him as you possibly can—but follow Him in any case. "If any man serve me, let him follow me." Why were these disciples baptized this evening? Because they desire to follow Christ. "Thus it becometh us", said He, "to fulfil all righteousness." He set us an example. Those who are His people, and who hear His voice, recognize the truth and authority of the Word of God. They follow Him.

They are the personal property of the Good Shepherd: "My sheep." The Lord never speaks lightly. When He claims proprietorship in us, He does it for a purpose; and He calls us His own. We belong to Him. If we are His sheep, we are His because He bought us. He paid

a price for us. Do not let anybody rob you of the music of that ancient word, "redemption". It is a great word. It is the corollary of grace. It is the complement of grace. It brings us back, redeems us unto God. "My sheep", said the Lord of His people.

I have heard people speak of their possessions as though they owned them. A man speaks of "my house",—and perhaps he does not own half of it. He speaks of "my car"—and maybe he owns the tires. It is *My* this, and *my* the other; we are proud of our proprietorship in something. But when the Lord Jesus says, "My sheep", He means that they are really His, that they cannot possibly belong to anybody else: they are His personal possession.

I like to hear a young bridegroom say, "This is *my* wife", and the wife quite proudly say, "Let me present *my* husband." Of course they practised that before they were married, just to see what it would sound like! And they rather liked it! *My* wife. *My* husband. And I admit that it is very lovely. But there is something better than that. When an old man, full of years, with his hair frosted by the snows of many winters, and in expression of half a century of tried affection, says "This is my wife", that is something different, is it not? When He, Who from the ages of the ages, had set His heart upon us—when He says, "They are my sheep", He willed that they should be His. He paid the price for them. He sought them. He found them. They are His. And what infinite significance there is in that possessive pronoun in this relation; "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

I shall not nurse that figure of the sheep except to remind you that it is intended to humble us, because we are such a silly, stupid, crowd. That is what we were, "as sheep going astray" but we have now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. Have you recognized yourself in that description? Do you belong to Him?

## II.

Let us see HOW GRACE MANIFESTS ITSELF, what it does for His sheep.

*He does something for them.* That is what salvation is, not what you do for God, but what God does for you. There is a vast difference between the two. There are many professedly orthodox people who say they believe the Bible is the word of God, who, notwithstanding, preach salvation by works, as though we could save ourselves, as though it were within human power to do something for God. We may do something *with* Him, by His power, once we are saved, and as the result and issue of our salvation. But it would be fatal for all of us if salvation depended upon our doing. It begins here: "I give." That is where salvation begins, always—with God: it is the gift of His grace. It is an act of His sovereign power. It is what God does for us, and in us, that saves us.

*What does He do, then, for His sheep? What does He give them?* Easy circumstances? Material prosperity? A comfortable time in this life? The honour of the world? No, not that. They may have none of these things: He gives them something of vastly greater value than that: "I give unto them . . . life."

Thereby *He shows Who He is*, for in all the universe there is no one but God who can give life. I recall some few years ago the President of the British Asso-

ciation for the Advancement of Science, in his presidential address, suggested that the time would come, he thought, when life would be chemically produced, and the living would be produced from the non-living. His successor two years later declared that science had made absolutely no progress toward the discovery of the origin of life. Spontaneous generation was beyond human experience, and all that science had observed had tended only to confirm the view that life was produced by antecedent life. Where is the beginning of life? Here is the answer. No one can tell us where life came from when this Book is shut. If I had all the men of science in the world listening to me this evening I would challenge them all to tell me one thing about the origin of life, apart from the revelation of this Book. They know nothing about it. But here it is: "In him was life, and the life is the light of men"; "As the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." Moreover He gave Him authority over all flesh that He should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given Him.

"I give unto them . . . life." No one but God can say that. Salvation is life, a new principle, something we had not before, something no human power could possibly confer upon us, something that comes from God, and from God alone. "I give unto them . . . life."

I call you back from your trust in the church, in any sort of institution or ceremony, and remind you that somehow or another the man who is to be saved must come to God. There is no intermediary. He has not delegated that power to any church, to any prophet or priest. That power resides in God Himself. He has reserved a point at the genesis of life in all realms for His own direct appearing. There is no substitution for the power of God in the giving of life. Nothing less is salvation: "I give unto them . . . life." That is what Grace does for His sheep.

But *what sort of life is it?* "I give unto them *eternal life.*" I used to be very much concerned lest I should repeat anything I had ever said before. I thought it was rather a reflection upon the preacher's resourcefulness if he should repeat himself, if he should use the same illustration twice, if he should say the same thing a second time. But I have learned now that it is necessary, not only to say it twice, but to say it a hundred times. Perhaps the frequent repetition of that which may seem common-place may reflect upon the preacher's resourcefulness—or seem to do so—but such repetition is really necessary because of our limited capacity to receive the truth. The teacher must repeat the same lesson, until the scholar has learned it. I do not care what you think of me as a preacher. I have got past that. If you do not like it, you need not come, or when you get enough of it you can always go. I am not concerned about whether you say, Well done, or not: what I am concerned for is that you should receive the truth, and that the truth should grip you, and abide with you. If some day in years to come you should say, "I heard the truth of the gospel somewhere years ago. I do not remember where it was, but I heard it, and I have come to believe it. I am saved", I shall not care whether I get credit for it or not—the Lord knows about that. I want you to receive the truth.

That is why I repeat it again, "I give unto them *eternal life.*" That does not mean—and this I have said to you before—that does not mean that life is eternal

only as to duration. We think of eternal life as a life that goes on, and on, and on, into the eternity of the future. It is far more than that. The life that God gives is not only related to the future: it is related to the past. It is eternal in the sense that it never had a beginning. The life that you receive never had a beginning. It is a spark from the Fire yonder that never was lighted, and that can never be extinguished. That thing that the Scripture calls eternal life is a bit of God, it is the very life of the Eternal in the soul of man. There is a point of time at which that life, as the gift of God, is received by you, but there never was a time when the life that is in me and you, as Christians, had a beginning. It was always with God, and He made it possible, by that tremendous transaction on the cross, to remove all moral barriers, that He might be just and yet confer upon us that priceless boon, His own nature, so that we should have within us eternal life. That is what it is to be saved.

There are plants that we speak of as *annuals*. They die off in the Fall. You cannot make them grow another year. There are some that live two years, and some live longer. There are trees that live for thousands of years. I saw two trees in Stanley Park, Vancouver, one prone upon the ground, and another growing over it, two great fir trees. I had not time to investigate—and I have not the capacity to understand if I had—but I was told that those two trees represent six thousand years of growth, three thousand in the one on the ground, and three thousand in the tree that has grown on top of it. But to look at those giants of the forest one could well imagine that either of them had been six thousand years in growing; they almost challenged the clouds.

Why do they live three thousand years, while some plants, growing out of the same soil, perish in a season? Because it is of the nature of one to perish, and it is the nature of the other to live. In other words, the quality of life in that giant of the forest is essentially different from the quality of life in the plant that passes away in a year or so.

So, dear friends, the life that God gives is eternal, not merely in duration, but in its very nature and essence. It has an eternal quality in it. It is not subject to death. The life that the living Saviour confers is the life that throbs within Him. As He came forth from the grave, "because it was not possible that he should be holden of it", so we must come forth from the grave. We are partakers of that life which there is no power on earth or in hell to terminate. He said of His own life, "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." The life that He gives to everyone who trusts Him is the life that is His own; it is as eternal as His own. It has no beginning, no ending—beginning only as to our reception of it. We become one with the Eternal when we are saved by sovereign grace. "I give unto them *eternal life.*"

Do you not want to be saved? There is nothing you can have in this world that will not perish. I care not what it is, ultimately it will diminish. It will rust or corrode. And many things pass away altogether. A man of science said not long ago that there is not a city in the world to-day, if untouched by human hand, without effort to preserve it, that would not crumble into ashes in a few hundred years. It would pass away, like

the empires that have passed away before us. But this thing that the Bible calls salvation, that in our text is called eternal life, is of the very nature of God Himself, and will last for ever because it has eternity in it. "I give unto them eternal life."

And then, *to make it still surer, He says, "And they shall never perish."* There is danger of our perishing if we are separated from Him. There is a universalism taught in some quarters to-day that is utterly unscriptural. Everybody is going to be saved, everybody is going to heaven. I remind you that our Lord Himself said, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish"—that is why Christ came. Had there been no danger of our perishing He would not have come—"but have everlasting (eternal) life." The only thing that can save us from perishing is the gift of eternal life: "They shall never perish."

I am very glad *we have not to keep ourselves.* I am glad it is written that when once we are saved, we are saved for ever. There are some people saved as often as some other folks are healed. I do not know whether you have noticed it or not in these emotional orgies that we have had in Toronto, where religious quacks, charlatans, have come with their little flasks of oil, but somehow or another every time a campaign of that sort is launched in this city the same people go to get healed. They seem to like the medicine. But I have observed that the same ones go up every time. I cannot help believing that if it were the Lord's work He would do it properly: they would stay healed.

There are some people who profess to be converted over and over again. I was Pastor in a little village some years ago, and there was a man and his wife there who used to be "converted" alternate years. It made no difference where the evangelistic services were held, Methodist, Baptist, or Presbyterian, church, at a certain season one or the other was converted—but the two never were Christians at the same time! They used to say in the town that the kind of religion that particular couple got did not seem to mix in family life: when one was religious, the other could not live with him or her, as the case might be. The man was converted one year, and the wife the next—in and out all the time. Laugh if you will: I tried to make it sound ridiculous, because it is ridiculous. That is not the work of God. "They shall never perish." The Lord's children may stumble, they may soil their garments, but they are His children. They may follow at some distance, but they will follow if they are really His. "They shall never perish." That is His word. He is not going to be robbed of one of His sheep.

If the devil had power to destroy us, he would. He is the adversary of our souls. He goeth about seeking whom he may devour. He would eat us up over night if it were not that the "angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them". "He will keep the feet of his saints." He does really. You do not see the angels, but they are there. That is why we are here this evening. You may call us old-fashioned, you who listen over the air. We are old-fashioned, as old-fashioned as this old-fashioned Book. We confess our unwavering confidence in a supernatural religion, that gives us the ministry of God's angels. They are "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation".

A brother came to see me a little while ago, and during the conversation he said, "Why, man, you ought to have been dead years ago. The things you have had to endure would have killed most men." He did not mean that he wanted me to be dead, because he is a friend; he is here to-night. I have had people say that again and again, and I have no doubt that the adversary of souls would kill us if he could. We should not get home to-night if he had his way. He would consign us to perdition had he the power, but he has not. "They shall never perish." That is the word that is written. That is the word of our triumphant, sovereign, Saviour—and we trust in Him.

I suppose this church ought to have been out of business long ago—if newspapers could have done it; if a good many organizations could have done it, we should have closed our doors. Why have we not? Simply because the living Christ is the Head of this organization. He has helped us hitherto. He has helped us as individuals, and helped us as a church; and we reach more people to-day than we ever did. "They shall never perish."

Then, for my own comfort, I am going to talk to myself for a few minutes. I like this next phrase, "Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Salvation is not in a house, not in an institution, not in a church, not in anything else: but in His hand. *Salvation consists in a personal relation to God.* Whatever that figure means, the hand of God, it implies that I am held, and you are held if you are a Christian, in the hand of God. "Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

Did you ever carry a letter in your pocket that your wife had given you to post? I received a letter some years ago from a man, enclosing a letter from his wife. The inside letter was stamped and addressed, and the covering letter said: "I have to make a confession. My wife gave me the enclosed letter to mail to you several days ago. I presume it is dated within the envelope, and were I just to put it in the mail you would wonder that it had been so long in transit. I am sending you this word of explanation: it has been in my pocket. I have informed my wife that her letter is late."

We have all done things like that. Did your wife ever say of something, "Carry it in your hand, and then you will not forget it"? Did she ever tell you that? You cannot forget what is in your hand, can you? "Neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." We are in His hand, constantly remembered, in continual contact with Him, His hand upon us. "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones." So Ezekiel said. I do not know where He will set you down—or set you up—but if you are in the hand of the Lord, it will make no difference where you are. "Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." I do not know what that means if it does not mean that all there is in Christ, all the resources of incarnate Deity, are mine for my salvation. He has given me life, He holds me in His hand, He promises me I shall never perish—and flings His challenge to the universe, to anyone, to try to pluck me out of His hand. "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever."

### III.

This further word: "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." I have a watch in my hand

that was given me by my morning class several years ago. It is real gold. Do not let anybody try to steal it: my name is on the inside of it, and you could not dispose of it unless you smashed it up and sold it for old gold. I value it, not only for what it is worth intrinsically, but for the affection of which it is an expression. I value it for its associations as certain friends' gift to me." I prize it and take care of it. "My Father, which gave them me." God did not make a present to His Son of that which was of no worth. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." We are part of the crown jewels, the gift of the Father to His Son. And not only will the Son take care of us, but the Father will take care of us too. "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

We have a hard time, most of us. "This vile world is not a friend to grace, to help us on to God." Many people tell me of the difficulties they have at home, at business, that circumstances are unfavourable, and all the rest of it. I suppose many of us, were we to try, could justify ourselves to ourselves in being remiss in our religious duties and say, "All the tides are against me. It is so hard sailing that I do not know how to get along at all." The tides are not all against you. There is Someone Who is not against you. God is for you, and God is greater than all—than all circumstances, than all temptations, than all our weaknesses, than all our tempters, than all our difficulties, greater than anything that could afflict the soul, greater than all the forces of earth and hell combined.

"He gave him to be the head over all things to the church" Who is Himself the Head of all principalities and powers. The devil has more power than you, but he is not almighty; he knows more than you, but he is not omniscient. He hates you, and would destroy you if he could; but he is in chains. Job's experience tell us that. And the Father, Who sovereignly chose us to give us to His Son—for that is the explanation of our salvation, of our rebirth, our Christian experience: God was back of it all—is greater than all. You do not need any safety deposit vault in which to put your soul, for you are held in the hand of One Who is "greater than all".

"And no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the one true God, the glorious Trinity, the only God we know, is ours, and we are His. We are saved with an everlasting salvation. We have God's oathbound promise to rest upon that neither in this life, nor in the life to come, is it possible for anyone who ever puts his trust in Christ, to perish. When we are saved after that fashion we can challenge all the powers of darkness. You do not need a body-guard. The Lord will look after His own, literally. Knowing them that are His, He will give His angels charge concerning us, to keep us in all our ways.

I offer you in the name of our exalted Saviour that salvation. Weak, are you? Then it is for you. Poor? Then it is for you. Sinful? Then it is for you. Utterly impotent? It is for you. "The gift of God is eternal life."

A little girl came to me some years ago, wanting to join the church; she wanted to be baptized. "Tell me", I said, "how you were saved." She said, "I was in a children's meeting the other day, and the man who was leading the meeting took a quarter from his pocket, held it up, and said he would give it to the boy or girl who

would go to the platform and get it. We did not think he meant it, but he insisted he did. By and by a little boy went up and held out his hand, and the man gave him the quarter. He came proudly back to his seat with the quarter in his hand. We all wished we had gone then. When the boy got back to his seat the man said, 'Just as I gave that little boy that quarter, and as it became his by simply receiving it, accepting it, God will give you eternal life if you will trust Him.' And then and there I trusted Christ; I was saved."

"The gift of God is eternal life"; "They shall never perish." Trust Him this evening, and be saved with an everlasting salvation.

### FROM WITHIN PRISON WALLS

(Two or three weeks ago we published a letter from a prisoner in one of the penitentiaries in the United States saying he heard our evening service in prison by radio every Sunday. We wrote him and the letter below is his reply. If all our radio hearers were as appreciative and generous in their support as he we should have no difficulty in financing our radio enterprise.

Some readers may remember that this man earns twelve cents a day, which means his two dollars represent sixteen and two-thirds days' pay.—Ed. "G. W.")

Dear Dr. Shields, January 20th, 1934

I am taking this, my first opportunity, to write and thank you for sending me the lovely Hymn Book also the other book "Adventures of a Modern Young Man" and the many copies of GOSPEL WITNESS. How I have enjoyed them, no one but God knows. I've passed them all (except the Hymn Book) around to men who enjoy them and I get them back and I'm making a volume of them to take home with me, for I expect to go home this year.

You are so kind to send me all these lovely books and all I can say is that I am grateful to you. I sing the hymns along with your choir and congregation and when the choir sings their number I sing along too (so that's where I have the best of the congregation!)

As I said in my last, or rather my first, letter, I have broadcasted many, many times in bands but never have I known the thrill that I experienced when I heard your kind prayer which I felt was for me and heard your words in regard to my letter. I guess tears were in my eyes because an officer who was making his rounds came by my room and looked at me in surprise and said in a sympathetic tone of voice, "What's the matter kid—is anything wrong", and I said, "No, cap, everything is all right." The tears that he saw were tears of happiness, not of sorrow.

I sent the papers home for my Dad and Mother to read and I showed them and my wife my letter in print and your prayer. I have the dearest, sweetest little wife waiting for me and praise God I'm soon going home to her. We were only married four days when I was taken from her but I'll soon be with her again bless God. Doctor, do you know this little poem? I am not sure but I think it's by Coralyn Wells.

"The little sharp vexations,  
The briars that catch and fret,  
Why not take all to our Helper  
Who has never failed us yet?"

"Tell Him of all the hardships,  
Tell Him our troubles too,  
Tell Him the baffled purpose,  
When we scarce know what to do.

"Then leaving all our weakness  
With the One divinely strong,  
Forget we have the burden;  
And carry away the song."

That little gem of verse surely has been a great comfort and help to me. I'm sure you are familiar with the little poem but in case you are not, I send it to you so that it may be a blessing to you too.

And now in regard to the money which I promised to send. I am ashamed to offer you so little, Doctor, but when I do

(Continued on page 8)



## Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 9

No. 1

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 6

FIRST QUARTER

Feb. 11, 1934

### A GOOD KING APPEARS

Lesson Text: 2 Kings, chapter 18.

Golden Text: "He trusted in the Lord God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him."—2 Kings, chapter 18:5.

Bible School Reading: 2 Kings 18:1-16.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

Monday—2 Chron. 29:1-11.

Tuesday—2 Chron. 30:18-27.

Wednesday—Psalm 12:1-8.

Thursday—John 2:13-25.

Friday—2 Tim. 3:1-7.

Saturday—Jude 1-7.

#### I. A GOOD KING (vs. 1-8).

In king Hezekiah we have an example of a son who did not follow in the footsteps of his father. Ahaz did evil in the sight of the Lord (17:2), while Hezekiah did that which was right, (v. 3). Probably he saw the foolishness of his father's actions, realized their wickedness in God's sight, and determined to do right. Whatever be the reason, and the same is worthy of meditation, he is to be commended for his good sense in taking his stand for righteousness. Some children grow up good because of parental training, and others become good in spite of it, but generally due to some outside influence. The opportunity and privilege of Sunday Schools in reaching the children of ungodly parents may here be noted, also the duty of Christians in doing personal work among their unsaved associates in business, and social sphere, (Mark 1:17).

The work of Hezekiah in the service of God was both destructive and constructive. "He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it, and he called it Nehushtan", meaning a piece of brass, (v. 4). He also trusted in, and clave to the Lord his God, departed not from following Him, and kept His commandments, (vs. 5, 6). There are some, and their number is not small, who desire to serve the Lord without interfering with the work of evil. They do not believe in interfering with false systems of belief: they refrain from the language, as well as the act of condemnation in this respect, and speak only of love to all. They forget, what is manifest in this chapter, and in other scriptures, that there must be a definite attitude of antagonism toward sin, as well as a positive declaration on the side of right; otherwise, we are in danger of compromising with evil. Sin in belief, and act, receives condemnation from God, (Matt. 5:27, 28), and in the individual himself, sin must be dealt with before blessing is received, (Rom. 6:12-23). This is also seen in the case of Hezekiah, (v. 7). Note his confidence in divine help manifest in refusal to continue in subjection to Assyria (v. 7), and in his victory over the Philistines, (v. 8).

Several things are worthy of attention respecting this king. We may note his upright character, his devotion to God, his firmness of purpose, his wholehearted service of God, and his courage in attacking evil. He had real backbone in standing for God in the midst of apostasy, he presented a splendid example to his people, and from him we may learn with profit. These are apostate days, and strong men and women of God are needed who will take their stand on the Word of God, and fearlessly live and proclaim it. The king had the manifest approval of God in his efforts, although it may be of interest to notice that this did not imply cessation of trouble. Saints in these days are promised tribulation, but along with it there is victory, (John 16:33). Observe the superstition of the people in burning incense to the serpent of brass, (v. 4). Man is always ready to put the material before the spiritual. This is evident in the highly ritualistic branches of the church where images, pictures, and other articles are used in representation of spiritual realities. Worship should be given to God only, (Matt. 4-10), and that in the Spirit, (John 4:24).

#### II. WAR WITH ASSYRIA, (vs. 9-37).

As already intimated the fact that Hezekiah devoted him-

self to the service of God did not preserve him from trouble. He was compelled to face the great power of Assyria, and though greatly tried in consequence he was finally, by divine power, granted victory over the foe, (19:35). After recording Shalmaneser's expedition against Samaria, (vs. 9-12), which we have studied in the previous chapter, information is given concerning Sennacherib's attack on Judah. Possibly the Assyrian forces had Egypt as their main objective, and dealt with Judah by the way. The fenced cities in Israelitish territory were attacked and overcome, (v. 13), then while the enemy were at Lachish to the south west of Jerusalem, and that city itself threatened, Hezekiah sent his submission to the king of Assyria, offering to pay tribute. His offer was accepted, and he was assessed at such a price that the resources of the little state were taxed to the limit to pay it, (vs. 14-16). The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel, and "man's inhumanity to man make countless thousands mourn". Hezekiah's action was no doubt due to fear, but it did not prevent further pressure by his enemies. There may be a question here as to whether he acted wisely, either from the political, or the spiritual standpoint. They were not saved from the enemy as a consequence, and it would seem as if the better course to pursue would have been the one followed later when he prayed to God and received divine guidance. Numbers may make men afraid, but they do not affect God. He is able to give victory to the few, (1 Sam. 14:6). If Hezekiah had trusted Him instead of acting in accordance with worldly wisdom he might have saved his gold and silver, and kept his heart at ease,

A very interesting history is now given us of the sending of the Assyrian messengers, with the great host against Jerusalem. On arrival they took up their position outside of the city and called for Hezekiah, who sent out to them his representatives, (vs. 17, 18). The speech of Rabshakeh then follows; which is of a boastful type, in praise of the Assyrian king, in depreciation of any power which might be brought against him, and containing a declaration of the hopelessness of seeking to hold out against him. It is useless to trust in Egypt, he intimates, (vs. 19-21), and as for trusting in the Lord God, has not Hezekiah taken away his high places and altars, and commanded the people to worship in Jerusalem, (v. 22). In the heathen mind the action of the king was misunderstood: he had destroyed the altars which had been erected contrary to the will of God, perhaps a few of them dedicated to Jehovah, but for the most part, if not in entirety, given over to idols. The idea in Rabshakeh's mind was that there was no use of the Israelites trusting in the Lord if He had been thus insulted, good reasoning, but wrongly based, as we have seen. Following this, there is a reference to the weakness of Israel, (vs. 23, 24), to the supposed direction of God in the enterprise, (v. 25), and to the persons for whom the message was intended, (vs. 26, 27), the whole concluding with an appeal not to hearken unto Hezekiah in putting their trust in the Lord, (vs. 28-30), and to surrender to the Assyrians (vs. 33-35).

The speech was intended to strike fear into the hearts of the people of Jerusalem in magnifying the great power of Assyria. The gods of the various nations had been unable to deliver their devotees out of their hands, and Jehovah would not be any more successful with them. It was useless, therefore, either to trust, or fight, for deliverance. The wisest thing to do was to surrender, and throw themselves on the mercy of their conquerors. The speech was characterized by self-confidence, boldness, and blasphemy. It had its effect, but the people acted wisely in not answering it, (v. 36). They left that matter with their leaders who sought divine guidance and received the manifestation of divine power on their behalf, (19:1, 14, 35).

The enemies of God and His people are very bold these days in their attacks on the divine revelation. It used to be the case that Atheists shrank from assuming the designation of their belief, but now they flaunt abroad their name and their teaching, and they hesitate not, to use their utmost endeavour to crush the Christian religion, and destroy belief in God. Such is their avowed purpose. And, sad to relate, they are being ably assisted by Modernists, Evolutionists, and other false teachers. Notice should be taken of them, prayer should be offered concerning them, capable persons should deal with them, but there should be no fear of them, for they cannot overthrow God, and He will deal with them in His own time. Note may be made of the reality of spiritual conflict, and the necessity for alert prayerfulness and activity in God's service.

# 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.

## JARVIS STREET

Seldom has such a company of young people been gathered together in any church in the city of Toronto as gathered for the Annual Meeting of the Young People's Department of the Bible School of this church. Their annual get-together, as they call it, was one of delight and spiritual enthusiasm. The many expressions of appreciation indicated that a program of spiritual songs and messages of Biblical inspiration could still be employed as a vehicle to convey to the young people of our land the higher standards of Christian experience.

Promptly at eight o'clock the Superintendent of the Young People's Department, Mr. O. L. Raymer, called the meeting to order. A most interesting program followed.

After the musical numbers had been given, Rev. W. E. Atkinson gave a missionary travelogue on the work of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec. The pictures gave a glimpse of the way the missionaries take to reach their appointed field of labour in Liberia, West Africa. Some interesting slides of Madeira, Canary Islands, Dakar, Freetown, Sierra Leone, and Monrovia, Liberia, were among those shown. The perilous difficulties encountered in landing in the small surf boats in order to reach the shore of Grand Bassa was fully explained, and the means of transportation of the missionaries' equipment to the shore was made quite realistic by the splendid pictures making up the travelogue. Much credit was given to the Paterson, Zochonis Company who have so kindly co-operated with the Union's office and also the missionaries on the field in making their reception to the West African coast fairly comfortable. Carriers are obtained and the trek to the station over bridges of a most primitive type, and across rivers on rafts, dug-out canoes, and other early methods of transportation were shown. There was not a dull moment until the lecture was completed and the young people had been taken on a trip throughout the whole mission field illustrating the many ways the missionaries carry on their work from day to day in their far-away fields of labour in Liberia.

Following this address, Dr. T. T. Shields, spoke on the methods of conducting Sunday School work and securing the best results for the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

Immediately following this address the young people adjourned to the B. D. Thomas Hall where a reception was held by the teachers and officers of the department, and refreshments served. Mr. O. L. Raymer took charge, and after a very happy time of Christian fellowship, the meeting was brought to a close by the singing of a verse of "Blest be the tie that binds", and the pronouncement of the benediction by the pastor of the church.

## BRISCOE ST., LONDON

In a letter from the Pastor, Rev. R. D. Guthrie, occurs the following: "It is just 11.30 p.m. Sunday, and although I am tired I must drop you a few lines to give you some news about Briscoe Street.

To-day was our First Anniversary, and what a day it has been, indeed! One day in the courts of the Lord's House is better than a thousand. We began the day with a record attendance at the Bible School, followed by a great morning service. The largest morning audience in our short history assembled and listened attentively to the message brought by the pastor. The entire service of over one hour and thirty-five minutes was broadcast over Station CFPL, London. It was heard as far East as Toronto according to reports received so far. In response to the invitation two fine young women accepted Christ as their Saviour. Hallelujah! At the evening service we were packed almost to the roof. Vestibules, inquiry-room, pulpit steps, and choir space were all taken up and would you believe it, we actually had fourteen people standing in the baptistry. We had already secured sixty extra chairs and all were occupied. The Lord

gave us great liberty in preaching the Word and three responded to the invitation. This makes twelve who have thus come in the last two months. Praise the Lord Whom we seek to serve.

The instrumental quartette from Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, played splendidly and very acceptably. They rendered a fine piece of service for the Lord, especially as it was broadcast in the morning. Messrs. James Howell and Howard Ryan of Courtland also assisted, and sang with the pastor in trio and duet selections during the day. These numbers especially brought favourable comment from the radio audience.

We step into our second year's work with a spirit of unity, expectation, and joy prevailing in our midst. We believe our radio ministry is going to mean much to the work of the Lord in the coming year.

## UNION CHURCHES BROADCASTING

Jarvis Street Baptist, every Sunday evening, 7-9, over CFRB.

Timmins, First Baptist Church, every Sunday evening, 7-8.30.

Chatham, every Sunday afternoon.

Hespeler, over CKPC every Thursday evening at 7.30 and Wednesday morning at 10 o'clock.

London, Briscoe Street, every third Sunday at 11 a.m.

## MR. CLUBINE ARRIVES IN LIBERIA

We are glad to learn from our Liberian mail that Mr. Percy Clubine has arrived in Liberia, none the worse for his long journey, and was met at the boat by Rev. and Mrs. Hancox, Miss Lane, and Miss Stacey. The Daveys will be nearing Liberia by this time also. Continue to remember the workers and the work in Liberia.

## FROM WITHIN PRISON WALLS

(Continued from page 6)

send it, a big heartfelt of gratitude will go with it and many prayers too. And, please, when I send it don't send a letter of acknowledgement because you've sent me so many things and postage and all and you won't have anything left. I can only write by special permission and it may be over a month and perhaps longer before I can write again. But as soon as I am permitted I am going to send two dollars and later on Doctor, I will send a like amount and when I get home and am earning money I will send the tenth which belongs to God and maybe a little of my own as I am able. I believe there are poor souls here in our own beloved Canada and United States which need the Gospel far more than anyone in Africa ever did because there is more sin here. So by God's grace I'm going to do what little bit I can do to help and I don't know of anyone who is doing a greater work than you and your church in spreading the word of Christ over so large an area. I would God that I had more to send but I pledge myself faithfully to send a little as I can. Oh if each of your listeners could only send something, wouldn't it help so much!

I just wanted to write you this letter so that you wouldn't think me ungrateful and to assure you that as, soon as I can, I will really send what I have promised in my first letter and in this one. I do enjoy your sermons so much. I've never heard anyone who talks so interestingly nor have I heard sermons so good. How I do love the singing of your choirs (Senior and Junior) and the grand playing of your organist.

Doctor, I don't know how to thank you for the Hymn Book and papers. But I am so grateful. God bless you and your loved ones, your church and everyone connected with it, the sincere prayer of—