

The Gospel Witness

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AND IN DEFENSE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.
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"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."—Romans 1:16.

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

A BIG BONFIRE

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, March 18th, 1934

(Stenographically Reported)

Broadcast over CFRB, 690 k.c., as is every Sunday evening service of Jarvis Street Church, from 7 to 8.30 o'clock, Eastern Standard Time.

"And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

"And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.

"Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

"So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed."—Acts 19:17-20.

Of all the epistles of Paul I am sure I am correct in saying that not one of them assumes such a high degree of spiritual development in the persons addressed as the Epistle to the Ephesians. Writing to the Corinthians, the apostle complained that they were yet carnal, and that it was necessary for him to address them as babes in Christ. To the Galatians he expressed his astonishment that they had been so soon moved away from the grace of Him that called them, to "another gospel which is not another". For spiritual qualities manifest in the lives of the saints at Colosse and at Philippi and at Thessalonica, and among the strangers at Rome, the apostle gave thanks; but in none of them did he imply such advancement in Christian knowledge and grace as in his letter to the Ephesians.

Of the seven letters addressed to the churches in Asia, the first was addressed to the church at Ephesus. It was not only first in order, but it was evident that, for some reason, the church at Ephesus had attained a spiritual stature that was considerably above the average. When Paul was on his way to Jerusalem, he sent for the elders of Ephesus and met them at Miletus, and there reminded them of his three years' ministry among them.

A brief survey of the work at Ephesus may therefore perhaps partly explain the superior spiritual character of the Ephesian Christians.

The city was visited by the Apostle Paul himself. There he found certain disciples. He asked them whether they had received the Holy Ghost when they believed, to which they replied, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." Then he

said, "Unto what then were ye baptized?"—wondering how it was possible that they had been baptized without hearing of the Holy Spirit.

That ought for ever to put an end to the theory that Christian baptism may be administered in the name of the Lord Jesus only. Paul assumed that anyone who had been baptized must have heard of the Holy Ghost. They replied that they had been baptized unto John's baptism. Evidently they had not heard the gospel, and Paul preached the gospel to them; and when they heard it, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. By which we are not to understand that they were not baptized in the name of the Trinity, but that the term is used here in contradistinction to the baptism of John.

The Holy Ghost came upon them, and the number of the men were about twelve. These, with the women, formed the nucleus of the church at Ephesus. Then we read that Paul "went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God." After three months, when many hardened themselves and "spake evil of that way" which Paul had preached, he withdrew from the synagogue, separated the disciples also, and continued to conduct his services in the school of one Tyrannus; and for the space of two years thereafter daily he disputed, expounded, the things of God.

That must have been a high privilege, to be under the personal ministry of the Apostle Paul for two years, daily hearing him expound the things of God. We know that he was in Ephesus longer than that, for he

reminded the elders at Miletus that for the space of three years, he had ceased not to warn them night and day with tears. His ministry was accompanied by special manifestations of divine power, particularly showing itself in the expulsion of unclean spirits, in power over the evil one.

The text I have read to you tells us that "the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified" in Ephesus. The result of that was that many believed. Believing, they confessed; confessing, they showed their deeds; and such as had used curious arts brought their books and made a great bonfire of them, not secretly, but openly before all men; and when they estimated the value of these books they found it to be about fifty thousand pieces of silver. "So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." Thus the foundation of the church at Ephesus was laid by magnifying the name of the Lord Jesus, with the inevitable result that the word of God grew mightily and prevailed. That was the apostolic method, and it ought to be the method of those who would evangelize after the apostolic fashion to-day.

Let us see some of the implications of the teaching of these verses.

I.

Here, then, in Ephesus were CERTAIN PEOPLE WHO SO BELIEVED THAT THEIR FAITH COMPELLED CONFESSION. They were not secret believers by any means: but they were most emphatically believers. We are being taught nowadays that one can be a Christian without believing very much; that, in fact, you may be a Christian by believing almost anything. Some may believe that Jesus Christ is not the Son of God—some may believe that He is. Some may believe that one is saved by grace alone—others may believe that one may be saved by works. Some may believe that the ordinances of the New Testament should be obeyed as they are given—some others that they may be altered; still others that they may be ignored and entirely set aside.

We have now before us a new type of religion, that tells us it makes no difference what one believes: all of us can come together in one "first century fellowship", ignoring even principles that the Bible says are vital to the salvation of the soul.

Not thus did the Apostle Paul evangelize Ephesus! not thus can churches of the character of that at Ephesus be produced. He disputed daily, he persuaded the people concerning the kingdom of God. As a result of his preaching, many hardened themselves and refused to believe. They "spake evil of that way", with the result that Paul did not have a great "house party", but separated himself from those who disbelieved the gospel. He gathered the disciples together as believers, that they might be taught the things of God every day. The outcome of that teaching was that there grew up at Ephesus a company of people who were distinguished for the fact that they were believers.

I insist that the general teaching of the Word of God is to the effect that saving faith differentiates Christ from all others. It sets Him entirely apart, and teaches that true faith is faith in a Person; and in a Person because He is known to be a particular Person. He is believed because the believer knows whence He came, what He is, what He has done, what He has promised, and what is in prospect for those who believe. We need to be on our guard against that superficial type of religion that is becoming so popular to-

day in churches generally. "As he (man) thinketh in his heart, so is he." Character and conduct, and the general course of life, will be determined—must be determined—by the content of a man's faith. What he believes determines what he is.

These Ephesian Christians believed Christ with a faith that set Him apart from all others. They regarded Him as an unique Person. He was not one among many: He was the only One: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." They accepted His standard of righteousness. They accepted Him as *the* truth. They looked upon His life and death as divinely ordered, His death as an atonement for sin, His resurrection as an historic fact that could not be disputed or denied. Such was the content of the faith of the Ephesians. It is no wonder they grew to be stalwart Christians, exemplifying in their lives the faith they professed.

What I ask of you who are here this evening, and of those who hear this service by radio is, are you a believer? I do not ask you whether you are a church member, but I do ask you, Are you, in the truest sense, a believer in the person of the Lord Jesus? Do you believe that there was no other like Him? Do you believe that He stands throughout human history in splendid isolation as the second Adam, the Lord from heaven? Are you prepared to accept His standard of what a man ought to be? Are you prepared to measure yourself by His standard of righteousness, and to admit that whoever falls short of it, falls short of the glory of God—no matter how well spoken of he may be by his fellows, how estimable a citizen, how worthy a husband or father? Are you willing to measure yourself by the standard which the Lord Jesus has set up? Do you believe that He is God's ultimatum? that we are to be judged by Him? Do you believe He is *the* truth?

You cannot find in the New Testament the record of a believer in Christ ever questioning His authority, His infallibility. He is the last word. Do you believe that? Do you believe the record of His death, that He "died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures"? Are you a believer after that fashion? My question is not, I repeat, Are you a church member? Nor have you been baptized. That is not the point. First of all, has everything that is in you gone out in full and complete surrender to Jesus Christ—your heart, your conscience, your intellect, all the capacities of your mind? Have you bowed at the feet of Jesus Christ as the Incarnate God?

If you have not, then your faith is defective. I do not say that a man may not be saved by a less intelligent faith than that. We have to begin somewhere. I remind myself frequently of the man who was born blind, and whose eyes were opened by the word and power of a Man called Jesus of Nazareth. When the doctors of the law began disputing respecting the claims of this man Jesus, this uninstructed man who had only an experience of His power, who had read none of their books, who had attended none of their schools, answered them by telling his own experience: "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." When they said, "We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is," he who was born blind answered, "Why herein is a marvellous thing that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes."

At last they cast him out. Then he met his Healer in the temple, and this Man Jesus said to the unintelligent, uninformed, Christian of experience who had been touched by divine power, who did not know very much, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" That was a tremendous question, was it not? And he answered, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" In effect he said, "I would believe in anybody whom Thou wouldest recommend. Who is He?" Jesus said, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him."

A man who has the beginning of saving faith in him may be defective in intelligence, but his renewed nature makes him hospitable toward the truth, and the moment more light comes to him he welcomes it, and receives it. There is nothing antagonistic in him toward the truth. That, therefore, is my question, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" Does someone say, "I should like to if I only knew who He is." When the Word of God tells you it is Jesus Christ, can you fall at His feet and say, "Lord, I believe," and worship Him? That is what it is to be a Christian.

I say, *the man who thus believes is bound to confess.* No man can really receive that full-orbed revelation of God and keep it to himself. Somehow or another he will be forced into the open, as were these Ephesian believers. I say, therefore, beware of any sort of doctrine that is called Christian that does not set the crucified and risen Christ before you as the one Object of your faith. Anything short of that is not of God. There is much taught in this city to-day that is far short of that standard.

Then *these people believed in a changed life, and they confessed it.* There is nothing new in that. True believers have always been changed by their faith, some more, some less. They believed; they confessed; they showed their deeds. They let all Ephesus know what a change had taken place.

There are three instances recorded in the New Testament in which our Lord raised the dead to life. You are familiar with them: the little twelve-year old girl, the ruler's daughter; the young man, the son of the widow of Nain; and Lazarus of Bethany. The little girl of twelve was still in her father's house, and the mourners were there. There was nothing repulsive about her outwardly. In all probability she looked like a child asleep, only there was the pallor of death upon her countenance. But she was not asleep: she was dead. But she was still in her father's house.

The son of the widow of Nain had been dead a longer time, and the putrefaction that had begun within was in danger now of manifesting itself without; it was time, to bury him. Our Lord stopped the funeral procession on its way to the cemetery, and raised the young man to life. But he had been dead, really dead; and dead a longer time than the little maid.

In the third case our Lord stood at the grave of Lazarus, and you remember the dreadful words uttered by one of the sisters when the Lord Jesus said, "Take ye away the stone"? They were afraid of the stench of death, afraid to have the grave opened for he had been dead four days already. He was dead—but he was no more dead than the little girl, no more surely dead than the young man on the way to the grave.

All three were dead. Each of them was utterly beyond human power to bring them to life again. The little girl of twelve years was just as much in need of the almighty word of the Lord Jesus as was Lazarus. Death reigned within, but the outward manifestation of the inward cor-

ruption was different in each case. Given time, the body of that beautiful child would have been as repulsive as the body of Lazarus, but the death within was not yet manifest without.

So, I apprehend, there are people whose outward lives differ. There are some who run to every excess of riot. They are not only dead, but they are manifestly dead, like Lazarus. People are afraid of their company. They are criminals perhaps. At all events, the sin within has corrupted the whole life. There are others not quite so bad outwardly, like the young man on the way to the cemetery. Some there are like your little children, very attractive, very lovely, but still dead in trespasses and in sins.

Jesus Christ brought each of the three to life. The outward change in the little girl was not as great as that in the young man of Nain; and the change effected in the young man of Nain when he rose from the bier and went home from his own funeral, was a great change, I grant you; but it was not as great a change as that of Lazarus who had been sepulchred with the dead. There were three degrees of the dread enemy's work, but fundamentally they were all the same. They were all dead. Not one of them could ever have lived again had not the Lord Jesus given them life. The change effected by the new birth in the lives of some is more manifest and open than in the lives of others. But there is always this distinction at least: the difference between the pallor of death and the glow of health, all the difference between death and life; even as Christ said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation"—mark this—"but is passed from death unto life."

That is the thing that distinguishes the Christian. He is no longer dead. He has become alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. The Ephesian Christians thus openly confessed the faith that was in them, and by showing their deeds they proved that they were changed within.

Furthermore, *where there is true faith in the soul it always drives a man to share his faith with others.* I believe in "sharing",—but do not share your sin. Surely you should keep that to yourself, save as you confess it to God. Every man has sin enough of his own without having a share of yours. But share your faith, and the knowledge of the great salvation that has been given to you. The Ephesians so confessed their faith in Christ that the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

II.

Once more: I have spoken of a faith that compels confession. Let me now speak of A CONFESSION WHICH DEFINES FAITH.

Every true confession involves a definition of faith, a definition of faith that grows out of a man's experience. I will take second place to no one in respect to the importance of knowing the truth experimentally, and not merely as a theory. Take for example the confession in baptism. What is it? It is a definition of faith. When one is buried by baptism, what does he confess? He confesses his faith in a Saviour Who died for him, in a Saviour Who was buried for him, in a Saviour Who rose again the third day. What is the gospel? Paul said, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." Some

of you have seen many, many hundreds buried in this baptistry. What did they confess? Just this, their faith in the gospel the apostolic summary of which I have just quoted, the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

These people confessed their faith. How? Many of them had used curious arts, and they brought their books and put them together in a pile, out in the open, and burned them before all men. They said, "We shall not need these books any more. We are entirely separated, divorced from the old life. We no longer believe the things we once believed. These books which once were reckoned to be of value are now utterly worthless to us. We give them up to the flames." What, then, did they confess by thus burning their books?

Incidentally let me tell you that there are many people who ought to burn their books, for there are plenty of books that are good for kindling—and for nothing else. They never were good for anything else. They might well be burned. They contain things that are contrary to the Word of God, and subversive of the faith of those who would put their trust in the Lord Jesus.

But what did the Ephesian believers confess? *They confessed their faith in the finality of Christ.* They said, "Now at last we have reached the Ultimate. We have found Someone Who meets all the requirements of our natures. We have found One who has provided an adequate salvation."

The disciples of John came to Jesus Christ and said, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Art thou but a step along the road? Is Thy coming but a further, and perhaps fuller, revelation of the word and will of God? Or art Thou the last word? Art Thou the divine ultimatum? Must we still look for somebody else beyond Jesus Christ?" And Christ answered, "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." Blessed is he who can accept that as the revelation of God's purposes of grace, as God's last word.

As for these Ephesians, they were not looking for another. They had found Jesus Christ—or had been found of Him. They had arrived at finality. There was nothing *beyond* Him, but infinite truth *in* Him which it will require all eternity to understand. Therefore since the books they had used in superstitious practices they no longer needed, they burned them.

It is a great thing to see a man take his stand for the truth of God in such a way as to burn his bridges behind him, cut himself off from all possibility of going back again. A man gives up a certain habit—I do not know what it is, let us say drink. He has bottles in the cellar. He says, "I am going to stop drinking; I shall not drink any more." Are you sure of that? "Yes." You are never going back to it? "No." You believe the Lord will deliver you from that habit? "Yes; I do." What are you going to do with your bottles? "There they are in the cellar." I know they are there, but how long are you going to leave them there? "I will promise you that I am not going to drink any more." Then take your bottles out and break them—but be mindful of the poor motorist, and do not break them on the curb.

It is the principle I am discussing. The man who does that, shows at least that he has faith that the Lord Jesus has saved him, and will keep him, and that he will

not need these things again. They burned their books. I could suggest many books that would do well to make a fire of. There are many people who waste money on buying books that only corrupt their minds. I cannot go into details, but I leave the principle with you. If you really trust Christ, and are the recipient of His salvation, then act as though you are saved forever and are sure you will need these things no longer. Do you ask what to do with your playing cards? Burn them! And everything else alien to the new life which God has given.

Their confession of faith *served as a confirmation of their own faith.* The Bible requires confession: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." If we really believe, we shall desire to confess; and, by confession, our own faith will be confirmed.

Let me ask you, my friend,—you need not answer me openly for the moment: answer to your own conscience, Are you a Christian? "Yes, sir." Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? "Yes; I do." Have you ever made an open avowal of your faith? "No; I have not." Have you ever followed the divine plan of being buried with Christ by baptism? "No; I have not." But you believe? "Yes." You have not confessed your faith? "No." Why? "I think I had better try myself a little." That is it, is it? Then your faith is in yourself, and not in Christ? Your faith is partly in your ability to maintain a godly walk; therefore you would refrain from a confession of your faith until you are sure, by an extended experience, that you are really a Christian? True faith is not an experiment but an experience. True faith says of Jesus Christ, "He is my Saviour, and as God is true, He will keep me. That being so, I must tell people," and in the telling of it, my own faith is intensified, it is confirmed.

I have known many people who never had the joy of the Lord until they confessed. They had a quiet assurance that because God's Word was true, and they believed they were saved. But never until they openly abandoned themselves to Christ in public view did they have the real joy of salvation in their hearts. The Ephesian believers burned their bridges—or their books, and the fire consumed not only their books but their doubts as well.

And it cost them something. It represented possibly about ten thousand dollars. *It cost them nothing to be saved: it cost them ten thousand dollars to be true to the faith that was in them.* It costs you nothing to be saved. It may cost you everything in life to be loyal to the One in Whom you believe. Do you see the difference? They burned their books, not in order to be saved: they destroyed that which would have cost ten thousand dollars, not in order to be saved, but as a confirmation of the blessed fact that they were saved. There is a vast difference between the two. The poorest man in the world, out of employment, and out of food, without a roof over his head, without a friend on earth, and guilty into the bargain, may be saved on exactly the same terms as the richest man on earth. It costs nothing at all. But come as a poor sinner, having nothing at all, believing that Jesus Christ is your All-in-All. I cannot tell you what it will cost you to be true after you are saved. I cannot tell you what sacrifices may be involved in a consistent life. There may be many things which now you practise which will have to be corrected.

Perhaps some man hears me this evening who knows that in his name in the bank there are thousands of dollars which properly do not belong to him. He knows

that he has kept back the hire of the labourers. He knows that he has not been true and honest in his business dealings. Now he has great riches. He is a member of the church, he bears office, and is honoured by his fellow-churchmen as one of the successful men of the world. As I preach, he knows in his own conscience that surrender to Jesus Christ would involve the surrender of nearly all that he has because it does not belong to him. I do not know what it would cost anyone else to be true to Christ. I only know that you may have salvation without money and without price; and that after that, when once you have seen Him, there will be such compensations in His companionship, such delight in His fellowship, that you will be willing to part company with anybody, or any thing, rather than to break your fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Ephesians had a religion that was in harmony with the Word of God. When the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified it issued in the word of God's being multiplied, growing exceedingly. Would you test any religious movement? If it is really of God it will be characterized by two things. It will magnify the name of Jesus Christ. It cannot be of God without that, for that is the special mission of the Holy Ghost, to glorify Christ. The religious movement that magnifies man instead of and at the expense of Christ is not of God, I care not who sponsors it. And then, if it magnifies Jesus Christ, it will magnify the Word of God. Every revival that has ever come to the earth has always had the effect of sending people to the Word of God. You can measure any movement by that two-fold standard: does it magnify Jesus Christ? Does it honour the Word of God?

Have you a religion that does both? Then you ought to confess it. May the Lord help us so to do if we have not done so hitherto.

Let us pray:

Bless, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the testimony of Thy word this evening. Help us that we may be rooted and built up in Christ, and established in Him, even as Thy word teaches. If there are any here, or who have heard this service by radio, who have not made open avowal of their faith, we pray Thee to give them grace so to do this evening. We ask it in Thy name, Amen.

NO LECTURE THIS WEEK

As last week was examination week in the Seminary, the Bible lecture given Thursday evening was apart from the Seminary course; and as an economy of space it is omitted from this issue.

THE OXFORD GROUP MOVEMENT AGAIN

Oxford Groupers are visiting Toronto again. The Editor's address published in a booklet of forty pages, entitled, "The Oxford Group Movement Analyzed" may be obtained at THE GOSPEL WITNESS office, the book department of The T. Eaton Company, Ltd., both at the main and the College Street stores, and at other book stores. The price for single copies is 5c. If larger quantities are desired they will be supplied from THE GOSPEL WITNESS office at the following rates:

25 copies	\$1.00
50 copies	\$2.00
100 copies	\$3.75
	(postpaid)	

The original edition of this booklet was of ten thousand copies, after it had been published entire in THE GOSPEL WITNESS, which had an additional run of several thousand of that number. That edition was exhausted, and a further edition of seven thousand copies published. Orders have been received for this booklet from many parts of the world, notably from Great Britain, South Africa, and from various mission fields. A little while ago a bookstore in Belfast ordered two thousand copies.

A LETTER FROM BULGARIA AND ITS RESULTS

In our issue of March 1st we published a letter from Rev. Paul L. Mishkoff, of Sophia, Bulgaria, in which he very generously reported his having translated some of the sermons of THE GOSPEL WITNESS into the Bulgarian language, not for printing, but for reading to the people. In that letter he said:

"We can publish every month four sermons in one form, and it will cost us only \$46.00 for 10,000 copies. We have not this money at hand, but we pray that the Lord will provide the funds."

In response we received a letter from a brother in Ohatchee, Alabama, enclosing a money order for \$46.00. The letter is so good that we publish it entirely herewith.

In this connection we offer a suggestion which we have for some time been inclined to make. Certain sermons have a temporary and local value, but many others might be very useful if put into tract form. For example: we have never yet published a sermon on the doctrine of the eternal security of the believer—and we have published many—the supply of which has not almost immediately been exhausted. Only a few weeks ago a sermon on that subject was published, and not a single copy remains except those in our permanent file.

Sermons of this character, as well as sermons having a special evangelistic appeal, could be published as tracts, and would then be available for general use. We suggest therefore that any who do not know what to do with their mission money might assist us in establishing a *Gospel Witness Tract Fund* for the publication of specially useful sermons. All amounts thus received will be acknowledged, and periodically we shall publish an account of what sermons have been published, and how they have been used. So, then, we announce the advent of another wee baby to the Jarvis Street household, namely, the *Gospel Witness Tract Fund*.

We believe that enterprises which grow out of a manifest necessity are more likely to be useful than those which are the result of abstract planning. We shall be glad to receive contributions for the *Gospel Witness Tract Fund* at any time. At an early date we will publish figures informing our readers as to the cost of publishing certain sermons in tract form in editions of one thousand or more, so that it may be possible for others to do in respect to particular sermons what our brother from Alabama has done in response to Mr. Mishkoff's letter.

Following is the letter from Alabama:

Ohatchee, Alabama,
March 14th, 1934.

"Dr. T. T. Shields,
Toronto, Canada.

Dear Dr. Shields:

"In THE GOSPEL WITNESS of March 1st I read with interest a letter from Bulgaria by Brother Paul L. Mishkoff, to the effect that the people were hungry for the Word as expounded by you.

"As I considered the ten thousand copies of four sermons per copy for \$46.00, I concluded it would cost about one-ninth of one penny for each sermon printed; and I was amazed when I realized that it was within my power—which I count a great privilege—to send you as a missionary to foreign fields in the person of the gospel that you preach.

"Brother Shields, I am a Baptist. For a means of livelihood am just a rural letter carrier, and have not money in the general sense of that term. I have only enough to meet necessary family expenses, and those incident to my job—and divide with the Lord, because it is all of Him anyway.

"But back to the mission question. I confess to you that I have lost out with our organized work down here. There may be on the fields some real gospel preachers and teachers, but judging by much of the so-called preaching done by those that come from the schools and colleges, I fear it is shallow and chaffy, and not the gospel of saving grace. I do not say this in the spirit of criticism, but it is just the bare facts of the case, that when our preacher-boys

(Continued on page 7)

The Union Baptist Witness

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ON WITH THE WORK, BRETHREN!

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."

Waiting for returns, expecting the harvest, enduring as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, is a trial which very few count a joy, and yet how necessary these things are for the strengthening of our faith and the perfecting of the saints. If only Christians could live as admonished by the wise man of Ecclesiastes, the trials of a life-time would harm very few and would disarm many of their prejudices and lack of interest in the Lord's work.

The perusal of these interesting items from our churches and the Foreign Missionary Field should cause great rejoicing and inspire us all to greater efforts in the sowing of the seed, and the patient waiting for the harvest. God has blessed, and He will continue to do so as long as we sow in faith. "For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed, for let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord."

HESPELER

Good times are being experienced by the Pastor and people in the town of Hespeler. Two weeks ago Sunday evening, two responded to the invitation, one for baptism, and the other for salvation. For some time definite prayer has been made for the young man who surrendered to the Lord Jesus Christ. The lady who responded to the invitation for baptism lives in a nearby town, and has offered her home as a place of meeting for gospel services. The pastor, Rev. W. N. Charlton, is anxious that something should be done, and the prayers of the Lord's people are requested that this may prove another open door for the work which God has committed to our trust.

BELLEVILLE

Mr. Roy Hisey has been assisting the pastor, Mr. John Armstrong, in special meetings beginning March the 4th. Two have definitely professed conversion, and many others have been under conviction. They will appreciate the earnest prayers of God's people that many may come to know Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord.

MEDINA

Rev. Arthur Lee has been holding special services with Rev. Melchie Henry, the pastor at the Medina Baptist Church. During the first week of the services it was evident that there was something troubling the spiritual life and freedom of the Church. The messages given were for believers, and at one of the services a special invitation was given to believers to reconsecrate their lives to His service, particularly those who held offices. It was a joy to see numbers coming forward for that purpose.

At a later service the members were given the opportunity to right the petty wrongs and grievances existing between them. First the officers were asked to break bread with the pastor, thus signifying there was nothing between them, then the meeting was left open to all. It was a great sight to see Christian going to Christian and asking forgiveness; such was the spirit manifested that even after the close of the service it still continued.

The concluding services were times of great blessing where there was a spiritual warmth evident to all. How applicable was Deut. 7:14, "If my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

At the close of the concluding service the Church was informed that plans were ready for immediate steps to be taken to have lumber prepared for the building of a parson-

age. Any assistance that sister Churches care to give financially would be greatly appreciated. It is estimated that a sum of five hundred dollars will be required to bring to a completion this work begun.

ST. CATHARINES

In a recent communication from the pastor, Rev. E. E. Hooper, he says, "The work here is going ahead. If God be for us, who can be against us? We are anxious to get into larger quarters, as we are crowded every Sunday evening. We are contemplating purchasing a lot." The members recently gave the pastor a surprise banquet on the occasion of his birthday, and gave him a fine presentation.

EAST WINDSOR

A good work is being done at the Calvary Baptist Church, East Windsor, of which Rev. F. S. Kendall is pastor. There has been a number of decisions for Christ recently, and five are now asking for baptism. Three prayer-meetings a week are held, and the Lord is graciously answering their prayers.

BAPTISMAL SERVICE IN LIBERIA

Our missionary, Rev. Gordon D. Mellish, writes in a letter dated February 2, 1934, "It was a great joy to us to have another baptismal service last Sunday, when four men and one woman were baptised. The woman was Nanna, wife of Ge, who was a member of the church before. Then there were two school boys, Ben and Ze, also two town men, Widdi and Toga. Toga comes from Veya bli, where Nyinodiga lives and where the two men, also Nyinodiga's wife, have been giving forth a consistent Christian testimony by services held regularly, as well as by their daily lives. Widdi has been waiting for baptism for many months now, or at least he has wanted to be baptised, but he waited to get his wife's approval of the step he was taking. Now she has approved, but she has not come out for the Lord herself as yet, and so we just continue to pray for her. Widdi comes from the same town as the woman and her husband I mentioned whom the doctor operated on. Also there is one more man from that town, Gan, who has asked for baptism, making four from the one town who are Christians.

Up to this time this town, Whinyon-ga bli, has seemed a very hard place to reach, but now we rejoice to see these coming from there. Others from this town walk one hour to service every Sunday morning to the mission, and we know there are going to be others very soon coming from that place too.

In addition to those I mentioned above, there is also one more woman, Naen-jeede, who has asked for baptism. These four who have asked, we are just keeping waiting at the present time, though each one gave a very clear testimony, and understand what they are doing. Altogether we are very much encouraged in the work at the present time, for also all the services are very well attended."

A good work is being done in the medical department, too. "Up to this time," writes Mr. Mellish, "we have not charged for any medical treatments, but we have found that all other missions in Liberia do charge. At the Lutheran Mission their dispensary, after many years effort, is now self-supporting, so far as medicines are concerned. The people of this district have not as much money or other things, and so we will not receive enough for a long time anyway to pay the full cost of medicines, and by this means a few people may even be turned away, but those who do receive treatment will appreciate it much more than when everything was free.

The work of the Lord among these people is very much upon our hearts for we see such a great need here. We do not even like to think of going home and leaving so much work here, and yet we know that it is better for our health. Will you continue to pray with us for the salvation of many of these people?"

LAST SUNDAY AND THE SEMINARY

Last Sunday morning the Pastor was somewhat indisposed, and at a late hour, about nine o'clock, telephoned Rev. W. Gordon Brown, to ask him if he could take the service, which he kindly consented to do. The Pastor himself preached in the evening the sermon published in this issue.

We refer to this only for the sake of what follows. There was present in the service Sunday morning a gentleman whom we first met years ago as an elder in Spurgeon's Tabernacle, London. He and his wife were concluding a world tour of mission fields. Though a layman, this brother has given much of his time and means to the work of the Lord, and is a man of unusual discernment. Sunday evening he reported to us the morning service. He said, "I was greatly delighted with the message delivered by Mr. Brown, and equally with the other young man, Rev. W. S. Whitcombe, who assisted in the service. You are singularly fortunate in having two such splendid men in association with you. Their straightforwardness and general trustworthiness, as well as their unusual ability, appears at once even to strangers."

To this estimate of these splendid men we breathed a fervent and grateful, Amen. Toronto Baptist Seminary in particular, Jarvis Street Church and the Union of Regular Baptist Churches in general, have a great asset in these two splendid characters.

And further: the value of an educational institution does not consist in bricks and mortar, but in the personnel of its Faculty. That taken into account, we have still other reasons to give God thanks.

Miss Olive Clark, M.A., Ph.D., as a full-time member of the Seminary Faculty, has more than fulfilled all our highest expectations entertained when she joined us. A fine scholar, a splendid teacher, and a woman of excellent poise and judgment, her ministry to the whole Seminary is invaluable; still more especially her influence over and counsel to the lady-students.

But to these we must add other names. We have called Rev. Alex. Thomson, of Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church the Seminary *gyroscope*. No wind can move him, no earthquake disturb him. He and his theology have a rock-like quality. Our readers may judge of the character of his work by his expositions of the Sunday School lesson from week to week.

Rev. A. C. Whitcombe, Pastor at Orangeville, who is our Professor of Hebrew, is not at all like his brother, Rev. W. S.; but is in every particular just as good. These young men are of a type that cause parents almost to envy the father and mother of these two splendid men.

Then we have Rev. W. W. Fleischer, Pastor of Shenstone Memorial Baptist Church, Brantford. Mr. Fleischer is an exceedingly able man: he is our Professor of History, a magnificent preacher, a good executive, a superb Christian gentleman.

Mr. Del Clark, the Director of Practical Work in the Seminary, is one of our own Seminary boys. He is a splendid man who loves the Lord, who is constantly at work finding new opportunities for the exercise of the students' powers.

In the English Department we have also Miss Elizabeth Fuller, a teacher of rich resource and fine ability; and Mrs. J. M. Coghill, another teacher of ability and long experience and gracious personality. She is our dignified Seminary mother and hostess at all social functions. These two ladies give their services absolutely gratuitously, and thus make us perpetually their debtors.

What a Faculty—and the half of their worth has not been told. Can our readers wonder that every day we live we give God thanks for every one of them? Some day in this life, far more than now, the Seminary's influence will be felt; and we doubt not that through the instrumentality of the students they train for ministerial and missionary service, the multitude that no man can number will be augmented by countless thousands—and in the long reach of time by millions—because of their devoted ministry.

How we wish we had plenty of money! What we would do with the Toronto Baptist Seminary! And with THE GOSPEL WITNESS! Remember these interests when you make

your will. And to avoid all possibility of mistake in the identity of the object you name as your beneficiary, associate both of them with Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto.

A LETTER FROM BULGARIA AND ITS RESULTS

(Continued from page 5)

come from the so-called Baptist schools it seems they have been educated away from the Word, rather than in the Word. It is evident that at least part of those who go from these schools to the mission fields are of the same type. Therefore I cannot, in good faith, give to the cause of missions as carried on by the organized work down here.

"But I am happy to enclose this money order for \$46.00, for I am doing it in good faith, and in the realization that thousands of hungry souls will hear the gospel of Christ that 'is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth'. And I am persuaded that many will believe because these sermons are Holy Spirit-empowered.

"I pray God's blessing upon you and your great work, upon Brother Mishkoff in his work, and upon your great sermons as they go to Bulgaria."

(Signed) _____"

**Only 9 Days to
March 31st**

You have said:

"I must send something to The Gospel Witness"; or

"I must send something to The Seminary"; or

"I must send something to the Radio Fund."

As a member of Jarvis Street Church perhaps you have said:

"I must make up my weekly offering arrears"; or

"I must send in a thankoffering over and above my weekly contribution, for the blessings I have received."

Have you said one or any of these things?

HAVE YOU DONE WHAT YOU SAID YOU MUST DO?

If not, do it at once! Do it now!

**Time waits for no man, and
March 31st will soon be here.**

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 9

No. 2

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 14 SECOND QUARTER April 8th, 1934

HISTORY OF THE PROPHETS OF THE PERIOD

Lesson Text: Jeremiah, chapter 7.

Golden Text: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." II. Chron. 7:14.

Bible School Reading: Jeremiah 7:1-16.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

Monday—Isaiah 1:10-20. Tuesday—Hos. 4:1-11. Wednesday—Amos 7:10-17. Thursday—Jer. 2:1-13. Friday—Luke 1:67-80. Saturday—Acts 3:17-26.

I. THE PROPHETS OF THE PERIOD.

Of the written prophets, six give us information which relates them to the period extending from the time of Isaiah to that of the captivity. Isaiah carried on his work in the days of Uzziah, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, (Is. 1:1; 2 Kings 15:20). Hosea laboured at the same time, (Hos. 1:1). Amos delivered his messages during the reign of the first part of these kings, (Amos 1:1). Micah prophesied during the days of the last three, (Mc. 1:1). Zephaniah carried on his work in the days of Josiah, (Zeph. 1:1; 2 Kings 22, 23), and Jeremiah served the Lord in the days of Josiah, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah unto the captivity of his people, (Jer. 1:2,3; 2 Kings 22-25). In addition to these probably another three or four prophets lived and worked during this period. They give us no information in their books concerning the time of their labours, but, judging from the nature of their contents, we conclude that Nahum prophesied during the reign of Hezekiah, Obadiah near the days of the captivity, and Habakkuk about the same time. Joel may also belong to the early part of this period, although some believe that he carried on his labours in the days of Joash, (2 Kings 12), while others hold to a post-exilic date.

II. THE MISSION OF THE PROPHETS.

The mission of the prophets was to convey God's message to men, not simply in the sense of foretelling, although that formed part of their message, but in forth-telling, giving all the counsel of God affecting the local situation, as well as intimating its future application. These men of God belonged to the various strata of society; some, like Isaiah and Jeremiah, to the upper classes, others, like Amos, to the lower circles. They were, all of them, men of strict integrity, of real ability, of thorough consecration, and fearless in the discharge of their God-given duties. They lived in the midst of troublous times, and were called upon to deliver the full counsel of God in the presence of opposition, which meant unpopularity, and for some, physical suffering; yet they declined to compromise either in attitude or message, and remained true to their calling, for which we have much reason to be thankful.

The mission of each prophet, while the same fundamentally, yet differed somewhat at times in its expression. Isaiah lived at a time of political prosperity, and religious decline, with idolatrous practices more or less contaminating the national life. His work was carried on in Judah, where he moved in the upper circles of society, and conveyed the divine messages to the leaders of the nation, (2 Kings 19:5), although not confining his services to these. He has been termed the "most sublime, versatile, and comprehensive of all the prophets". In the performance of his duties he rebuked the wicked, exhorted them to repentance, and assured them of pardon on submission to God. He also predicted the overthrow, and utter desolation of the great cities of the ancient world; and portrayed the suffering and glory of the Messiah, with the universal extension of His kingdom, and the happiness of mankind under His sway. Isaiah did much to aid his countrymen in their external and internal troubles, and if his counsel had been accepted continually the nation would have been saved many sorrows. In accordance with

the nature of his teaching he is well-termed the Evangelical prophet. Note his call (Is. 6), and his wondrous messianic prophecy, (Is. 53).

Hosea laboured at the same time as Isaiah, but in the northern kingdom, where from the religious standpoint, things were worse than in the southern kingdom of Judah. Concerning his personal life we know nothing except that of which we are informed in his book. We know from this account that while a man of God he had a very unhappy married life with an unchaste wife, (Hos. 1:2). God used this union as an object lesson whereby to show the relationship of His people toward Himself. They had committed the sin of spiritual adultery against their divine husband, (2:16; Jer. 31:32). Hosea makes this known to the people, and then in a series of discourses he portrays in detail what is there depicted in general. His book is somewhat sad, but it ends hopefully with a promise of blessing based on repentance.

Amos, the shepherd of Tekoa, also laboured in the northern kingdom. Respecting him we know nothing except that which he has chosen to give us in his book, where, in addition to his occupation and location, we learn of the time of his call, (Amos 1:1; 7:14, 15). He did not belong to the regular prophetic office, but receiving the call while engaged in his secular work, he immediately carried out the divine command, and though located some twelve miles to the south of Jerusalem in Judah, he travelled north to Bethel in Samaria to deliver God's message. The result of his mission we know not, but we are convinced of his faithfulness, and fearlessness in its deliverance. Prediction of judgment and prophetic visions are recorded in his book.

Micah, a native of Moresheth, situated thirty miles southwest of Jerusalem, prophesied concerning Samaria and Jerusalem. He was a man of the people and of the province, and deals almost exclusively with the ethical and religious features of his time. In his prophecy he reproves the sin of the people, and gives a message of hope respecting the glorious future of Jerusalem, ending with a promise of mercy. Zephaniah, it is thought, aided Josiah in his work of reformation, and he has given us in his book prediction of judgment on Judah and foreign nations with a promise of deliverance for the former, Jeremiah is termed the weeping prophet on account of his expressed sorrow over the condition and fate of his people. Living at a time when they were subject to a foreign yoke it was his mission to counsel submission thereto. This attitude was assumed because that yoke was imposed as a divine judgment for sin. Submission was the wisest course to pursue under the circumstances, yet in spite of this the prophet was made to suffer grievously, and was eventually carried forcibly down into Egypt by his rebellious kinsmen where he probably died, (Jer. 43:1-6).

III. LESSONS FROM THE PROPHETS.

Many are the lessons which may be learned from the prophets and their mission. The following are but a few of the most obvious of these. First, we are impressed with the evidence of God's interest in human affairs. While He has granted man freedom of will, He has not left him entirely to his own devices. The supreme illustration of the divine interest is found in the coming of Jesus to this earth, (John 3:16). In the second place we note the fact of men being directly under the power and direction of God. Holy men of God spake as they were moved of the Holy Spirit, (2 Peter 1:21), and their writings were inspired of the same source, (2 Tim. 3:16). In a measure it is the privilege of all the Lord's children to be endowed with the power of the Holy Spirit that they might effectively proclaim the glorious gospel message (Acts 1:8; Eph. 5:18). Emphasis may be laid on the privilege inherent in this.

In the third place various divine characteristics may be observed, such as omniscience, manifest respecting Israel's past, present, and future, and including therein the future of the world; omnipotence, in the exercise of divine power in judgment and deliverance; omnipresence in the fact that God is met with everywhere; wisdom, in the manner in which He deals with His people, and kindness, mercy, patience, and justice. Note may also be made of the high purpose of God concerning His people, made known in the prophetic messages, and the foolishness of man in disregarding the divine directions and appeals. In all the writings, observe the Messianic note. Our Lord is the fulfilment of the prophetic message.