

# The Gospel Witness

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

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Associate Editor: ALEXANDER THOMSON

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

Address Correspondence: THE GOSPEL WITNESS, 130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2, Canada.

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Vol. 13, No. 1

TORONTO, MAY 17, 1934

Whole Number 626

## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

SALVATION MADE SIMPLE

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, May 13th, 1934.

(Stenographically Reported)

Broadcast over CFRB, 690 k.c., as is every Sunday evening service of Jarvis Street Baptist Church, from 7 to 8.30 Eastern Daylight-Saving Time.

"And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."—John 6:37.

I have a very simple aim this evening, one object only in view, and that is, to make the way of life plain to any who desire to find it. My object will be to answer the inquiry which I trust is present in the hearts of many, some within these walls, and I hope hundreds, perhaps thousands, who listen by radio,—to find an answer to the question, What must I do to be saved? I shall not argue the necessity of salvation this evening, but try to speak as though there were many present who are earnestly inquiring their way to Zion, with their faces thitherward. Therefore, I shall be like the man calling the train, the person directing you what elevator to take to get to the counter where you will find the supply you seek. Here is the simple word, the word of our Lord Himself: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

### I.

Now first of all, simply and directly, WHOEVER WOULD BE SAVED MUST COME TO JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF. There is no other way than that. Let that be assumed. Dismiss the church and its ordinances, and all human efforts and agencies as being in any sense indispensable to salvation. As we observed this morning: salvation is a personal matter. It consists in knowing Christ Himself. But what Christ? What Jesus? What Jesus shall we trust? To what Jesus shall we come? *The Jesus of history; the Jesus of the Bible.* I know of no other Jesus than the One Who was born in Bethlehem, Who lived among men, Who died at the place called Calvary, Who was buried, Who did actually rise again from the dead, and show Himself "alive after His passion by many infallible proofs", Who then ascended into heaven, Who makes intercession in our behalf, and some day, as we sang a few moments ago, is coming again to receive

us unto Himself. To that Jesus, the Jesus of the Bible, we are to come: not the Jesus delineated by an unbelieving human imagination. Not a diminished, dwarfed, Jesus, reduced to the level and dimensions of a mere man. If we are to know Jesus Christ at all, we must know Him as He is revealed in the Bible. Here is the only authentic record we have of Him; this, from Genesis to Revelation, is the record which God Himself has given to us of His Son. To that Jesus, then, we must come.

What is He? *He is never the Host of the righteous.* He does receive men, He does entertain men, He does provide for men, but never for righteous men. He specifically said, "I am come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance". If you are a righteous man, you have no invitation from Jesus to come to Him, for "this man receiveth sinners". *Nor is He merely the Assistant of the well-intentioned,* as some would assume,—that, after all, men are well-meaning, good at heart, but weak and frail, and faulty, and fall before many temptations. Men are very wonderful in themselves, we are told; all they need is a little help, someone to assist them a little, a crutch to support them along the way. Well, if that be so, not such is Jesus Christ. He is no Augmenter, or Supplementer of human effort. The treasures of grace do not constitute an augmentation fund to make up the little deficits which define the measure in which men fall short of the full requirements of the law. The Jesus of the Bible is vastly more than that. And to Him we must come.

*He is not the Exemplar of naturally potential saints.* It is a popular idea, that men are by nature saints and that, given an opportunity, they will blossom into splendid characters, and all they need is a word. Ideal, a worthy Example. Jesus came not to set an example to such; He begins with men after another fashion.

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Jesus than the One Who was born in Bethlehem, Who grew up as a man, Who died at the place called Calvary, Who was buried, Who did actually rise again from the dead, Who showed Himself "alive after His passion by many proofs", Who then ascended into heaven, Who is now at the right hand of the Father, Who in His compassion in our behalf, and some day, as we have seen, is coming again to receive

us unto Himself. To that Jesus, the Jesus of the Bible, we are to come; not the Jesus delineated by an unbridled human imagination. Not a diminished Jesus, reduced to the level and dimensions of a mere man. To know Jesus Christ at all, we must know Him as He is revealed in the Bible. Here is the only authentic record of Him; this, from Genesis to Revelation, is the record which God Himself has given to us of His Son. To that Jesus, then, we must come.

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*He is not the Exemplar of naturally potential saints.* It is a popular idea, that men are by nature saints, and that, given an opportunity, they will blossom out into splendid characters, and all they need is a worthy ideal, a worthy Example. Jesus came not to set an example to such: He begins with men after another fashion.

*Nor is He the Teacher of those who, by birth, were heaven-bound.* There are some people who believe that their feet were set in the path that leads to heaven from their birth; they have always been good. There came a great religious teacher to the Jesus of the Bible. He was a master in Israel, a doctor of the law, a great leader among the religious people of his day. But notwithstanding all that this Jesus said to him: "Ye must be born again". He attaches no importance whatever to advantages of natural birth. We are rather proud sometimes of our parentage; and some of us have at least much reason for gratitude on that account. But Christ said to some who boasted that they had Abraham to their father, that God was able, even of stones to raise up children unto Abraham. Ever did he discount the value of hereditary qualities, and never held out the hope of heaven to any man on the ground of the superiority of his natural birth.

As a matter of fact, *He dealt exclusively with sinners.* That is what He came for. He dealt with nobody else. What sort of Jesus do you know? As I come down to the office sometimes by a certain road I pass a government liquor store. I do not know the people whom I see going in there when the doors are open, but I have a pretty good idea what they are going for. When I see a man going in there I know very well he is not going in to buy milk for the baby, or bread for his family: he is going there for one thing only, because there is only one thing they sell, and unless one desires liquor there is no object in going there at all. It may be assumed that when you see a man going into a tailor store he is going in to order a suit of clothes. If you see a man going into a doctor's office you may assume that he is sick, or someone else is sick, and he is calling there in their interests. Thus men of various trades and professions advertise the wants of their patrons by the particular service they offer.

Even so, my dear friends, the Lord Jesus deals exclusively with sinners; no one else can have anything to do with Him. He invites no one else to His presence in this dispensation. It was for that He came into the world: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." "The Son of man" said He "is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Nothing could be plainer. That is the mission of Jesus Christ. I am quite aware that in many pulpits in this land men preach without any recognition of the fact that men by nature are lost, and in need of salvation. They preach a kind of Jesus that is not the Jesus of the Bible, and manage to get through without even a suggestion that men need salvation. But that is not preaching the gospel. I proclaim to you Jesus of Nazareth, the Lord Jesus Christ, and declare that you must come to Him if you are going to be saved. Regardless of what church you belong to, irrespective of the profession you adorn, however excellent your education, whatever blood flows in your veins, whatever your outward character may be, there is only one way of being saved, and that is by coming to Jesus Christ Himself.

## II.

WHAT THEN DOES IT MEAN TO COME TO CHRIST? It is not a question of locality. I remember when I was but a child how I often wished that the matter of salvation could be simplified, that I could locate Jesus Christ, so that I should know His exact address, where I could

go, and where I could find Him. I did not know in those days that others had felt the same thing: "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach." We have not to go outside of this building to come to Christ. You can come to Christ without moving from your place in the pew where you are now sitting. You need not leave the chair where you are sitting beside your radio, to come to Christ. You do not need to lift a hand or a foot to come to Christ. You may come to Him just where you are, and come to Him you must, if you are to be saved.

How, then, are we to come to Christ? Well, *first of all we must come to ourselves.* Mr. Whitcombe read this evening that the prodigal at last "came to himself", that is to say, he oriented himself; he took his bearings; he found out where he was, and what he was, and the conditions of life which then obtained with him. He learned that he had no resources. He had spent all. He discovered that he had no power to better his situation, for "no man gave unto him", he worked for his board, and received for his board something that was perhaps inferior to that which the swine did eat. Hard up he was; and "he came to himself" before he came to his father. So must we come to ourselves, and really know what we are and where we are.

Some years ago I was in the north of Scotland, during the War. I changed at a certain junction point, which was just like the hub of a wheel. The station was in the centre, and railways radiated in every direction. It was not a large station, but the roads went out like the spokes of a wheel, and I was not quite sure what train to take. I asked one of the guards standing by what train I should take. "Why", he said, "get a train at such a place and you go to such a place and then you change and get another train" and so on. I said, "That is very interesting, but what I want to know is where to begin. How am I to get to this place that you tell me I must leave in order to make this other connection?" He stood back and laughed. "Why", he said, "perhaps you do not know where you are?" I said, "I don't." "Well, if you don't know where you are, how in the world do you expect to know where you are going. Now let us get that settled. Here is where you are" and he told me the place where I was. "Now this is the place from which you start. Then you get a train and change"—I forget the names of the places; but I remember he remarked that it was difficult to know your direction if you did not, to begin with, know where you were.

Now, where are you? What is your position spiritually? Have you come to yourself? Do you know that you are bankrupt, that you need Christ, that you need the fulness of the Father's house? As you come to yourself you will learn how urgently you need to come to Christ.

Then let me say further: *it is not necessary that you should feel yourself to be the worst sinner in the world in order to come to Christ.* Very probably you are, do not know; but whether you are and know it or no you may come if only you feel your need of Him:

"All the fitness He requireth,  
Is to feel your need of Him."

Sometimes the virulence of a disease is discovered by means of a postmortem examination. The physician knew that the man was seriously ill. Probably he knew that he was going to slip through his hands, that he was afflicted with a malady that was beyond his power to heal, but just what that malady was, how long it would take to run its course, he did not know. But when the disease had done its work, and life had passed, then perhaps the doctor asked permission to examine, in the interests of science, and perhaps for the preservation of some other life, that dead body, to find out what the man died of, what was the real trouble; and by the examination he discovered the nature of the disease. Now he says, "I had no idea of the virulence of the disease until I examined him in this way".

That is sometimes so in Christian experience. It is after the "old man" is crucified with Christ, when sin has been brought to judgment, after we have been saved, perhaps years after, we discover what great sinners we were. We know that we are sinners; and, whether we know it or not, we are great sinners. But if anyone here is waiting until he feels more deeply about his sin, let me tell you this: all the feeling you need is just feeling enough to lead you to come to Christ. Come to Him, and He will show you what a sinner you are, and will forgive your sins, and cleanse you by His blood, and make you a new creature by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. Do you know your need of Christ? If so, you have taken one step in His direction.

*We need not have a great deal of knowledge.* I should be the last lightly to regard the value of religious knowledge. It is important that people be thoroughly instructed in the word of the Lord. But, thank God, people have been saved while very ignorant, and they have grown wiser by being saved. We may be saved while knowing but little about the Lord Jesus. We may be saved in spite of much ignorance; but all who are really saved will grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Frequently I recall to my mind that interesting story in the ninth chapter of John. It is marvellously useful as a mirror which reflects the experience of many. A man was born blind to whom a Stranger spoke, bidding him go and wash in the pool of Siloam, after He had anointed his eyes with clay. He went; and came seeing. Then the controversy arose as to who this Stranger was. The religious leaders said He was a sinner. The man knew little about Him. He had been blind all his life. How could he know? And his parents were afraid to tell what they knew. And when he was inquired of himself, he said, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." They said, "Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner." He said, "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. That is all I know about Him; that His power opened my eyes." And after further argument at last they cast him out. After that Jesus of Nazareth found him in the temple, and He said, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him." When once a man has been touched by the power of divine grace, even though he knows very little about the Lord Jesus Christ, there is that planted within him which has an affinity for the whole truth of the gospel, and

further light will always be hospitably received, and mentally welcomed whenever Jesus in His fulness comes to make Himself known. You may not know very much, but if you know that Jesus died, and died for sinners, and that you are a sinner, and that He bids you come, you may come to Him, and that, indeed, is a step in His direction.

*Nor is it necessary that you should have a mighty faith.* It is a blessing to be a great believer. But some of you are waiting, perhaps, until you have a faith that knows no doubt, and no questioning at all. But very little faith will do. If you have but a little faith, provided only that it is enough to lead you to come to Jesus, that faith will grow until by and by you will know Him fully for what He really is. Do not wait until you become stronger in faith. Come with the little faith you have, if only you have faith enough to move your will to come to Christ.

Consider *what is the minimum of saving faith*, the irreducible minimum, the *sine qua non*? What is the thing that a man must believe in order to be saved? He may believe many things after he is saved of which he had no knowledge before his conversion. But salvation is a matter of faith: "Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." What must we believe? Here you have it: "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach". What is that word of faith? "That 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." Believing that you will be saved. But no man can be saved without it. There is no salvation by a lesser faith than that. If Jesus Christ was not raised from the dead, then all the claims He made in His own behalf, by that simple fact are invalidated, and we have no divine Saviour, and no divine salvation. He was "declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."

Now do you believe that Jesus died, was buried, and actually rose again from the dead? Somebody told me the other day of a certain Baptist minister who said he believed the dust of the body of Christ was still in the grave, that His body did not actually rise from the dead. I hope that person was mistaken, but I would dare to say to that man, If you say that you do not believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, I do not care what sort of preacher you are, you are not a Christian. ("Amen!") No one can be a Christian who does not believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; for that was the culmination and climax of His redemptive work. And we must believe that; we must believe that the Son of God is come, that He was made in the likeness of men, "made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." If you know nothing else, if you know that Christ is risen and ascended to the right hand of the Father, if you believe in your heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, and will confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, "thou shalt be saved". That is what the Bible says in the tenth chapter of Romans and the ninth verse, as the children sing,

"Romans ten and nine  
Is a favourite verse of mine".

It is a favourite of mine, too.

## III.

Well then, coming, WHAT FOLLOWS? . . . "I will in no wise cast out". That, of course, means that no matter how great a sinner a man may be, nor how long he has sinned, nor how deeply he has sinned, nor how often, if he is out of hell, he can be saved. If he will but come to the living Saviour, He will not cast him out. You need not make any apology. Come confessing your sins. Sometimes my voice has reached into the penitentiary. I have reason to believe there are some who, behind prison walls, are listening to me now. It may be there are some who never expect to be free again in this life. It may be some have sinned grievously, and so offended society that society has decided that you must be locked up for the rest of your natural life. I am sorry if that is so, but if it be so, that you never expect to be able to move among your fellows again, I bring you this gospel: no matter how you have sinned, if you were Al Capone himself, or even the infamous Dillinger, who-soever you are, there is salvation in Christ: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out". That means, He will not cast you out no matter how weak your faith is. You may be a great sinner, and a very weak believer, but if you come even stumblingly to Him, *if only you come, if only you trust Him, He will not cast you out.*

And that means that He will not only receive you now, but *He will never cast you out at a later time:* "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

Salvation is not an occasional meal. Men have come to me sometimes, and asked for a quarter to get a meal—do not come to-night, I do not think I have one. But they have come, and I have said to them, "I have helped you before now, but what are you going to do to-morrow? What is an occasional meal?" What the man needs is a place to live, and a table spread every day, so that the recurring wants of every day will be supplied. Salvation is not an occasional meal: it consists in permanently dwelling in the King's palace, sitting at His table, abiding with Him forever. And He says, "I will not cast you out if you come". That means He will not cast you out by and by. When this life is over, when the whole tale has been told, and life's record is closed, and we depart hence, and stand before God, even then we shall stand in His righteousness, clothed with the perfect merits of the Lord Jesus Christ. He will not cast us out here, and He will not cast us out hereafter.

That is the simple term of salvation:

"Just as I am without one plea,  
But that Thy blood was shed for me;  
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,  
Oh, Lamb of God! I come."

Will you say it in your heart: "O Lamb of God, I come"?

Let us pray:

We pray, O Lord, first for any in this house who up to this hour have not come. May they come now! May they rest in Thy promise and delight themselves in the assurance of salvation on the ground of this authoritative word: I will in no wise cast him out.

There may be many who have heard this message by radio, sitting by their radios, or perhaps in some public places, garages, restaurants, or hotels, while driving a car, and even some away in mid-Atlantic, wherever the message of the gospel has reached to-night, help that man or woman to say,

Oh, Lamb of God I come; and having said it, to believe that Thou wilt never cast them out.

Lord, wilt Thou give grace this evening to those who have heard to make acknowledgment of their reception of Christ in their response to Christ. If Thou hast received them, and they have received Thee, oh, make them willing to acknowledge that they are on Thy side. Help the father to acknowledge to his children in the home, the wife to her husband, the husband to the wife, neighbour to neighbour, friend to friend.

And here within these walls as the invitation is given, and as opportunity is afforded for men and women to confess Christ, Oh Thou gracious Saviour, incline men to come! May this be a night of salvation to a great multitude of people here and elsewhere. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

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

## VOLUME THIRTEEN, NUMBER ONE

By the blessing of the Lord we have been able to complete the twelfth volume of THE GOSPEL WITNESS. This issue is Number One of Volume Thirteen. While many of our readers know something of the history of this paper, as each anniversary comes round, we are happy to know that we have a number of new subscribers who have made the acquaintance of THE GOSPEL WITNESS within the year. For their information, and that of the occasional reader, we state once more that the first issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS was printed with fear and trembling, May twentieth, nineteen hundred and twenty-two. Since that time, THE GOSPEL WITNESS has issued weekly. By one esteemed friend we were then exhorted not to presume to publish sermons, because no one would read them. Two of the first four issues of THE WITNESS contained summaries of sermons. In the fifth issue we published a sermon complete, and no subsequent issue has appeared without a full sermon. Issue number fifteen dated August 26th, nineteen hundred and twenty-two contained the first stenographically reported sermon; and from then until now, every morning and evening sermon, and most of the Thursday night lectures, have been reported verbatim; and from that time one such sermon has appeared in each issue of the paper.

We have never had money enough to advertise THE WITNESS, and it has spread itself, where it has gone, by its own advertising. Several years ago *The Christian Herald*, of London, England, asked permission to reprint sermons from THE GOSPEL WITNESS, a request which was very gladly granted. By this means the sermons of THE GOSPEL WITNESS have been spread all over the earth; for that paper, always true to the faith once for all delivered to the saints, has the largest circulation of any religious paper in the world, somewhat exceeding two hundred and fifty thousand copies a week.

Only this week we received from a missionary of The Evangelical Union of South America, directly from South America, the following letter:

"The Evangelical Union of South America,  
Rev. Dr. T. T. Shields,  
Toronto,

Dear Sir and Brother:

The undersigned is a missionary of the above Mission, which has a branch Committee in Toronto.

The object of writing to you is to express my appreciation of your valuable articles in "The Christian Herald and Signs of the Times". They so suit



my taste in every respect that I am asking if you have written any book on gospel themes, and if so, would you be kind enough to state what books they are, and their publishers. If you have any on hand, you might be willing to send me a copy, and on knowing the price, I will pay you through our office in Toronto, 135 Isabella Street.

May the Lord add His blessing on your efforts, by means of the wireless.

With hearty greetings,

Yours sincerely,"

We quote the above letter to illustrate the way the ministry of THE GOSPEL WITNESS has been extended.

In the twelve years of its ministry THE GOSPEL WITNESS has carried no advertisements—not because we have any special prejudice against them, but because such vigilance is necessary in order to avoid giving place to any advertisement that might be, or might seem to be, at variance with the testimony of the paper.

The subscription price of the paper could not possibly pay for its publication; but God has graciously raised us up friends all over the world who voluntarily contribute to the maintenance of the paper, so that, while many other religious papers have ceased to issue during these days of depression, THE GOSPEL WITNESS can say: "Having obtained help of God we continue unto this day".

This first issue of Volume Thirteen will contain but eight pages, but we assure our readers that we shall make up for the deficiency in the Spurgeon Centenary number which will shortly be published.

We ask our readers to keep THE WITNESS in mind; to pray that its ministry may be energized by the power of the Holy Spirit; and that the Lord will continue to give us friends who will support the paper financially. We could tell many interesting stories about the paper—how its sermons have been translated into other languages; how its illustrations have proved helpful to hundreds of ministers; how its messages are sometimes read over other radio stations; how it has been used to comfort and edify great multitudes of shut-ins; and, above all, how it has been blessed to the salvation of very many souls.

In years past THE GOSPEL WITNESS was a sword as well as a trowel, and dealt many a hard blow in fighting the battles of the Lord; and though THE WITNESS now endeavours to use the trowel more than the sword while building the walls of Zion, it still has its sword girded by its side.

We need not write more, but give all praise to God for everything that has been accomplished, while we thank God and take courage.

It would be a fine thing if our readers everywhere who are able to do so, would send THE WITNESS a birthday present. Give THE WITNESS a dozen quarters, or a dozen half-dollars, or a dozen dollars, as so many birthday love-taps.

### RELIGIOUS ORDERLINESS

The God we worship is a God of order. That is attested by the orderliness of all God's works, and the equal orderliness of His word. If His works be examined through microscope or telescope, the clearer view afforded only magnifies nature's invariable regularity. The

enemies of the truth have endeavoured by every means which human ingenuity could devise, to prove the contradictoriness, or irregularity, of God's word; but all without avail. The Holy Spirit expressed the law of His own nature when, through the Apostle Paul, He commanded: "Let all things be done decently and in order."

Orderliness, therefore, is a Christian duty. Regularity of life is an obligation which inheres in a Christian profession; and is binding upon the individual believer, and upon every church in its corporate capacity. It was to transform a human life of confusion to one of divine order that our Lord Jesus said: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness". A proper understanding and application of the principles of the gospel will make every life orderly. A thing is not necessarily mechanical which operates in an orderly way; "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear," is descriptive of the divine method both in nature and in grace.

Thus we may be orderly in our study of the word of God, not only in respect to time, or to periods of study, but in respect to truth in its many phases. The new moon appears as a fine crescent, and later comes to the full. So do we learn the alphabet before we become masters of Shakespeare, and the multiplication table beginning at "twice one are two" before we study higher mathematics. So also should we appropriate the sincere milk of the word before we clamour for strong meat. Nor should we always content ourselves with milk when, by reason of years, we ought to have developed capacity for meat.

We ought, also, to be orderly in the exercise of prayer; in our steps of approach to the mercy seat. Then praise and adoration will appropriately and naturally precede petition. If we submit to Him and to His word, the divine Spirit of order will teach us how to pray in an orderly fashion.

So should we be orderly in our worship. It was to this the Apostle Paul especially referred, when he said: "Let all things be done decently and in order". Some kind of order should be observed in the hymns we sing. "Lord dismiss us with Thy blessing" would be a poor hymn with which to open a prayer meeting; and hymns of exhortation and admonition, while they may have their place, ought surely to follow rather than precede hymns addressed to Deity. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty"; and when the Spirit of God dominates an assembly of worshippers they rejoice in the freedom which consists in lawful and orderly procedure. Rant and vulgar confusion are conspicuously absent from meetings pervaded by the creative, orderly, Spirit of God.

So, also, we should be orderly in our giving: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him". Mathematics is peculiarly the science of order. The tithe required the observance of numerical order. Nothing grows by fits and starts: in nature there is ever steady, constant progress. So every one should count it a religious duty, not only to give generously, but to give systematically, regularly, constantly. There would be less confusion and disorderly upheavals in churches if pastors would recognize the necessity of orderliness in the administration of church affairs, and so lead their people by instituting some system of giving which would include, so far as possible, every member of the

church. Railway trains run on steel tracks with flanged wheels to keep them in their place. Even motor cars must have their steering gear. The majority of people need a system to keep them systematic; hence an envelope dated for every Sunday, with the amount of one's offering marked on every envelope, will be a weekly reminder to Regular Baptists—who are so often irregular—of their regular obligation, which should be regularly discharged.

"Regular" Baptists! How many are regularly regular? And how many are regular only in their irregularity? If order is heaven's first law, it ought to have some place in the life of the Christian, and of the Christian church.

### RELIGIOUS DECENCY

It is just as much a Christian obligation to do things "decently" as to do them "in order". "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us" is a prayer appropriate to the lips of every Christian. We are admonished to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things", and to "let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good" or beautiful—"works" and thus "glorify your Father which is in heaven". "A meek and quiet spirit" which is said to be "in the sight of God of great price" is described as an "ornament". When our Lord enjoined a life of trust upon His disciples, He said: "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

All these scriptures to which we have alluded suggest that the life which is a manifestation of faith in God, will have something that is beautiful and attractive about it. It surely follows that coarseness and vulgarity of any sort, whether of speech, of conduct, or of apparel, is inconsistent with a Christian profession. That principle should apply to the individual believer. The gospel, when it is really believed, must exercise a refining influence upon the roughest character, and upon the coarsest speech; indeed "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his"; and it is inconceivable that the Spirit of God should have any concord with that which is boorish and indecorous. A true believer, growing in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, will become increasingly a true gentleman, a true lady. There is a politeness, a courtesy, which is learned in the school of Christ as it can be learned nowhere else. There are amenities of the Kingdom of Heaven which excel all courtly manners, and which become instinctive to those who abide in the presence of the Prince of Glory.

These principles also should find exemplification in the collective life and work of a church. The habitation of God's house is the place "where His honour dwelleth". Lightness of speech, coarse behaviour, an unseemliness of gesture, or general deportment, would be inconsistent with a place where the divine honour dwelleth. What shocking irreverence sometimes characterizes religious services! What vulgarity of speech, what inexcusable, and even dangerous propinquity to things that ought not to be so much as named among us is sometimes observable even in religious address! There is a spiritual dignity that is immeasurably re-

moved from all artificial stiffness. Nothing could be more dignified than a cedar of Lebanon, and this is the figure whereby the saint which grows to maturity in the house of the Lord is represented in Holy Writ.

What does it mean, then, for "all things to be done decently and in order" in the assembly of the saints? If one should purchase a costly jewel of the jeweller, would he expect it to be wrapped up in a piece of rough sacking? If one should buy the distilled essence of some fragrant flower, or a delicate unguent from a perfumer, would he expect either to be served to him in a cheap and unattractive tin vessel? Or, if such rich viands, or dainty confectioneries, as grace a king's table, are to be served, who would think of presenting them to their guests on *papier-mâché* plates, or coarse dishes of sheet iron!

How then, shall we offer to men such adornment as the jewels of grace would provide? or such purification of life as is effected by the Name which is as ointment poured forth? or how ought we to spread before the hungry the costly provisions of grace which challenge the appropriation of those who are brought into love's own banqueting house? How therefore, ought we to labour so that the word of the gospel may be "fitly spoken"; that it may, as saith the proverb, be "like apples of gold in pictures of silver"!

### DR. SHIELDS' TWENTY-FOURTH ANNIVERSARY

The following address was read by Deacon George Greenway at both services in Jarvis Street Church, Sunday, May 13th:

Toronto, May 13th, 1934.

Dear Pastor:

Through the goodness and mercy of God, we are permitted to greet you at the close of twenty-four years of your ministry in this Church, and the commencement of your twenty-fifth year as our Pastor beloved.

Again it is our privilege and pleasure to express our continued affection, and love for you, as our Pastor, and heartily to join in the hope that this happy fellowship, as Pastor and people, may continue for many years to come, if the Lord so wills it, and still delays His coming.

We rejoice that, while many in these degenerate days fail to declare the whole counsel of God, you preach His word, with no uncertain sound. The doctrines of grace are faithfully set forth, and salvation, alone through the atoning sacrifice on Calvary, is always presented as the sinner's only hope: This being so, it is not strange that the Lord honours His word and that many are brought to decision for Christ. We rejoice with you in this fulfilment of His promise: "Them that honour me I will honour".

"Though sown in tears, through weary years  
The seed will surely live,  
Though great the cost, it is not lost  
For God will fruitage give!  
The "Harvest home"—of God will come;  
And, after toil and care,  
With joy untold, your sheaves of gold  
Will all be gathered there!"

Your ministry is a benediction to thousands whom you never see. The message by radio reaches untold numbers, and "My word shall not return unto me void", saith the Lord.

There is probably no other preacher in Canada—and perhaps not in the whole world—who reaches more people than you.

We must also mention The Gospel Witness, which you so ably edit, and which carries your message to many

week by week. We rejoice, Pastor, in the wideness of your ministry and praise God for the blessing that attends it.

Let us assure you, dear Pastor, that you have the confidence, love and esteem of every member; and, best of all, the approbation and blessing of God! And we trust, and believe, that at the close of another year—when, if our Lord tarry and you are spared, you will have completed a quarter of a century as Pastor of this Church—we shall have seen still greater things accomplished in the Name of our Lord Jesus, and Pastor and people will rejoice together.

Signed, on their behalf:

CHARLES H. BROWNLOW  
JOHN J. BURTON  
GEORGE GREENWAY  
JAMES G. HYDE  
J. E. JENNINGS  
O. L. RAYMER

Deacons

Dr. Shields replied to the above address in the following terms:

"I am most grateful for this very kind expression read by Deacon Greenway; and the kindly sentiments therein expressed are most heartily reciprocated. This ship "Jarvis Street" has sailed through stormy seas, and we have had many battles for the Book, and for the faith once for all delivered to the saints; but "having therefore obtained help of God" we "continue unto this day". We recognize that God's hand has been upon us for good through all the years. Twenty-four years is a fairly long time, a pretty large share of any man's life. This church is something over one hundred years old. We forgot to celebrate our birthday, but Jarvis Street was a Baptist Church before Toronto, which celebrates its centenary this year, was a city. We are a little older than the city itself. In no time during all the years has there been a pastorate as long as this one. My great predecessor, Dr. Thomas, was here for twenty-one years, so that the two pastorates span forty-five years. That is a fairly long time.

"We give all praise to God. We rejoice that God has enabled us to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"; and in the blessing of God which rests upon our united labours. I sometimes feel rather sorry for ministers who think of other churches than their own as possible spheres of labour. I have long since lost interest in all other churches in the world, in that respect. I expect to go to heaven from Jarvis Street.

"I most heartily thank Brother Greenway, the other Deacons, and the members of the church, and all who were responsible for these flowers spread about here to-day."

## BAPTIST UNION NEWS

### Miss Lane Arrives Home from Liberia

After three and a half years of strenuous missionary effort, Miss Minnie Lane has arrived home on furlough for a much-needed rest. Like most returned missionaries who have spent a term of service in a tropical country, she shows the need of a change of climate, and an opportunity to regain the vigor of health once enjoyed. Her first few months must necessarily be spent in a restful and quiet place where she may be free from all responsibility.

Her only public appearance for the present will be at her home church, Stanley Avenue Baptist Church, Hamilton, on May the 24th. All other appointments and itinerary arrangements must be made through the Union Office.

Miss Lane reports Mrs. Hancox's condition excellent after the operation in England. Her condition became such in Africa that she was hurried out of the country and arrived in England in time to undergo a very necessary operation. Since then her condition has greatly improved, and she will be returning to Canada with Rev. Gordon D. and Mrs. Mellish, setting sail from England on or about May the 19th.

Pray for our missionary staff in Liberia, and especially for Mr. Hancox, and also for those who are on furlough. Further announcements will be made through these columns about the Foreign work and the workers, from time to time.

### Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto

Within the past few weeks sixteen have sought membership at the Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church, Toronto, one by letter, and fifteen by baptism. This bears testimony to the faithful ministry of the pastor, Rev. Alex. Thomson, and the Sunday-school teachers, as all are either scholars of the Sunday-school or parents of scholars. On Sunday, May 13th, ten followed their Lord through the waters of baptism. Two little girls of nine and ten years of age made application to the pastor for baptism. The result was made known at home, and the parents decided to come with their children and be baptized. In one family the father and three children were baptized together. Another case of both parents and their only child made a lasting impression on a well-crowded church audience. There is great rejoicing among the members for what the Lord is doing. Praise His Name!

### York Road, Guelph

May the 6th was another great day at the York Road Baptist Church, Guelph. In the morning two ladies were baptized. At the Communion Service following, nine were received into membership. In the evening five more were baptized, two married couples, and a young man. Fifty-five have been baptized in York Road in about thirteen months.

For the last two weeks a number of Armenians have been coming to the Sunday-school. There is a large colony there, and prayer is asked for them.

### Kinmount

May the 9th concluded ten days' special services held in "Hopkins Hall", under the rich ministry of Rev. L. Roblin of Otterville. The meetings were well attended, particularly the last week, by which time much of the prejudice had been broken down. Opposition, however, from the other denominations still continues. Mr. Gillion from Bobcaygeon drove over to assist at as many services as possible, and Mr. Boomer from Norland, also lent his support.

It was regretted by all that the campaign was such a short one, as the last few evenings there was a remarkable interest shown, and the numbers greatly increased.

Mr. Roblin's able exposition of the Word, coupled with a tender gospel appeal, was felt to be just the ministry necessary for this pioneer missionary work. The young converts hungrily devoured the rich feast of spiritual teaching. Many of them, in their teens and early twenties, never missed one meeting. They have been established in the faith and have expressed a desire for more.

Mr. Roblin's violin proved a real attraction, and his exquisite rendering of favorite hymns will be a village topic for some time to come. It is our earnest hope that he will be able to return in the near future and finish a work which was really but begun.

## TWENTY-FOURTH OF MAY RALLIES

### London Area

Kindly note that the Rally at London, under the auspices of the Briscoe Street Regular Baptist Church, will be held in the South London Normal School, at Wortley Road and Elmwood Avenue.

Special Speaker—Rev. A. J. Lewis of Kitchener.

Kinsman Quartette of Toronto will sing at all services.

### Toronto and Hamilton Area

Stanley Avenue Regular Baptist Church, corner of Stanley Avenue and Lock Street, Hamilton. Welcome home for Miss Minnie Lane of Liberia.

Special Speaker—Rev. James McGinlay, President of the Convention.

The Invictus Quartette of Toronto will sing.



## Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 9

No. 2

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 24

SECOND QUARTER

June 17th, 1934

### BUILDING THE WALL AND THE OPPOSITION

Lesson Text: Nehemiah, chapters 3 and 4.

Golden Text: "So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof; for the people had a mind to work." Neh. 4:6.

Bible School Reading: Neh. 4:1-23.

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS:

Monday—Job 22:21-30. Tuesday—Prov. 3:27-35. Wednesday—Ps. 5:1-12. Thursday—Ezra 4:1-5. Friday—Acts 5:17-26. Saturday—I Cor. 16:8-14.

#### I. BUILDING THE WALL (3:1-32).

In the previous lesson we noticed the decision of the people to rise up and build the wall of Jerusalem, (2:18); in this lesson we find the record of the carrying out of that decision. It would seem as if their action followed immediately upon their decision, with no waste of time between. There was no change of mind in the matter, therefore, the decision was not made thoughtlessly, nor was it based simply on the impulse of the moment. It was arrived at, undoubtedly, after the need had been brought vividly to the attention of all, together with the responsibility and privilege of the undertaking, and the patriotic nature of the work. Connected as it was with the Lord's city, and the Lord's people, it might reasonably be looked upon for spiritually illustrative purposes as the Lord's work, as indeed in a sense it was in its historical aspect.

With this in mind, several things are worthy of attention. First, that of the immediacy of the action after the decision. Sometimes decisions are made in the Christian realm without any resultant action following. They are simply forgotten with the consequence that accomplishment does not measure up to expressed intentions. Emphasis may be laid on the sacredness of decision reached and expressed in relation to the things of God, whether respecting salvation, or concerning matters affecting the Christian life. No decision should be reached thoughtlessly, and once arrived at in harmony with the word of God should be faithfully adhered to. In the second place we may observe the plentiful nature of the work. There was sufficient to engage the labour of every returned exile. There was consequently no excuse for idleness. The work was hard, to many unusual, to some possibly uncongenial, yet it was associated with hope and expectancy, and productive of patriotic and religious satisfaction. It was also progressive in nature, and being of ample proportions, it was necessarily divided by measure among the workers. This meant that neglect of duty by any compelled others to fulfil the extra task. Seen in this light negligence of duty means selfishness of purpose, and unfairness to those who are faithful, as well as sin in the sight of God. Work should be done heartily as unto the Lord, (Col. 3:23). Emphasis requires to be placed upon dependability in Christian service. Observe that some of the Jewish rulers declined to take part in the work, (v. 5), while special mention is made of the daughters of all of the rulers who did their part, (v. 12). The significance of the record may again be noted as in former lessons.

Observe further the orderly nature of the arrangements for the work. To each person was allotted a certain part of the wall, for which he was responsible. This meant concentration on a particular task, and all working together produced co-operation of effort. This arrangement was in accordance with the principle governing the work of God. Orderliness is manifest in all He does, as well as in all He desires to be done, (I. Cor. 14:33). Not much, if anything, would have been accomplished in the building of the wall if the people had kept moving around its circuit, touching a stone here, and a particle of lime there, and nothing would have been done if they had just gone round looking at the work to be done; yet in the Christian sphere we have representatives of both these classes. One may legitimately go to the help of another, but where such assistance has been rendered there should be a return to one's own task. And each person should be doing something in the Lord's service. Concentration of purpose and labour are both essential in Christian work. For the lack of them the cause suffers.

There are too many itinerant workers, tourists, and loafers among us. They are thinking more of getting, than of giving something. Let there be more concentration and co-operation of a consecrated sort, and there will be more progress.

#### II. OPPOSITION TO THE WORK, (4:1-33).

There never yet was work accomplished of a genuine and far-reaching importance which was not required to face opposition of some kind. In building city walls one might hope to escape the antagonism of enemies, but the Jews discovered otherwise. Sanballat and his companions were on the job. Several modes of hindrances were tried in order to defeat the accomplishment of the Jewish purpose. The first of these was mockery, (vs. 1-6). In the manifestation of this reference is made to the feebleness of the Jews, to the almost impossible task of resurrecting the wall out of the rubbish heaps, and to their possible inability to erect a strong structure, (vs. 2, 3). The task was undoubtedly a heavy one, with many discouraging features, and mocking would not be easy to withstand. Later on there was a tendency to discouragement in the ranks of the people, (v. 10), so their enemies were assaulting the Jews in a possible vulnerable spot. No one cares to be mocked, and the discouragement arising therefrom is hard to bear at any time, but particularly when difficulties are besetting one's endeavours. Note our Lord's experience of mockery, (Matt. 27:29), and the danger of discouragement leading to disobedience as in the case of Israel at Kadesh Barnea, (Number 14:1-4).

The Jews were manifesting wisdom in the way in which they met the mocking attack of their enemies. They might have engaged in argument, or they might have answered in anger, but instead they made the matter known to God in prayer, and kept on with the work. The purpose of the enemy was to secure the cessation of the work, and they would have been satisfied if this had been brought about even by the use of argument. We must be careful these days lest we be sidetracked in meeting the assaults of the enemy. We must engage in proper labour while we pray. The petitions of the Jewish prayer are strong, and seem vindictive, but they must be looked upon as emanating from persons who esteemed the offence of their enemies as having been committed against God, and therefore deserving of most severe punishment. Note the progress of the work, and the spirit animating the people, (v. 6). They "had a mind to work". When this is the case with any band of people progress is sure to be registered. Emphasis may be laid on the power and privilege of prayer.

On the failure of mockery to effect the purpose desired Sanballat and his companions meditated the use of force to accomplish the same end. They "conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it", (v. 8). This was not an empty threat which their enemies lacked the power to carry out. It would have been a serious business for both parties undoubtedly, but hatred does not always consider consequences, and an armed conflict might have taken place had not the Jews learned of the plot, and made efficient preparation to meet it, (vs. 13-23). This attitude discouraged the meditated attack, as success evidently depended on taking the defenders by surprise and it did not eventuate. Let us learn not to fear the threats, or attacks of the enemy, but prepare to resist them, knowing that the devil himself will flee when opposed, (James 4:7).

It is of interest to note the thorough preparation made by Nehemiah. He was determined not to be caught napping, so armed his followers, and set them in position on the wall, while they went on with the work. The sword and trowel were both ready for action, the one for battle, the other for constructive effort. Conflict and peaceful labour are still the fate of the servants of God, and for both they must be prepared. Observe also the constant alertness of attitude on the part of these Jews, (vs. 19-23), and the determination with which the work was carried on. Continued watchfulness is always necessary in the face of an enemy, and frequently we are enjoined to manifest this, (I Cor. 16:13; Col. 4:2). To encourage his followers, and speed them on to activity Nehemiah gave them a rousing exhortation, wherein he first of all told them not to be afraid of their enemies, then instructed them to remember the Lord "which is great and terrible", and enjoined them to fight for their brethren, their sons, their daughters, their wives, and their houses, (v. 14). In this exhortation notice the religious, patriotic motive. God was first, then family and home. Conscious of God's presence and power, men are able to face all enemies, and conquer through faith in the divine Helper, (Phil. 4:13).