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Editor: T. T. SHIELDS

Associate Editor: ALEXANDER THOMSON

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

Address Correspondence: THE GOSPEL WITNESS, 180 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2, Canada.
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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"YEA, AND IN HIM AMEN"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, August 5th, 1934

(Stenographically Reported)

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"According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."—
Ephesians 3:11.

"For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.

"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."—II. Cor. 1:19,20.

Prayer before the Sermon

O Lord, we thank Thee this evening for the promise of the Comforter, the One Whom Thou hast sent to stand by us, to instruct us and teach us in the way that we should go; and to communicate to us the things of Christ, even as the Son has revealed the things of the Father. Therefore do we come to worship Thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God.

We pray that this evening light may shine upon the sacred page. We rejoice to know that the Book which Thou hast given us is Thine own word, written by men who were moved by the Holy Ghost. We thank Thee for its infinite compass, for its inestimable wealth of truth. We bless Thee because Thou hast left with us a divine Teacher, even the divine Author of the Book Himself, for He, Who inspired its writing is pleased to open our understandings that we may understand the Scriptures. Graciously make Thy presence manifest in this service this evening. Thou dost come to us in quietness, in semblance of a dove. Often have we heard Thee, Thou Spirit divine, speaking as the still small Voice. In this quiet evening hour we beseech Thee so to attune our hearts that we may catch the faintest whisper from the Skies. Oh help us that we may understand Thy truth better, and that some who have hitherto walked in darkness may this evening be brought into Thy marvellous light. Yea; may God Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness shine in their hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

We think this evening of many whom we do not see. We thank Thee for the privilege of entering the rooms of the sick, of carrying Thy gospel to hospital wards, to sanatoria, to wayside places, and to points where men and women are seeking rest and refreshment of body and of mind. May the Lord render the word of His grace effectual this evening wherever it shall reach. May many who, at the beginning of this service, knew not Christ as Saviour, be translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of Thy dear Son.

Graciously minister to those who are in pain. Give them relief, we beseech of Thee. If it please Thee, O Lord, that so, it should be, restore to health and strength those who suffer.

Bless us as we meditate upon Thy Word. Make all who in any way partake of this service, to know that God is with us, and that we have heard His voice. Hear us since we ask it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

The Bible, from beginning to end, is the essence of truth, truth concentrated to the highest degree. God is a great Packer: He can pack an oak into an acorn; He can pack the food of millions into a single kernel of wheat. The miracle of the loaves and fishes was but the supernatural acceleration of natural processes. He did in a moment of time what He is always doing by slower methods throughout the realm of nature.

So He has packed all truth into the Bible. There are some who do not so believe. But we in this place are convinced that such is the case. Someone may ask, "Why not a continuous revelation? Why should not God speak directly to men to-day as He did in ages past?" I do not believe He does thus give special revelations to-day. If any of you have special revelations from heaven, please share them with someone else; do not bother me with them. I am not interested in your visions and dreams. The postman scarcely ever comes to my office that he does not deliver, with other mail, some communication from someone who imagines that he or she has received a special revelation from God. We may sometimes, by the goings of God upon our own spirits, as Bunyan would say, communicate His will to us in a way that will make that, if it be in accord with His Word, an

infallible communication to the individual concerned. But never vicariously does He do so, communicating His will through one to another.

The Bible is the word of truth, truth in essence. Why do we want more? Why not seek an amendment to the multiplication table? Why not ask for an enlarged alphabet? Why are there only eight notes in the scale? To us, the Bible is a book of principles. It is an ageless book. It is contemporary with all ages, because it is the word of Him Who is from everlasting to everlasting God.

To some of those great principles I propose, as the Lord shall help, to endeavour to direct your attention for a little while this evening.

I.

With these two verses as the basis of my argument, let me remark to begin with that GOD HAS A PLAN FOR EVERY HUMAN LIFE, that God works in all realms according to plan. It is important that we should conceive of God as a God of order, a God Who—I think I may reverently say it—is governed by His own laws; for the reason that all His laws radiate from Himself, and are founded in the nature of things—which is really another name for the nature of God.

There are evidences of order and design everywhere in nature. You cannot break a rock asunder, or inspect a flower, or microscopically examine the minutest forms of life, or survey the heavens and mark the measured courses of the heavenly bodies, without seeing that behind it all there is an infinite Intelligence Who has planned and ordered things according to His own will; and Who, by His own power, carries forward His programme in orderly progression. You cannot examine your own body, or study the constitution of your own mind, without concluding that you are fearfully and wonderfully made, and that there is design and purpose running through it all.

And who that considers the recuperative powers of nature can fail to see that Someone has anticipated the abnormalities, the breaks, and violences of life, and has laid up in store a supply available for the restoration, for the normalizing, of it all? That is a mere truism, I know. Anyone who observes nature with but the most cursory glance, without microscope or telescope, who is content with mere superficial observation, must be impressed with the presence of design in the whole fabric of nature.

What should we expect in the moral and spiritual realm? If we find order and prescience in the one, shall we expect mere hap and chance in the other? If we are subject to fixed and inexorable law in the physical realm, if there be uniformity of law, and if law be universal—if indeed it be a universe and not a multiverse—if there be uniformity of law at all, then in the moral and spiritual realm we may reasonably expect to find a like design, and similar evidence of order and of a system of government. Indeed, if there be any break in that moral realm, any lapse or violation of any law of the realm, would it be unreasonable to expect that we should find that preparation had been made for recuperation, for restoration? Should we not expect that the divine Creator had anticipated human need, and made provision for it? I venture the assertion that that is exactly the fact of the case, and that the whole scheme of redemption is in perfect harmony with the order and design of the natural world.

God has a plan. That is what our texts say, that He has an eternal purpose: that from the beginning He saw to the end; that the whole course of human history, whether considered in the large, or in respect to individual experience, is all naked and open to His view, that He has anticipated every conceivable exigency of life, and has a plan for our redemption.

II.

Let me further observe that HIS PLAN OF REDEMPTION IS CENTERED IN JESUS CHRIST, and is expressed or revealed through Him to needy men. I know there are religious experts who seem to imagine this world was terribly neglected until they arrived, and that no consideration that could be effective for all time for human need was taken. Hence we must have professors of various orders who will evolve out of their own minds and imaginations schemes of human betterment!

We believe that the principles of the Bible are just as fixed and inexorable as are the laws of nature itself, and that they emanate from the same Author. The principles that enter into the scheme of redemption *are all of divine origin*. I hope you will not object to that. I saw a little boy or girl—I expect it was a girl, however—downtown one day, just a little toddler. There were crowds of people on the sidewalk, and her mother had let go her hand. As we got where the traffic was a little thicker she called to the little girl, "Come back and let me take your hand." "No!" She put her hand behind her back and said, "I go on my own"! So do men and women foolishly want to "go on their own". They have turned every one to his own way.

But there is room for congratulation, for everlasting praise and thanksgiving to God, that He has had compassion upon us in our folly, and that of His own infinite wisdom He has devised means that His banished be not expelled from Him. Mark you, if once you can accept that principle, that salvation originates with God, then the foundation for faith has already been laid. It is because men think they can save themselves they get into so much trouble.

I do not know any chemist who would presume to try to alter any law of the chemical realm. I am not a chemist. I am aware that chemists make new discoveries by new combinations of various elements, and by reading more accurately the laws of the chemical world. But the most man can do is to discover the fixed principles of a particular realm, and conform his activities thereto. I have never heard of any astronomer petitioning parliament for authority to improve upon the solar system. Thank God, there are some things beyond the meddlingness of our legislators. I heard a story the other day told by Lord Cecil when he was visiting here. He said there were three men lunching together, who discussed among themselves which of the three represented the oldest profession. One was a surgeon, one was a mathematician, and the third was a politician. The surgeon said facetiously, "You know that woman was made of a rib taken from Adam's side; so there must have been a surgeon there. Surgery is surely the oldest of our sciences." "Ah," said the mathematician, "I read also in the same Book of a system of order being established. There can never be order anywhere without the application of the principles of mathematics. What have you to say to that?" The politician said, "You are both right so far, but let me ask you a question, Who made the chaos?"

Men have succeeded in producing a chaotic condition of things, but we may be thankful that God has done some things without consultation with His human creatures. He made man in His own image and likeness, but He did it last of all. I used to visit in a certain home, sometimes by special invitation of the gentleman who was a close friend of mine. When he wanted to talk with me a while he would say, "Come up to the study." Then, when we got inside, he would close the door. Presently there would be a knock, and the door would open. His wife would look in and say, "Should I be intruding?" If he had important matters he wanted to discuss I have heard him say, "I fear you would, my dear; we have a private matter to talk over." It was probably not particularly private, but he knew that when his wife entered it would be time for him to be silent!

The Lord completed the creation of this old world before He made man, so that there was no one to interfere with it. When man was created He put him into an ordered world, and with that ordered nature man has not been able to interfere. The sun rises and sets as he did at the beginning, and the whole course of nature proceeds according to the will of God. If God be supreme there, why should we not expect Him to be supreme in the moral theatre? Why should you want to dabble with things there? The fact is, salvation is of divine origin. It is according to His eternal purpose.

Observe: this plan of His is one that is *not discoverable by the human mind*. There are some things in the natural realm which we can reach for ourselves. There are some natural secrets that may be wrested from nature's breast. Men have compelled the natural world to reveal some of its laws. When we speak of natural law we mean nothing more than the way in which man has observed certain natural forces to work. Men have, by close observation, learned how to adjust themselves to laws which cannot be changed. But now in the spiritual realm, while the laws of right and wrong are open to all of us, when we have violated God's law, we may receive instruction respecting the method of restoration only by the principle of divine revelation.

In the chapter I read to you the Apostle Paul speaks of that which was "not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit". He explains in this chapter how he knows so much, and he explicitly says, "I am able to tell you this, not because I discovered it, but because God from heaven revealed it to me—If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to youward: how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." That is what the Bible claims to be—not a record of men's gradual, painstaking, laborious effort to find God, it is not a record of the evolution of human religious consciousness: it is a record of the unfolding of the plan of the ages, the eternal purpose which God has purposed in Christ Jesus, revealed to ruined men in order that they may be saved.

Are you ready to receive instruction, not from me, not from any man, be he pope, or priest, or bishop, or whatnot—nor from a particular professor or educator. There is but one source of instruction on this matter, and that is the revealed Word of God: There are re-

sources of recuperation, of redeeming and restoring grace, that are beyond human knowledge unless God reveals to men their need and His abounding grace. Are you ready to accept and to recognize the implications of that position?—for it amounts to this: that all the way through it is grace—grace—grace all the way. Grace, as I have so often told you, is only another name for God.

But you cannot find it out for yourselves. You must come as a little child. Just as when, as a little child, you climbed upon your mother's knee and said, "Mama, a Bible story," and mother told it you, so must you come as a little child to Him Who is the King of kings and Lord of lords, that He may tell you a Bible story, that He may tell you how God has planned to redeem us from all iniquity. You need not buy the latest book. You will never improve upon the word of God that liveth and abideth for ever.

The next matter is that, while this cannot be discovered, it is *explicitly revealed*. God has made known His redemptive purpose to us. "Oh," says one, "I would like to find it out for myself." You do not act after that fashion in other matters. I remember a good many years ago a friend reported to me an interview he had had with a certain famous Brooklyn minister. He said to the preacher, "Dr. So-and-So, do you still read your Hebrew Bible? Do you study your Greek Testament to-day?" I do not subscribe to what the Doctor answered, but it is suggestive, and illustrative of the subject. The great man said to the enquirer, "Do you ever go to New York, to Manhattan?" "Yes." "Do you go over the bridge, or do you swim?" "I go over the bridge." "So do I." Of course you do. That is how you came to church. You did not build your own motor-car? Why did you not? You used one somebody else built for you. You took the street-car that was running. You availed yourself of that which had been provided for you. Why in the name of common sense—to put it on no higher plane—will not men avail themselves of the salvation which God has provided and revealed? Why should we want to swim when the bridge has been built? Why do we try again the folly of the Babel builders, and seek by our own efforts to erect a tower whose top will reach to heaven, when God has already let down from the skies a ladder that reaches from heaven to earth, upon which the angels of God ascend and descend, waiting to carry us home?

It is revealed in the Bible. That is all. *It is revealed*. Said Elisha of the great man, the captain of the host of the king of Assyria, "Tell him this: go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean." But the self-sufficient Naaman was angry and said, "Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage." That is how people approach the gospel. "I thought"! Never mind what you think. You say, "Does not God want me to think?" Yes; but He wants you to think as He thinks. The highest exercise of the human mind is to think God's thoughts after Him. And you have a long way to go, my thinking friend, before you can catch up with God. No! No! He does not require men to stultify the intellect—nor does faith do that! But we are to accept as divine direction that which the Bible gives, because it is part

of the eternal purpose. It is as fixed and inexorable as gravitation. You cannot change it. If you want to be saved, you must accept God's plan, and not try to evolve one for yourself.

And surely we ought to be as reasonable in our attitude toward God as we are in our attitude toward faulty and fickle man. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." You are to transfer your faith to another object. What is it, then? That revelation is exclusively through Christ. There is no way to God but through Christ. Even though we know Him in any measure in nature, it is still through Christ; for He is the Author of nature, and the Creator of it all. But the scheme of salvation centers in the person of Christ "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." You do not need another gospel, you do not need a new philosophy any more than you need a new sun. God has forever settled it, and it is in Christ, and in Christ alone. We shall find salvation in and through Him, or we shall not find salvation at all.

Very simply then I refer to the other text, which I have dealt with only indirectly: "The Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." I wish some preachers would study that text. If certain people are asked their opinion on a certain subject they reply, "Yes and no". "Are you going east?" "Yes and no"! I suppose they mean that if they go far enough east they will get west. "Are you an evolutionist?" "Yes and no"! "Do you believe in the inspiration of the Bible?" "Yes and no"! Not thus does the gospel speak. Paul says, "Silvanus and Timotheus and I so preached the gospel that it was an affirmative, positive, message in Christ. All the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." Or, as the Revised Version has it, "Howsoever many promises there be"—in Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, it makes no difference where they are—"howsoever many promises there be", they find their fulfilment and complement in Christ, and nowhere else. The promise to Abraham that in his seed should all nations of the earth be blessed was fulfilled in Him: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." In Him is the yea. Everything is in Christ.

My friends, it means this, to put it very, very, simply. God has already answered your question. You do not need to ask Him whether He is willing to save you. "In him" is the yea. Have you ever been in the House of Commons? An honourable member from so-and-so enquires so-and-so, and the minister answering the question says very often, without elaboration, repeating the question or calling it by number, "The answer is in the affirmative"; or, "The answer is in the negative." What do you need? Forgiveness of sin? Cleansing of the blood? Regeneration? Power from God to effect the continuous process of sanctification until you are presented without fault before the throne of God? Whatever you need is already answered in Christ—and the answer is in the affirmative. "All the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."

What does that mean? It simply means that grace to enable us to acquiesce in the divine programme was in Christ, as our hymn has it—

"Ho, ye needy, come and welcome,
God's free bounty glorify;
True belief, and true repentance,
Every grace that brings us nigh,
Without money,
Come to Jesus Christ and buy."

The man of science puts his microscope over the object that he is examining. He is looking for the operation of some law that he thinks he has observed, and, having examined it closely, he says, "Yes; I see it." He calls to his fellow-labourer, "Look at that." He looks at it: "Yes, I see. Are you disappointed?" "Well, I did not expect to see just that." "What about it?" "It is the law. We cannot change it." What did he see through the microscope? Yea. And what did he say when he saw it? "Amen; I cannot change it."

What do you see in the gospel? God's plan of saving poor lost sinners? What else do you see? All the resources of grace to enable us to bow to the divine decree and say,—

"Nay, but I yield, I yield,
I can hold out no more;
I sink, by dying Love compelled
To own Thee Conqueror."

I have spoken thus this evening with a desire to show you that there is nothing arbitrary in the scheme of redemption, that there is nothing that requires us to stultify our reasons, to refuse to allow any faculty of the mind to function. It means that we are to examine the divine revelation, and receive it gladly. That is the meaning of the word spoken on the day of Pentecost, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized." They said, Amen, to the affirmations of the gospel; they acquiesced in the divine programme; they came from the far country back to the Father's house.

It is comforting, surely, to every thoughtful man to know that the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ is orderly, as orderly as creation itself, and needs no amendment, no improvement. May the Lord help us, that just as we receive the sunshine and the rain, we may receive the word of God; for He Himself instituted a comparison between them: "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

May it prosper in your soul and mine, that all may learn the joy of saying, Amen, to the revealed redemptive purpose of grace in Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE ANTI-CHURCH HERESY

We have before in these columns, on several occasions; directed attention to the importance of the local church as an organization of divine institution; and now we call attention to it once more. An evangelism that makes no provision for the instruction and training and discipline of young converts is not the evangelism of the New Testament. The Great Commission was given by our Lord before He returned to the Father, and is recorded in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark; and is, of course, implied in the general teaching of the other Gospels. In substance, it is repeated in the first chapter.

of The Acts: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." What is involved in obedience to that commission was exemplified in the activities of the apostolic church, recorded in The Acts of the Apostles.

But the rest of the New Testament is addressed especially to Christian people, and is occupied with direction to believers, instructing them how to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things". Indeed, it would not be too much to say that the larger part of the New Testament consists rather of instruction to the children of God than in direction respecting the work of evangelism. The Epistles to the Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Thesalonians, were addressed specifically to local churches. We need not, however, occupy our space with further emphasis upon the truth that the local church is of divine institution.

For some years now there have been springing up organizations, calling themselves by many names, which are not churches. They are "tabernacles" of various sorts, "centres", and what-not. But they have no membership. They are usually nominally under the direction of a committee or of some particular leader. They are not designed as spiritual homes, but as religious lunch-counters. The form of organization permits of no kind of discipline. Those who attend belong to nothing, and leave nothing when they depart.

These places are usually avowedly evangelical, and, generally speaking, their testimony is true to the essentials of evangelical faith. They are religious centres, served generally by a succession of men of varied doctrinal complexions, and of equally varied ability.

The people who attend usually boast of their "freedom"—and their freedom is the freedom of a boarding-house as against the discipline of a well-ordered home.

These congregations are usually under some kind of manager who preaches only when other special preachers are not available. These religious centres are very much like religious shows. They belong to a kind of circuit, and the preacher-actors, who successively preach in them, go the rounds. They are usually described as being "famous"; or, "dynamic"; or, "widely travelled"; or, as having shaken hands with some important personages; or as being "ex—" terrible somebody: "ex-cowboy", "ex-pugilist", and we know not what else. But these religious peregrinators seem to have this in common, that they are bitterly antagonistic toward anything that resembles an established church, with a settled ministry. They seem to resent the idea that there should be such established places whose doors are not open to religious sensation-mongers.

That, of course, is not surprising. We have found men who are always on the go, giving addresses here and there, ready always to recommend any group of Christians to form an undenominational organization, centre or tabernacle, without membership. The reason is, of course, that that makes one more platform from which they hope to speak. It enlarges their circuit, and somewhat increases the probability of their having steady employment somewhere.

Two or three years ago we wrote an article entitled, "Religious Sprees", which greatly provoked those against whose operations it was directed. We have never regretted writing it, and are writing this article merely as an extension and enlargement of it.

We insist that this anti-church movement is utterly unscriptural. It advocates a type of religious life that is far from the standards of the New Testament. The people who attend and support them do not seem to recognize that their operations constitute something of a religious racket. They are parasitic in their very nature. They make no impression whatever upon the forces of evil, and do nothing to build up sane, solid, symmetrical, Christian character. Their one redeeming feature is that they provide a city of refuge for the disgruntled people of all churches. There will always be certain people who find their only happiness in being miserable; whose repentance is always vicarious in that it is exercised in respect to other people's sins rather than their own; and whose so-called faith is but the grossest presumption disguised.

Their financial management is usually of a very questionable character, as there is no membership, no organized body to whom the pastor-manager or his committee is organically and legally responsible. They are like the beggar on the street with a tin cup tied around his neck. They are under no obligation to give account to anybody of what they receive. The people who habitually attend a theatre, generally speaking, pay much more for their pleasure than other people pay for their religion; and these anti-church religious shows are just about as expensive to maintain as a theatre. The pastor-manager, and such help as may be necessary to maintain the building, must of course be supported. But in addition to that, special offerings must be provided every three or four weeks for the remuneration of the special speakers. Many of these places are very much like a travelling circus; which pitches its tent, makes a stir for a day, takes in a lot of money from the people who pay to see the show—and then folds its tents and moves on to another place.

Inevitably some really spiritually-minded persons are caught by their loud and bold professions of superior spiritual knowledge and attainments. In not a few instances, however, they cater to those who have a liking for the abnormal and irregular, and indeed all too frequently, stoop to that which is vulgar and unseemly, in order to attract a crowd.

For the appraisal of these institutions one need only bring their record into the light of New Testament simplicity to discover that they are far removed from the New Testament pattern of what a local church ought to be. Let our readers ponder carefully these observations, that their attitude toward these movements may be determined by a clear apprehension of New Testament teaching respecting the local church.

MODERNISM AND BEER

Years ago—let us say until about twenty-five years ago—the majority of Protestant churches bore a vigorous evangelical testimony. The simple acceptance of the Bible as the word of God, and the settled conviction as to the authority of its precepts and principles, had the effect of producing in the churches stalwart characters of tough moral fibre, which were directed by tender consciences.

The churches of that day, in Canada at least, developed a strong temperance sentiment. Total abstinence was the rule among professing Christians, and an attitude of definite opposition toward the whole liquor traffic followed as a matter of course in the experience of those whom the Bible had taught their duty to their neighbours.

The continuous proclamation of these temperance principles, and the organized efforts of various temperance societies to remove temptation from the path of the weaker brother, resulted in banishing the liquor traffic from ever-increasing areas by the application of the local option principle.

Then came the War, and the necessity for total prohibition. The prohibition law was enforced like other laws, until Ontario chose for itself a Government that deliberately set out to bring the prohibition law into disrepute by encouraging rather than punishing its violation. Then, from the same quarter, without popular demand, came the legislation which permitted the selling of beer of small alcoholic content. This was followed by the Government Control principle. And now, within the last few weeks, the freer beer privileges, which has opened "beverage-rooms" all over the city.

In the vicinity of Jarvis Street Church during the last few weeks we have witnessed such drunken orgies as were never seen in Toronto in the worst days of the open bar—and the saddest part of it all is, the women become just as drunk as the men. During these last weeks we have been ashamed of our Canadian legislators, ashamed that the clock of moral progress should have been wantonly set back a half century—without demand from anybody but the brewers and distillers, who plan to get rich by the ruin of multitudes of men and women. What the result will be in the multiplication of traffic accidents, to say nothing of the steady deterioration of the moral character of the country, no one can possibly forecast.

But our question is, What has happened to the churches? The Methodist Church used to stand like a rock against all the machinations and attacks of the liquor interests. Baptists, practically to a man, were prohibitionists; and could always be depended upon to vote on the right side of any moral question. But the Methodist Church has been absorbed in the United Church, and in the process seems utterly to have lost its conscience. It has no voice of protest against this floodtide of iniquity. These seems to be no large religious organization ready to take the field against the old enemy.

It is nearly sixteen years since the Great War ended. The world hoped it would be the last great war—though no one who knew his Bible could possibly believe it. But now all nations seem to be sharpening their swords again, and preparing for further conflict. When prohibition came, both in Canada and the United States, the temperance forces, we presume, supposed they had won a victory which was likely to be permanent, and the temperance army therefore demobilized, feeling that it had nothing left to do. But the enemy has re-appeared. It is as strong and vigorous as ever. And it seems to us it will be necessary once more for the church to begin its educational process, in season and out of season, denouncing the accursed traffic, warning its members against participation therein, and seeking to bring together in co-operative effort people of good conscience of every name who would save the youth of this country from the demoralizing effect of this traffic.

The world getting better? Alas! alas! history repeats itself, and though there may be improvement here and there, it seems now as though the world were once again on the toboggan-slide, slipping back to lower levels of life than have been known for many a year. May God help us to put on the whole armour of God, to gird on our swords, and return to the battle!

ENCOURAGEMENT TO STREET PREACHERS

An Incident Related by Mr. Spurgeon at the Tabernacle Prayer-Meeting

I heard just now a little story which may encourage those of you who preach in the street. One of our friends called in upon a tradesman not far from here, bought some goods of him, and seeing in his shop a text, or a temperance motto, he asked him if he was a Christian. The reply was "Yes, blessed be God, I am." A conversation began at once, in the course of which the tradesman enquired, "Do you know a minister of the name of Medhurst?" The other said he knew him well, for he was the first student in Mr. Spurgeon's College. "Well, he was once in Glasgow, the minister of North Frederick-street Baptist Church, and he often went out to preach in the open air. Two sisters, in rather humble circumstances, were living together in Glasgow, and neither of them had any concern about religion. One of them was very ill, and near to die. The other having to go out to a shop to get some necessary for her sister, wished her sister, as she lay alone, to be amused, and therefore gave her a novel to read while she was away from her. She herself hurried along, but her curiosity made her stop for a few minutes to listen to a young man preaching out of doors. The Spirit of God blessed the few sentences which she heard, so that she saw her past life in a true light, and was fully and deeply convinced of sin. In a few seconds—perhaps fewer than it takes to tell it—she was in an agony of soul about her condition before God. The congregation moved off into the chapel, and she dearly wished to go in with them; but she recollected her sister whom she had left sick at home, and so she quickened her steps towards the shop. She was, however, so bowed down and wretched that she felt ready to faint, and, pausing a while, she took hold of the rails of an area, and cried, 'O God, have mercy upon me. I will have it any how! I will have it now.'" Scotch people, you know, even if they are godless, are usually well acquainted with the Bible: precious texts came to her recollection, and in a few moments by faith in Christ Jesus she found peace with God, and went on her way light of foot and joyous of heart. As soon as she reached home she cried to her sister, "My dear sister, I have never spoken to you about your soul; you will soon be with God, and you are not prepared to die any more than I was myself a few minutes ago. That book is no good; I will get you the Bible; and oh that you may feel your state by nature, and seek and find the Saviour as I have done!" It is a short story, for the invalid died within a few months, happy in Jesus, saved through the instrumentality of her sister, who had been brought to God in the street by hearing Mr. Medhurst preach in the open air. The survivor became a Bible-woman, and went to work in a town in Scotland where she remained for years a great soul-winner, remarkable for usefulness, considering her station and opportunities. What cannot the Holy Spirit accomplish even by a few words heard in the street? One soul can be won, and that soul may win another, and so the light may be passed on for many a mile and through many a year. Do not think when you preach at the street corners that you will at once see the harvest of your seed-sowing, although the Lord may so favour you. If you see no immediate results your labour may, nevertheless have been owned of God. Street hearers perhaps live far away from the preacher's residence, and they may have no idea of who he is or where

he resides, and so they may obtain eternal benefit and yet never speak with the man who was their spiritual father till they meet him in heaven. I am not aware that Mr. Medhurst knows anything at all about this case, though probably he will hear of it now; but whether he is informed of it or not is a small matter, for the deed is done, heaven is enriched, and God is glorified.—From *The Sword and the Trowel*, March, 1881.

OBJECTIONS TO ELECTION—A PARABLE

An eminent minister gave, in one of his sermons, the following illustration of the divine dealings with sinners:—A clergyman sitting in his study saw some boys in his garden stealing melons. He quietly arose, and walking into his garden called them. "Boys, boys." They immediately fled with the utmost precipitation, tearing through the shrubbery and tumbling over the fences. "Boys," cried out the gentleman, "stop, do not be afraid. You may have as many melons as you want. I have more than I know what to do with." The boys, urged by the consciousness of guilt, fled with increasing speed. They did not like to trust themselves in the gentleman's hands, neither did they exactly relish the idea of receiving favours from one whose garden they were robbing. The clergyman continued to entreat them to stop, assuring them that they should not be hurt, and that they might have as many melons as they wished for. But the very sound of his voice added wings to their speed. They scampered on in every direction, with as determined an avoidance as though the gentleman was pursuing them with a horsewhip. He determined, however, that they should be convinced that he was sincere in his offers, and therefore pursued them. Two little fellows who could not climb the fence were taken. He led them back, telling them they were welcome to melons whenever they wanted any; and, giving to each of them a couple, allowed them to go home. He sent by them a message to the other boys, that whenever they wanted any melons they were welcome to them if they would but come to him. The other boys, when they heard of the favours with which the two had been laden, were loud in the expression of their indignation. They accused the clergyman of partiality, in giving to some without giving to all; and, when reminded that they would not accept of his offers, but ran away from him as fast as they could, they replied, "What of that? He caught these two boys, and why should he have selected them instead of the rest of us? If he had only run a little faster he might have caught us. It was mean in him to show such partiality." Again they were reminded that the clergyman was ready to serve them as he did the other two he caught, and give them as many melons as they wanted if they would only go and ask him for them. Still the boys would not go near him, but accused the generous man of injustice and partiality, in doing for two that which he did not do for all.

So it is with sinners. God finds all guilty, and invites them to come to him and be forgiven, and receive the richest blessings heaven can afford. They all run from him, and the louder he calls the more they try to escape. By his grace he pursues, and some he overtakes. He loads them with favours, and sends them back to invite their fellow-sinners to return and receive the same. They all with one accord refuse to come, and yet never cease to abuse his mercy. They say, "Why does God select some and not others? Why does he overtake others who

are just as bad as we, and allow us to escape? This election of some and not others is unjust and partial." And when the minister of God replies, "The invitation is extended to you; whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely," the sinner heeds it not, but goes on in his sins, still complaining of the injustice and partiality of God in saving some and not saving all.—From *Dr. Belcher's "Clergy of America"*.

HAVE YOU MADE YOUR WILL?

There are many of the Lord's people who have no money to leave anyone, but there are some whom the Lord has blessed with some measure of material prosperity, who have some property to leave behind. We have known of a few who have been perplexed to know where to put what money they have so that it will yield the largest spiritual revenue. In one or two instances we have reason to believe that, through failure of a testator rightly to express his desire, money intended for Jarvis Street and its interests, has been left to other organizations. It should be understood that Jarvis Street Church is an entirely independent and separate organization, and when money is intended for Jarvis Street Church, the church should be specifically named.

Toronto Baptist Seminary is an incorporated body, separate from Jarvis Street Church as a legal entity, but is under the direction of the Deacons of Jarvis Street Church as Trustees. Therefore, money intended for Toronto Baptist Seminary should be left to that institution by name. To avoid all possibility of conflict, let it be stated that it is connected with Jarvis Street Baptist Church.

THE GOSPEL WITNESS has been instrumental in pleading many good causes, and by reason of its pleading, money has been left to institutions and organizations in harmony with the principles for which THE GOSPEL WITNESS stands. But no one has ever yet willed a dollar to THE WITNESS. It struggles along as a pack-mule, trying to carry the burdens of many; and those whose burdens it carries fail to give the poor beast of burden a feed of hay, much less of oats!

So then, these are the three great enterprises: Jarvis Street Church itself, Toronto Baptist Seminary, and THE GOSPEL WITNESS. No institution anywhere is more economically conducted than these. We know of no organizations that stand more clearly and uncompromisingly for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints. Therefore if you have any money to leave, remember us in your will—more especially, Toronto Baptist Seminary.

SUMMER SUNDAYS IN JARVIS STREET

During the summer months some churches have actually closed, others have held union services with other churches nearby; but Jarvis Street continues on its way. Not one service is cancelled. The whole programme of other months of the year is carried through, even in the summer—with the additional item of a great open-air service after the indoor service Sunday evening.

Last Sunday was the most difficult of the year, followed as it was by Civic Holiday. Notwithstanding, there were fine congregations. Many people would call them great congregations. We are especially glad during these summer months to have the privilege of welcoming a great many of our readers and radio hearers who, having read the Jarvis Street messages through these pages or heard the Jarvis Street service over the air, when visiting Toronto make it a point of attending a service in Jarvis Street Church. This was true of both services last Sunday. The presence of the Lord was with us, and each service was an occasion of blessing.

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

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No. 3

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 36 THIRD QUARTER September 9, 1934

JOB'S MISERY AND DESPAIR

Lesson Text: Job, chapters 3-5.

Golden Text: "For my sighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters. For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come upon me."—Job 3:24-25.

Bible School Reading: Job 4:1-21.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—Proverbs 1:1-9; Tuesday—Jeremiah 15:10-21; Wednesday—Psalm 11:1-7; Thursday—Psalm 104:1-13; Friday—Luke 6:39-49; Saturday—I. Peter 4:1-7.

I. JOB'S COMPLAINT (3:1-26).

After remaining silent for several days Job gives vent to his feelings in cursing the day in which he was born, and complaining of the fact of his existence. He is not in this cursing God for that which had happened to him, but is voicing his lamentation that he should have lived to suffer it. While not approving of that which he utters, we can yet sympathize with his feelings. Job was in a hard case. He had lost his family and his wealth, and he was in great physical suffering. In addition, his wife did not understand the nature of his trial, and gave him foolish advice (2:9). And the friends who had come to comfort him had also a wrong conception of his trouble. He had no one who understood him, no one to whom he could look for comfort, or advice; no wonder despair seized him, and he wished he had never been born. Others have been in a similar case, as Elijah (I. Kings 19:1-4), and Jeremiah (Jer. 20:14-18); and we do well not to be too severe on Job. Let us learn how to act when similarly situated. It may be taken for granted that while it is wise to open our hearts to the Lord, it is well to be most careful in expressing our innermost feelings to others. God knows us intimately; our closest friends do not always understand us.

Job's complaint relates first to the day of his birth, which he regrets and curses. He uses strong language to express his feelings, requesting that the day perish wherein he was born, that it would be darkness, that God would not regard it from above, nor let His light shine upon it; and prays that the night may also be cursed because it did not prevent his birth. He then proceeds to express regret that he had not died at birth, and gives a word-picture of the peace of death: "There the wicked cease from troubling; there the weary be at rest." "The small and the great are there; and the servant is free from his master." There is nothing revealed in these words respecting the eternal destiny of souls. The complete revelation concerning this is given in the New Testament, although Job has something further to say about the future (19:25-27). In this place he is thinking of death as the state in which human distinctions are not observed, and the troubles of life are at an end. Job was weary of life, and desired rest. He longed to be free from earthly troubles. They seemed to be too heavy for him to bear. It should be observed, however, that he was enabled to bear his troubles, and each child of God is sustained by the divine Power (II. Tim. 4:17). Note the certainty, solemnity, and significance, of death. There is a blessed rest in time and in eternity for all who trust in Christ (Matt. 11:28; Heb. 4:9). These phases of rest require explanation, with their accompanying blessings.

Having cursed the day of his birth, Job complains of life from the standpoint of one who desires death (vs. 20-26). He states his bitterness of soul, and desire for death; and asks why life is given to him under such circumstances. He longed for death, in the face of his trouble, but could not find it. He had nothing to live for, and sought only the grave. It is well to remember that such a feeling was but temporary with Job, and was due to physical causes. We are all subject, to some extent, to similar influences; and require to look up to God, and contemplate the brighter future. It is better on before for the child of God. Note the fact of trouble; and its beneficial effect (Ps. 119:67). We

cannot hope to get through life without trouble of some kind, but we can expect to bear it courageously for Christ's sake.

II. THE ANSWER OF ELIPHAZ (chapters 4 and 5).

The statement of Job stirs Eliphaz, one of his visiting friends, to give him an answer, wherein he administers reproof, and gives counsel. He first reminds Job of the fact that he had instructed and strengthened others in their trouble, but now that it had come upon him he fainted. The implication evidently is that he should have been able to bear the trouble, since he knew how to help others in similar difficulties. It is one thing to give advice: it is another matter to carry it out. Teachers should be prepared to live what they teach, and thus be an example to those who learn from them. Teaching should be both life and lip. It was thus in our Lord's case, and is meant to be so in the case of His followers. Job's hope is then brought to his remembrance, and the justice of God is emphasized. It is pointed out that the innocent do not perish, neither are the righteous cut off; the wicked reap what they sow, and by the blast of God do they perish. Each person is dealt with in accordance with his life, and receives that which is his due. A vision given to Eliphaz further emphasizes the justice of God's dealings with men. Note the nature of the vision (vs. 12-16), the words of the voice (v. 17), and the holiness of God in contrast with angels and men. God can be trusted under all circumstances, and we must be careful respecting judging from outward appearances. God allows His people to be tested and tried, but only that they may benefit therefrom. He chastises them because He loves them (Heb. 12:6). Our Lord Himself was tested of the devil to prove Him, and manifest His power over temptation (Luke 4:1-13; Heb. 2:18). And as the Captain of our salvation He was perfected through suffering (Heb. 2:10). Look upon affliction therefore with understanding, and endure the same with patience.

In continuance of his answer, Eliphaz draws attention to the goodness of God (5:1-16), and to the blessing of divine chastisement. Several things are therein mentioned: Job is shown the foolishness of his complaint. He could not expect anyone to answer him, and the spirit manifest in his complaint was hurtful to him: "Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward." Affliction is therefore not to be wondered at as something strange, and incomprehensible. Note the cause of all trouble—sin. In trouble the person to whom we should look is God, to Whom we should commit our cause, and Who doeth marvellous things. Note the confidence with which we may trust Him with our cause, and the marvellous things wrought by Him. He gives rain upon the earth (v. 10). He sets the lowly on high (v. 11). He confounds the crafty (vs. 12-14). And He saves the poor from the hand of the mighty, and gives them hope (vs. 15, 16). It may seem at times as if the wicked were having it their own way, but surely and certainly a higher law becomes evident in emphasis of righteousness. This may be noticed in connection with general history, as well as respecting the individual law. God has not left His world to run alone. His presence is manifest therein.

Respecting the blessing of chastisement, Eliphaz mentions the one who is corrected by God, and enjoins Job not to despise such chastening. Such happiness is due not to the pleasure of the experience, but to the fact of God's attention; and the benefit to be derived therefrom. The divine deliverances are then referred to as reasons for rejoicing in the Lord's attitude toward His own. He makes sore, and binds up; He wounds, and makes whole; He delivers in trouble; He redeems from death in famine and war; He shelters from the scourge of the tongue; and protects from the beasts of the field. And last, Job is assured of coming to the grave in a full age with the blessing of God upon him. Note the various kinds of afflictions referred to as physical ills: famine, war, tongue, and beasts of the earth. It is rather significant that the tongue should be mentioned in this connection. The tongue is referred to as a scourge, a sharp sword (Ps. 57:4); choice silver (Prov. 10:20); a tree of knowledge (Prov. 15:4); devouring fire (Is. 30:27); and a world of iniquity (Jas. 3:6). And death and life are said to be in its power (Prov. 18:21). It defiles the whole body, sets on fire the course of nature, and cannot be tamed (Jas. 3:6-8). These are strong words, and we are impressed by them with the importance of this little member. It causes a great deal of strife, from which we need shelter (Ps. 31:20), but it can also be used by God to the blessing of many souls. May we exercise care in its use.