

The Gospel Witness

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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"IF THOU BE THE CHRIST"

A Sermon by Dr. P. W. Philpott

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, September 30th, 1934.

(Stenographically Reported)

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"Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly."—John 10:24.

Prayer by Rev. W. Gordon Brown

We have come to Thee, O Christ, because Thou hast first come to us. We love Thee because Thou hast first loved us, and made us to know that love. We would lay hold upon Thee because Thou hast laid hold upon us, and drawn us with the cords of that love to Thyself.

We have been singing to Thee, our Father and our God, hymns of praise for the grace of the Lord Jesus, thanksgiving for His glory, with the beauty and the wonder of which He stooped from heaven's highest place to a cross on a lonely Hill of a Skull for our sins; He came from the immediate presence, the very bosom, of the Father, in which He dwelt, to the land of God's forgetfulness, to a place outside His presence, that we might be drawn into the circle of His grace, lifted with our Saviour to a home that is brighter than anything earth could furnish. We rejoice that

"When all was sin and shame
A second Adam to the fight, and to the rescue, came."

We bless Thee that where our first parents lost, the new Man, Christ Jesus, gained the victory; and the Son of man, the Son of God, was made manifest to put away the works of the devil,—to destroy them, and at last the devil himself;—and we shall be saved. Receive our thanks for this Thy salvation, O Lord:

Bless all Thy children with a new realization of Thy power. Help us who profess the name of the Lord Jesus to shed forth the fragrance of Christ in every place we go; help us to glorify Him, to live like Him, that men may take note of us that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him.

Remember those in Thy presence who do not know Thee as their personal Saviour. Graciously open their eyes to their need, and their hearts to His incoming, that they may be born again by the Spirit of the living God.

Comfort all who are in sorrow. We think of some who are suffering through bereavement, who miss with a sore longing those who have left their side. Oh that they would turn to Thee, and find that God Himself taketh the place of

all He taketh away. Wilt Thou bless the lonely and the tried, those from whose sky the sun has gone down. Help them to find their sufficiency, their all-in-all, in the One in Whom Thou art delighted, Thine only begotten Son.

We think of Dr. Shields in his ministry in the Old Country. Strengthen by his witness the testimony that is being given in that land to Evangelical Christianity. Help Thine own children to gird on the sword of truth, and go forward valiantly in the name of the Lord, to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, that they be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Bless the one who speaketh Thy word to us to-night. O Lord, that we might forget mere words, the hymns we have sung, and even the prayers; that we may find the very thoughts of God, yea, the words of Christ, for did He not say, The flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life? Let us hear His words to-night, that we may have spirit, that we may have life; since we ask it in His great name, Amen.

Some time ago I preached a sermon, and was requested to repeat it at a Conference near Brantford in August. I was taken suddenly ill in the afternoon, and was unable to keep my promise. A number of the friends came from quite a distance to hear the message, and since I have undertaken to supply the pulpit of Jarvis Street Church they have requested that I preach the sermon, promising to listen in at a little town some hundreds of miles from here.

The text you will find in the 10th chapter of John's Gospel, verse twenty-four: "Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly."

You may know that John's purpose in writing his Gospel was to answer this very question, not only for

the Jews of his time, but for truth-seekers of all ages. I believe the Gospel of John will convince any honest seeker after truth if he will come to it with an unbiased mind. The Holy Spirit inspired him to write these scriptures to convince men that Jesus is the Christ, and, that believing, they might have life through His name. Neither Matthew nor Mark give us any reason for the writing of their Gospels, but Luke gives us his reason for writing: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed." John, in the last two verses of the twentieth chapter of his Gospel, tells us why he wrote. Speaking of the miracles which he records—which, by the way are just seven; and six of them are peculiar to John's Gospel: they are not found elsewhere in the Bible. He calls the miracles, signs, and speaking of these signs he says, "Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

I believe if you will come to this Gospel with an honest desire to know the truth on this important matter, the Holy Spirit will make it plain to you.

A number of years ago I had in my pulpit in the City of Hamilton a very celebrated preacher—indeed, he was with us on two occasions for ten days each time. I refer to Dr. Arthur T. Pierson, the great Presbyterian minister, who exercised such a fruitful ministry in Detroit for many years. A number of Detroit friends will be listening in to-night, and they will recall with gratitude that great man of God. At the close of a service he had an almost invariable habit of inviting any "honest seeker after truth" to meet him in his vestry. I heard Dr. Pierson tell that he had dealt with upward of two thousand men in that way, and that not a few of them had been led out of nature's darkness into the light and liberty of God.

One Sunday morning when he had been preaching in an opera house, his church having recently been destroyed by fire, he gave that invitation; and when he went into the little room at the side of the stage he found a man he had never met before. Immediately in his own quaint manner Dr. Pierson asked if he were spiritually ill, adding, "And do you want me to be your physician?" The man said he supposed he was sick spiritually, and Dr. Pierson asked him for the symptoms of his case. "I guess mine is a serious case. I am the most unhappy man living. I practise law in the City of Windsor, and have been very, very much discouraged for some time, and very downhearted." "Are you a Christian?" "No." "You believe in the Bible?" "No; I cannot say I believe the Bible." "You believe that God gave His Son Jesus Christ to die for you?" "I cannot say that I believe that." Dr. Pierson was somewhat annoyed and said, "Then why did you come in here to waste my time? I asked for honest seekers after truth to meet me in this room." "Oh," said the man, "you misunderstand me. I am an honest seeker after truth this morning. I

thought I would come over to Detroit and hear the singing in one of the large churches, but when I saw the notice in front of the opera house that a service was being held here, I came in. While you were preaching you convinced me of one thing; that is why I am here." "What did I convince you of?" asked the great preacher. "Sir, you convinced me that you believe something that satisfies you." (Would to God I could convince everybody looking into my face to-night, and who hears over the radio, that I believe something that satisfies me, as Dr. Pierson convinced that man.) "You believe something," said the lawyer, "that satisfies you, and I have come to ask you what it is you believe."

Telling the story, Dr. Pierson said, "I felt I had an honest seeker, and I lifted my heart to God in prayer that He might direct me in helping that man." "Then you really want me to be your spiritual physician?" "Yes," said the unhappy lawyer. "Will you take any medicine I prescribe?" enquired the minister-physician. "Yes." "You tell me that you do not know whether the Scriptures are true? I can tell you a way to find out. Jesus Christ said, 'If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.'" "But," said the man, "what is His will?" "For you, my brother, I would suggest the reading of John's Gospel. Take John's Gospel honestly, with an unbiased mind, searching the truth concerning eternal matters, and I believe God will reveal His will to you. Will you do that? Will you do it to-day?" The lawyer said that he would, and enquired, "Is that all?" "No," replied Dr. Pierson, "there is something else. Jesus Christ said, 'Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.' After you have read that Gospel I want you to kneel down and pray to God, and ask Him to reveal to you whether the teaching of that book is true or not."

A couple of weeks passed, and it was Sunday morning again in that opera house, and Dr. Pierson gave the same invitation. As he did so, a tall man stood up in the meeting and asked if he might say a word—and as he asked permission to speak he moved toward the platform. He told the congregation of the Doctor's method of dealing with him in the little room, how he went back to Windsor and to his own office, and found the Bible that was used for taking oaths. He opened to the Gospel of John, and started to read it reverently. He said, "I got only to the third chapter, when there came to me such a sense of the divine presence that I could scarcely continue reading. I said to myself, I guess here is the place to get down to pray. No sooner had my knees touched the floor, and I had breathed the name of the Christ I had been reading about, than the cloud broke, the sun shone through, and God's love flooded my life. During these past two weeks I have been as happy as I was miserable before."

That is an illustration of the point I desire to make. I believe if you will come to this Gospel of John and read it honestly, you will be convinced of the truth—the truth every man must accept if he is to be saved, that Jesus is the Christ, the Saviour of sinners; and that, believing, he shall have everlasting life.

It has been observed that John's Gospel is somewhat different from those of the other evangelists. He does not write like Matthew, Mark, or Luke. It is a difference of approach, and the matter he presents is different.

Have you noticed in the reading of this Gospel that the first five chapters are somewhat of a diary? John practically covers in those five chapters the first year of Christ's ministry—and he covers it with a great wealth of detail. You will not find it so in any of the other Gospels. Had he not so written, we would not have the discourse on the new birth. How much we should have missed! Nor would we have had the discourse on the Light of the World, nor the Bread of Life, nor the wealth of teaching and comfort contained in chapters thirteen to seventeen—the last words of Jesus Christ on that darkest night in the history of the world just before He went to the cross. We would have known very little about the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit had John not written His gospel, for here we have the teaching concerning the person and mission of the Holy Ghost very clearly set forth. Then there are the words with which I myself have comforted many scores of hearts in the hour of trial, and especially in the hour of bereavement, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

There is a recipe for keeping trouble out of your heart. You cannot keep it from the threshold of your door, but you can keep it from getting into your heart, and from taking all the sunshine from it. *Keep believing in Jesus Christ.* You may not understand what is taking place—but believe. The disciples did not understand what was about to happen, but their Master said in effect, "Keep believing in me, even though you cannot understand. Let not your heart be troubled. I am going away to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

I think some of us have grown so familiar with some of these great utterances of our Lord and Saviour that we have lost the sense of their greatness. What wonderful words those are. Then I think every Christian ought to read the seventeenth chapter of John once a week, the high priestly prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ; and undoubtedly an example of His intercession on our behalf just now at the right hand of the throne of God. I mention these particular teachings of this Gospel because there was a reason for their being there recorded—and how much poorer in truth would the church have been had John not written!

You have observed at the outset of his Gospel the vast difference between it and any of the other writers. Matthew and Luke especially date their writings by Jewish High Priests and Roman rulers of the day. John does not so date his Gospel. He begins like the writer of the Book of Genesis: "In the beginning". He goes back to the beginning of all things. But there is this difference between the beginning of John's Gospel and that of Genesis: Genesis starts "in the beginning", and works downward, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth", etc.; but John starts at the same point, and works upward, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Later in the same chapter he tells us that the "Word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us." That is his

way of telling us about the Incarnation: the Word that was with God, and that was God, became flesh and tabernacled with us; and "we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth". Moreover John says, "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." That is our privilege. It is a great thing to be able to receive the glory of God, and no one but God Himself could communicate the *fulness* of God. That was the mission of Jesus Christ. John also tells us that He is the Light of the World, and Life of every man.

Then John proceeds somewhat like a lawyer presenting his case to the jury. He brings his witnesses, and submits certain evidence to substantiate these claims. The first witness is John the Baptist, of whom our Lord bore this testimony, "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist." He was not only the last of the prophets, but the first great preacher of the gospel. He was mighty popular with the Jewish people until he began to preach that Jesus Christ must be the substitute for sinners, and that men could be saved only through Him. His popularity began to wane at that point. It has ever been so.

John the Baptist would have been acceptable to the Jews as their Messiah had he been willing to accept their offer, but he declared that he was not the Messiah, nor was he worthy to unloose the latchet of His shoes Whose forerunner he was. But he said, "He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."

Pointing to Jesus, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." One would have thought that that great multitude of people would have fallen on their faces and accepted Jesus Christ as the Messiah at that time—but they did not! Only two in the great company turned and followed Jesus Christ. It has ever been so. We do not reject Him as they did then. We do not hiss, and spit in His face. We do not crown Him with thorns. We do not join with the crowd, saying, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" We do not sell him for thirty pieces of silver. We try to take Pilate's attitude of neutrality. But "neutral we cannot be". We are either for or against Him: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."

My chief purpose in bringing this message to-night is to call your attention to the claims that Christ made for Himself, as they are before us in the Gospel of John. I feel free to say this, that so tremendous are these claims that they bring us face to face with an issue that we cannot evade: He was either "very God of very God", or He was an irresponsible fanatic; it is a case of Deity or insanity. To me it is Deity. I have never had the shadow of a doubt. I have been a Christian fifty years, and never once during those years have I questioned the authority of the Scripture, never once have I doubted its authenticity. I know that some dear people who are educated above their intelligence would say that is a reflection on my scholastic standing. One woman said to a friend of mine who was dealing with her at a counter in a store, and inviting her to come to a service I was conducting, "I would not go to hear that old fool."

He believes all the Bible!" My friend was greatly exercised, but I said, "Praise the Lord." "What are you praising the Lord for?" "I praise the Lord that I have established the reputation in this community of believing the Bible to be the infallible word of the living God. If that involves being a fool, I am a very happy one I assure you!"

In this Gospel, Jesus Christ is constantly pointing to some Old Testament institution or event very sacred to the Jewish people, and saying of that institution or event, "That is a type: I am the Antitype. That was a symbol: I am the reality, the fulfilment."

At the end of the first chapter you have the story of Nathanael's being brought to Jesus Christ by Philip. The Master looked at him and said, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." You remember the rest of the story? "Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." Philip knew exactly what the Lord was talking about. It took him back to Bethel where Jacob saw the ladder "set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." Jesus Christ said that ladder was only a symbol: "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man. I am the one and only communication between God and man." There is "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Later in this Gospel we hear Him say, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

I want you to hear that. If you miss Him, you miss the gate; you miss the way; you lose eternal life. He alone is Mediator between God and man. There is no other.

When you come into the third chapter you have Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, coming to the Master—paying Him a few compliments: "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." Jesus Christ looked at him and said, "You need more than a teacher: you need a Saviour. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. You cannot enter the kingdom unless that great change takes place." Then Nicodemus asked a great question, "How can a man be born when he is old—how can these things be?" I suggest to you, beloved people, that Jesus Christ answers that question in the third chapter. If you will accept His teaching as given there I believe you too will be born again this very minute.

What was the answer? Christ took Nicodemus back to something he understood thoroughly, to that time in Israel's history when the people had been smitten with the serpents, and they were dying by the score. God said to Moses, "Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live"—and every dying Jew who turned his eye to the uplifted serpent lived; and every Jew who refused to look died.

Christ Jesus said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Praise His name, is that not a wonderful truth?

"There is life for a look at the Crucified One,
There is life at this moment for thee;
Then look, sinner, look unto Him and be saved,
Unto Him Who was nailed to the tree."

No honest student of the Scripture can question that the lifting up refers to His crucifixion. We sometimes hear it said, "If the preacher will lift Him up in the sermon, it will draw men unto Him"; or, "If the singer will lift Him up, people will be saved." There is a sense in which that is true. But that is not the meaning here. The lifting up is not the lifting up of Christ in sermon or song, but it means His crucifixion, His being lifted upon the cross. Three times you have that word in this Gospel, and each time it refers to His sacrificial death.

For example, in the twelfth chapter certain Greeks came and said, "We would see Jesus." As He talked to those Greeks He said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John interpreted His word, saying, "This he said, signifying what death he should die." That is what it means, beloved. What I want you to see is that He pointed back to that event in Israel's history and made it a type of His crucifixion.

In the sixth chapter you have our Lord using another incident in the life of Israel as a type of Himself. He had fed the five thousand miraculously, and the people wanted to make Him a King right off, a kind of breadking, somebody to feed them. But He would not accept kingship at the hands of a mob. He sent the multitude away, and told the disciples to get a ship and go to the other side of the sea. The next day the people—perhaps some who had participated in the miracle—came to talk with Him, saying, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" Jesus answered, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Then they asked Him, "What do you more than others? What sign shewest thou then, that we may see and believe thee? What dost thou work?" That, after the wondrous miracle He had performed of feeding the five thousand! Without giving Him time to answer, they continued, "What dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written; He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Was not that as great a miracle as your feeding the multitude?" "Yes; your fathers had manna in the wilderness—but they are dead. That bread was but a type of Me: I am the Antitype. I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. I am the bread of life." What a claim for anyone to make for himself were He not more than man!

In the seventh chapter there is a still more startling claim. That chapter tells of the feast of tabernacles which lasted eight days, with the eighth the really great day of the feast. On that day they celebrated the smiting of the rock back in the wilderness experience, and the last act in all their festivities was the forming of a procession of the white-robed priests about the temple, which procession wended its way down the path to the pool of Siloam, where the pitcher was filled with water; and as

they ascended they chanted the twelfth chapter of Isaiah, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." When they came again to the temple the priests halted before the altar, and in the sight of all the people poured out the water as a solemn oblation to God. One Who had been listening to all that, Who had been a witness of the whole ceremony, stepped forward, "in the last day, that great day of the feast," and lifted up His voice and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of him shall flow rivers of living water."

Friends, words like those would be startling on any occasion, but I declare to you if He were not the God-man, that would be the worst kind of blasphemy. Not only does He promise to slake our thirst, but to make us a source of blessing: "Out of your innermost soul will flow rivers of living water." You remember He said to the woman He met at the well, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

Let us look at the eighth chapter for a moment, where we have the Lord Jesus in the temple again, where, we are told, on either side of the altar stood huge golden pillars, on the top of which were great lights sending their soft glow, not only about the temple, but over the hillside. They were memorials of the pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night; by which our fathers had been led through the wilderness. You will know, if you read your Old Testament; that for many years there had been no Shekinah glory in the temple, no pillar leading the Jews about. Back in Ezekiel you get the story of the withdrawal of God from the temple. Ezekiel said He moved out over the portals of the temple as if to say, "I am loathe to leave you." Then he saw the glory of the Lord go over the city and again tarry as if to say, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!" Then away to the hills! And there had been no return of the glory of God through all the years. But they commemorated the day when He had tarried in their midst. The Master stepped forward, as they lighted those lamps, and said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Friends, I want you to think with me for a moment. I say again reverently, This Man was more than mere man Who made these claims—"I am the light of the world."

In John's Gospel there is a title written in only three letters, and it occurs seven times. It is these words, "I am." Have you noticed it by John?—"I am." Jesus Christ, by appropriating that title, takes us back to the third chapter of Exodus where Moses stood at the burning bush when his commission had been given him. Filled with fear because of the task that had been given him; and with apprehension as to his reception, Moses said, "Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?" "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you."

You will find that never an angel, and certainly never a man, appropriates to himself that title. Until Jesus Christ came, no one had dared claim that for himself. But when He began His public ministry He immediately applied it to Himself, "I am the Bread of Life". He filled it out, and made it understandable; "I am the true vine"; "I am the door of the sheepfold"; "I am the good shepherd"; "I am the way, the truth, and the life"; "I am the light of the world"; "Before Abraham was, I am". He said on one occasion, "If ye believe not that I am (the King James Version adds 'he', but it is in italics, and was not in the original), ye shall die in your sins." He appropriated that title.

But perhaps the most comforting of all is the title we have in the chapter Mr. Brown, read, "I am the good shepherd". What comfort that has brought, what essential security to little children! Many of us in our early childhood were taught to say at our mother's knee:

"Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me;
Bless Thy little lamb to-night;
Through the darkness be Thou near me,
Keep me safe till morning's light."

We went to sleep conscious of the Divine Shepherd's care. And I have known many who have grown old in life's journey who still loved to say, "The Lord is my Shepherd."—"I am the good shepherd." Come into His fold to-night, and be saved—and safe.

THE SEMINARY CONVOCATION

Small events may have great issue. One might easily imagine a casual spectator among the audience on Convocation night characterizing as a sheer waste of time that part of the service when the Trustees and Faculty of Toronto Baptist Seminary signed their names to the Statement of Faith, a summary of scriptural teaching on the great fundamental truths. But was this signing of names a mere formality? By no means, for in this seemingly insignificant action of the putting of pen to paper lies the justification of the very existence of the Seminary.

Let us never forget that the Lord put upon the heart of our President the burden of establishing an evangelical educational institution at a time when there were other seminaries and Christian training schools in Canada, and the only justification for establishing another such institution was the fact that none of these could adequately meet the need which faced us in this province at that time, the absolute necessity of providing a safe training school for Baptist ministers, missionaries and workers, not one to educate them away from the faith once delivered to the saints, but to instruct minds and hearts in the truth of God as presented to us in the infallible, inerrant Word of God. To carry on this glorious task, President, Trustees, and Faculty, covenanted with God at the time of the founding of the Seminary.

If ever we should swerve from that original purpose, or cease to rest upon the foundation of the Bible as the inerrant, authoritative, Word of God, at that moment Toronto Baptist Seminary would lose all right to its existence. To remind us of this solemn responsibility, voluntarily assumed and whole-heartedly continued, that we teach or have taught nothing which is contrary to Holy Writ, year by year the original covenant is renewed.

Therefore, the signing of the statement of faith was one of the main items on the program of the Autumn Convocation which was held on Thursday evening, September 27th, in the Jarvis St. Church Auditorium. Friends of the Seminary were present in large numbers.

We greatly missed our honoured and beloved President, Dr. Shields, the one through whom the Lord has made possible Toronto Baptist Seminary, and his cabled message of greeting manifested his deep interest in the public opening of the Seminary. To this message of fellowship a reply was cabled.

Evidence of the practical working out of the ideals of the Seminary could be seen in the accounts of the service of students in the Lord's vineyard during the summer. Mr. Frederic Buhler, from France, student in the Theological Course, but also instructor in French, graphically described the spiritual needs of the French people of Quebec. Mr. Bruce Hisey reported persecution and also blessing in his field at Avoca, Quebec.

In thought we visited France, Belgium and Switzerland, as Instructor W. S. Whitcombe, M.A., who has recently returned from these countries, told us something of the history and character of the Baptist work there.

The Convocation Address was delivered by the man of God, Dr. P. W. Philpott, who is ministering in the pulpit of Jarvis St. Church during the Pastor's absence. The words of counsel addressed to the students, coming as they did from one of rich Christian experience, whom the Lord has been pleased to use in an unusual way during his many years of preaching, were deeply impressive. As Isaiah's vision of the Lord was accompanied by a vision of his own sin, and as it was at this point that he found the will of God for his life, we were reminded that we, too, shall find the will of God, which is not only the holy thing, but also the happy thing, as we see the Lord in His holiness and power, as we see our own sin and helplessness, then yield ourselves to Him. We shall find the will of God holy and acceptable as we present our bodies as a living sacrifice to Him.

An offering was taken for the work of the Seminary, but many of our readers did not have an opportunity at that time to show in a practical way their whole-hearted fellowship in this work. We would remind you that the opportunity is always present, and we exhort you not to miss the blessing which comes to those who support by prayer, interest and gifts the task of preparing men and women to go forth and proclaim the Gospel to the far corners of the earth. It is unthinkable in the midst of the prevailing infidelity that the testimony of the Seminary should be hampered through lack of funds. We strongly urge those of you who believe with us to give to the support of the work, as the Lord has prospered you. No gift will be too large; no gift will be too small, if given as the Lord directs. Let us hear from you in this matter, and let us hear from you at once.

—Dr. O. L. Clark.

WAYS AND MEANS

Our old enemy, called the devil and Satan, all too often finds his servants plenty of funds to carry on his damnable business; yet how often do the causes of righteousness lack the very necessities for waging war upon his hosts of darkness! These apparent conditions present a challenge to faith on the part of the Lord's believing followers. They must, according to the oft quoted saying of the great Carey, "expect great things from God"; and in that faith "attempt great things for God". We are not exaggerating when we say that Toronto Baptist Seminary is such an expectation, such an attempt. We began nearly eight years ago without a cent of capital or endowment. We have carried on since then in fair weather and foul—often the latter! To-day we have between sixty and seventy former students in the field of action in Canada and other countries, and in our halls are other recruits training for the war. Once more we appeal to the Lord's stewards to help us in this great undertaking. And why should you support this venture in Christian education?

Ways

First, because Toronto Baptist Seminary stands for the faith of the apostles, is built upon the one foundation of faith, which is Jesus Christ. In a day of religious declension, when pulpit and pew, press and people, are swinging away from the hope of the Gospel, this School has been raised up of God to stand fast in the liberty which the full-orbed Gospel alone can give. Last Thursday night, at our Fall Convocation, the trustees and instructors publicly set their signatures to a statement that they would have taught and would teach in accord with that clear doctrinal statement, and would not permit to be taught, nor teach, anything

contrary thereto in any class on any subject. Surely, nothing could be more binding than this.

Second, in accordance with such a stand upon the Bible as the very word of God, this School is raising up a generation of preachers and missionaries who are witnessing—and will witness—to this testimony of Jesus our Lord. The key to the situation in the churches is the minister in the pulpit. Our attempt is to put things right in the pulpit, that the churches thus served may stand true to the Lord Whom they profess to serve.

Third, the Bible clearly teaches that believers are stewards of all the graces of life, and it specifies "this grace also", namely, the grace of giving. As far as we can see, comparatively few Christians have caught the vision of the possibilities of setting aside a tithe or more of their income for definite Christian work. A friend told us recently of visiting a friend of his who would soon pass on and leave an estate of \$9,000. He pressed upon him the need of giving to the Lord's work, the duty of tithing. Days later he called again. The man said: "I am going to give you something." He did. It was \$5.00! That left \$8,995 for selfish interests! Lord, deliver us from being misers, especially in the service of our God.

Fourth, gifts to the Seminary are a kind of long-term investment for the Kingdom of God. One may give money to worthy foreign missions and in a few months hear of blessed results from such a gift. When one donates money to the Seminary, it is used to prepare workers who will go out and bring similar results to pass, through the goodness of God; but it may be years before the giver finds out what his money has done. But if the Seminary and similar institutions be not supported, where will the trained workers for the fields in Africa, China, and other foreign lands, not to mention the needy home fields, come from? To cut off our schools is to dry up the stream of good at its fountain head.

Fifth, money left us will be well used. This School has been in operation long enough for it to prove itself in part. Not in the large way for which we hope and pray, but in a smaller one, our men and women are doing Christian service which will stand the test. For this we thank God, and from it we take courage.

Means

And now a word or two as to how you can help us financially. For one thing, you may send us a gift at once, large or small, all are acceptable and helpful.

Perhaps you have some money which you would give to the Seminary but you must have the income derived from it for some years to come. In such case, the capital can be handed over to our trustees, who will carefully invest the same, pay you the usual interest, and keep the amount intact during your lifetime.

Many can remember us in their wills. Such monies should be left to Toronto Baptist Seminary, our school being incorporated under the laws of the Province of Ontario so that we may receive such funds.

Some can do none of the above things, perhaps, but all can pray. Prayer opens Heaven's storehouses. Pray for us; pray with us.—W.G.B.

THE WEEK-END IN JARVIS STREET

Saturday night was another time of blessing as the people gathered for prayer. A spirit of liberty was upon the meeting and the presence of the Lord was manifest from the opening hymn to the pronouncing of the benediction.

There were 1,139 present in the School Sunday morning, and the morning service was almost wholly given over to the promotion exercises of the School. It was an inspiring sight to see the scholars in large numbers pass from one department to another, and being greeted by their new Superintendent. Mr. Hutchinson, General Superintendent of the School, had charge of this part of the service. The auditorium of the church was filled to capacity, and it was evident that all enjoyed this unique service. Dr. Philpott gave an appropriate message.

In the evening the church was again filled, and Dr. Philpott preached with great power the sermon appearing in this issue. Altogether, it was a day of blessing.

The Union Baptist Witness

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LIBERIA

In a recent letter from Rev. Edward Hancox, we have good news of the work at our Geah Bar Zondo station in Liberia. "We had a lovely service this morning," he writes, "with sixty-seven present at school and church. In the Sunday-school Kanga gave the message, and in the church service Lafayette gave out the Word. Then, it being the first Sunday in the month, we met afterward around the Communion Table to remember the Lord. There were eighteen native Christians besides us two white chaps. There were three members away. At this service I gave a message on I. Peter 1:8, 'Joy unspeakable and full of glory.' "The rice is now ripening fast, so there were two gifts of rice for the offering. One man and his wife brought a big bowlful yesterday for me to buy so they could give the money to-day. The other lot was brought to church to-day by Joe and his wife. We took the rice for ourselves, allowing sixpence for each lot. This was their first-fruit unto the Lord, and made me think of the Israelites and their laws concerning their harvest. Oh, the work of the Lord is surely precious to your heart when you see these poor native people once blind and in darkness, but now sitting down to partake of the Lord's supper as true believers in Christ. I said to them this morning that the Communion service was the only meeting in the month when we meet together as a family. At this time all the visitors are outside, and the Father's children meet together around their Lord."

Four are waiting to be baptised in the near future. Pray for these people and for our Missionaries. "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."

RECOGNITION SERVICE AT MAPLE HILL

On Friday, September 21st, 1934, a Council of Churches gathered in the Maple Hill Church to consider the advisability of recognizing it as a Regular Baptist Church. Rev. David Alexander of Waverley Road Baptist Church, Toronto, was elected as Moderator, and there were eleven churches represented by about twenty-five delegates.

Mr. William McGill, a member of the Maple Hill Church, read the Minute calling the Council. A statistical report of the church by Mr. McGill showed a membership of thirty-four, and the financial statement given by Mr. H. Knights showed receipts for general expenses for the past six months as over three hundred dollars, with approximately two hundred dollars given to Missions in the last year. The doctrinal statement as given by the pastor, Mr. John R. Armstrong, showed that the church had adopted the Articles of Faith as outlined in the Tentative Constitution of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec. After a time of questioning, the Council voted unanimously to fellowship the Maple Hill Baptist Church.

Between the afternoon and evening sessions, the ladies of the church served lunch to the delegates and visitors.

The building was filled by the time Mr. Bruce Hisey began the evening Song Service. After the Moderator had called on the Clerk to read the report of the afternoon session, Rev. P. B. Loney read the Scripture and led in prayer. Rev. W. S. Whitcombe, who has had much to do with the work at Maple Hill, gave the charge to the church. Rev. A. Thomson gave the charge to the pastor, and Rev. W. E. Smalley extended the right hand of fellowship on behalf of the Churches of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec. Pastor C. S. McGrath brought a gospel message, and the benediction was pronounced by the pastor, Mr. John Armstrong.

The day was thoroughly enjoyed, and it was evident that Pastor Armstrong has the support of his people. The future

of this work looks bright and we are looking for great things from the Maple Hill Regular Baptist Church.

C. S. McGrath, Clerk.

TIMMINS

The people of the First Baptist Church, Timmins, are glad to have their pastor, Rev. H. C. Slade, with them again, and to welcome Mrs. Slade to their fellowship. On Sunday night last they had such a good congregation that it was necessary to bring in more chairs to accommodate the people. There seems to be a great interest the last few weeks in Timmins and the surrounding district, and it is evident that the Lord is working there. Two young men have come forward within the last two weeks, and they expect to baptise four next Sunday, two being from out of town, who have heard the message over the radio.

Mr. Slade had a request to visit a community down in the country about thirty miles from Timmins, at Shillington, and last week he and Mr. Wellington went down and held a meeting. The people were very much interested, and have asked them to come again. They are hoping that this may lead to some souls being brought to the light down there, and it seems they are on the brink of a great revival. Let us all join in prayer that this may be so, and not only at Timmins, but in all the churches of the Union.

GUELPH

The York Road Baptist Church has just held its Second Annual Rally Week, which has resulted in much blessing. On Sunday night, September 23rd, three adults were baptised. At the close of the service two men surrendered to the Lord, and wish to follow Him through the waters of baptism at an early date. Last Sunday Rev. and Mrs. G. Mellish, our returned Missionaries from Liberia, were the special speakers.

NIAGARA FALLS

On Thursday evening, September 27th, a public reception for the new pastor of the Trinity Baptist Church, Rev. J. F. Dempster, was held in the Church. Greetings were brought from various pastors in the City, and a programme of sacred music was a feature of the reception.

Rev. W. E. Atkinson, Secretary of the Union, delivered the address of the evening, while Rev. E. E. Hooper baptised three from the Bethel Baptist Church in St. Catharines. Following the benediction, refreshments were served by the ladies of the church.

SEVENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION UNION OF REGULAR BAPTIST CHURCHES OF ONTARIO AND QUEBEC

To be held in

CENTRAL REGULAR BAPTIST CHURCH,
LONDON, ONTARIO.

October 23 to 25, 1934.

Special Speaker—DR. P. W. PHILPOTT

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 9

No. 4

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 42

Fourth Quarter

October 21st, 1934

ELIPHAZ'S SUPERIORITY

Lesson Text: Job, chapter 15.

Golden Text: Job 15:8-10.

Bible School Reading: Job 15:1-16.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—Psalm 55:16-23; Tuesday—Psalm 14:1-7; Wednesday—Proverbs 16:26-33; Thursday—Joel 3:9-17; Friday—Romans 7:18-25; Saturday—I. Cor. 2:9-16.

I. REPROOF OF ELIPHAZ (vs. 1-16).

In this lesson there is recorded the second speech of Eliphaz. The three friends take it in turn to speak, and Job answers each one. It was a case of three to one, but Job held his own against them. In each speech there are many lessons, and time spent in their study is not without profit. In the words of each there is manifest sincerity, and perfect frankness, with the highest resolve concerning each other. The three friends were really endeavouring to help Job, even when correcting him for what they believed to be his wrong attitude. They were miserable comforters, mistaken in the diagnosis of the case; yet they meant well, and uttered some truths that ought to be taken to heart.

In this speech Eliphaz accuses Job of uttering vain—or windy—knowledge; and with filling his inward parts with the east wind; also of reasoning with unprofitable talk, casting off fear, and restraining prayer, or devotion before God. This is severe condemnation of Job's expressed belief that the just suffer as well as the guilty. His friends sought to convince him that his affliction was due to his sin, and they endeavoured to bring him to repentance; but failed in their efforts due to his conviction of rectitude in his own life. It is intimated here that the adoption of his belief would end all devotion to God. This was not so in his experience, nor need it be so in the experience of anyone to-day who holds a similar belief. We know there is a just purpose behind the suffering of the righteous, and we trust God, even when we cannot understand (Ps. 62:8). The charge is pressed home by Eliphaz that Job was condemned by his own utterances (vs. 5, 6); and he is chided with his superior knowledge. Job had informed his friends that he was not inferior in knowledge to them, and he had condemned their statements respecting himself. But he had not claimed to be the depository of all wisdom. He is informed that the elder men are on the side of his friends, and he is asked the reason for the utterance of his words. One would be inclined to conclude from such a strong way of speaking that Job had been guilty of a most serious offence in his utterances. And the same would be true if he had been acting as a self-righteous individual seeking to justify all his actions before God. Instead, he was but upholding his innocence of any special sin warranting his heavy affliction. In the prologue we are enlightened concerning the cause of his sufferings, and know that Job was right in his judgment (2:6).

An argument against the self-righteous attitude is then presented by Eliphaz in a description of man's condition in God's sight. He is unclean. This is evident when his source is considered. Man was created innocent, but he fell, and brought upon himself the consequences of sin (Gen. 3). He became from that time unclean (Ps. 14:3). In contrast with the absolute purity of God, his uncleanness is great (v. 15). This Isaiah discovered in his wonderful vision (Is. 6:5). And, in addition, man "drinketh in iniquity like water, intimating his continued sinfulness. From these statements we realize the presumption of pleading one's own righteousness before God; for our righteousnesses are but as filthy rags in His sight. No one is good enough to stand in His presence, and it is only as we are in Christ, and cleansed by His blood, that we are permitted the privilege of this position (Eph. 1:4-7). Note the necessity for an understanding of the fact

of sin, and of God's unalterable attitude toward it; also of the divine plan of redemption.

II. THE STATE OF THE WICKED (vs. 17-35).

Having reproofed Job for what he esteemed was vain talk, and shown clearly the holiness of God, in contrast with the sinfulness of men, Eliphaz proceeds to describe the condition of the wicked. He intimates that he knows whereof he is speaking. He will declare what he has seen, and what the wise men have told. "Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no stranger passed among them", implying the purity of his inheritance, possibly having in mind Job's reference to the wicked dominating in the earth (9:24). The description of the state of the wicked is graphic and interesting. First, he is said to travail with pain all his days, or rather "trembleth of himself". "And the number of years is hidden to the oppressed." This is probably the reason for his trembling. He is uncertain of his time. The righteous man in a like position applies his heart to wisdom (Ps. 90:12). "A dreadful sound is in his ears." An evil conscience gives him a very unhappy time, and he anticipates dreadful things. A bad conscience is a very uncomfortable companion, as Herod found to his cost (Mark. 6:16), and many another throughout the years. It is due to a guilty knowledge of sin; and its only remedy is confession, restitution, and forsaking of the sin.

In continuation of his description, Eliphaz relates the attitude of the wicked to God: "He stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty. He runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers." The picture presented in these words is that of rebellion against God. The wicked one joining shields with his fellows, as soldiers attacking a fortress did to protect themselves against the missiles of the opposing forces, is depicted as running, spear in hand, against God. This was the chief reason for his unhappy condition. The foolishness of such an attitude is evident. No man can prevail against God; and while, with their puny efforts they are defying the divine will, "he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision (Ps. 1:4). Their utmost efforts cannot disturb Him. Note the folly of the atheists of Russia and elsewhere in denying the existence of God, and fighting against His recognition. They are just fools (Ps. 53:1). And others who choose their own way instead of God's way are equally foolish (Prov. 14:12). The physical condition of the wicked denotes their prosperity (v. 27). This may have had something to do with their rebellion against God, for there are few men who can stand prosperity (Deut. 32:15). The farmer in the parable made provision for larger barns, but considered not his duty to God (Luke 12:18); and the prodigal son left for the far country (Luke 15:13). Those who are prosperous require to keep very near to God, lest the sense of dependence on Him should become weak, and the desires of the human will take the place of the commands of the divine will.

Continuing his discourse, Eliphaz next describes the wicked as robbers who plundered cities and dwelt in the desolated houses of the inhabitants. Job had referred to these, therefore this reference. These persons were prosperous, but their riches would not increase, and their prosperity would not continue (v. 29). And as the hot wind of the east shrivels the branches of the trees, so would their offspring cease to be, and they themselves would pass away in the wrath of God. This is in emphasis of the operation of the law that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). Those who take the sword shall perish by the sword (Matt. 26:52), and those who continue in sin shall see the fruit of it in the lives of those connected with them, and bear the consequences of it in their own persons. History and observation bear witness to the truth of this. Sin in its nature bears its own punishment (Prov. 1:31). "Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity: for vanity shall be his recompense", implying the unsubstantial nature of the wicked's trust. Trusting in riches, or other material things, is foolish, for they are not abiding; and while they may at times be useful, they can never take the place of faith in the living God. Christian people require to exercise care lest they put more trust in things seen than in the thing unseen. Note the further emphasis on the brevity and uncertainty of the sojourn of the wicked on this earth (vs. 32-35). His lot truly is not a happy one.