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

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CHRIST AND THE COMMON LIFE

A Sermon by Dr. P. W. Philpott

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, October 7th, 1934.

"And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and His disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus said unto Him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory; and His disciples believed on Him."—John 2:1-11.

This was the beginning of our Lord's miraculous ministry. Two months prior to this event He left His home at Nazareth and came forth to the Jordan where John the Baptist was preaching so terrifically against sin, and during the sixty days that intervened some wonderful things transpired. He was not only baptized by John, He was also anointed by God with the Holy Spirit, Who came upon Him in the form of a dove. He was then led by the Spirit up into the wilderness where forty days and nights were spent in a terrible conflict with the evil one and the powers of darkness. All that took place there we shall never know, but we do know that Satan was defeated, and that Jesus Christ came forth triumphant to the Jordan again where John declared Him to be "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

The day following that public statement, John the Baptist was talking with two of his disciples, when Jesus passed by; and the preacher, calling the attention of these disciples to the Master, said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And these two disciples, John, the writer of the Gospel, and Andrew, left the preacher and followed Jesus Christ.

They spent a whole day in His presence. What a day that must have been! Then they did what I believe is

the most natural thing for a man to do when he has come in contact with Christ: they went out to find others and bring them into the fellowship which means more to men than anything else in this wide world. Andrew did about the biggest thing any man ever did do: he found his brother—a big, rough, blaspheming, fisherman, and he brought him to Jesus. It is much easier to talk to strangers about Christ and His love than it is to deal faithfully with our own flesh and blood.

The next day, Philip was added to this brotherhood, and he following the example of Andrew, found his old friend Nathaniel, a student of prophecy. Nathaniel was frightfully prejudiced against anything that came out of Nazareth, but Philip urged him to "come and see". That was the slogan of those early soul-winners.

It is great to have a Christianity that you are not afraid to have tested, a Christ to Whom you can invite men with utmost confidence, knowing that He will meet their need and solve the problems of their lives. All that we have to do is to bring them into His presence, and He undertakes the rest.

When Jesus Christ saw Nathaniel, He said, "Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile!" So astonished

was Nathaniel at this greeting that he exclaimed, "Whence knowest thou me?" And the Master replied, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." This is one of the evidences of His Deity.

In the last verse of this chapter John states that He "needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was in man." He is a "discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart." Before you speak a word, He can tell you all about yourself. When Nathaniel learned this, he said unto Him, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." Just to hear His word, just to look in His face, dissolves all your doubts, answers all your questions. It is no trouble to believe when you are in His presence. How suggestive were the words the Master uttered in response to that declaration of faith! "Because I said unto thee . . . believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these." And so we do. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The Christian life is anything but dull and monotonous. Each new day brings its trials and difficulties, but these are all met with God's promises which are always up-to-date, made for the very occasion, bringing a deeper consciousness and fuller vision of the Divine Presence. "Thou shalt see greater things" is the principle upon which the Christian life is lived.

Here we have the beginning of Christian discipleship, the beginning of true brotherhood. We hear much about brotherhoods these days, but there never was a real brotherhood of man outside of this circle formed on the banks of the Jordan. We may join all of the societies on earth, may know all the secrets and signs, but the spirit of real brotherhood is only found in genuine Christianity, for "one is our Master, and all we are brethren."

Christianity Is Consistent with the Common and Ordinary Affairs of Our Everyday Life. In the narrative which I have read you, we see the Master and His disciples attending a wedding feast in the highlands of Galilee, and this fact, with what took place on that occasion, suggests to us some very practical and timely truths. One of the principal reasons for the Jews rejecting Jesus was that He did not come to them in the regular order of their prophets. The Old Testament order of the Holy Man was a life of seclusion. The prophet lived in a solitary place like John the Baptist in the wilderness, coming forth to the people from time to time with some great burning message from God. He was different from the common crowd. But our Lord lived a life of the ordinary boy in a little village, and worked as a common artisan among men, building houses and making ox-yokes and furniture. He touched life in the common place. For thirty years He lived in a little gossipy village—and pleased God. What a lesson this teaches us! You will remember that before He ever preached a sermon or performed a miracle of any kind, that the heavens opened and the Father said, "This is my beloved Son; in whom I am well pleased." That testimony from the heavens must have referred to His life in the village of Nazareth. You may not be able to preach a sermon or sing a solo, you may never come into the limelight in other respects, you may have to live your life behind the counter or in the kitchen or on the farm, but remember Jesus Christ pleased God as a carpenter.

Is it not suggestive that He chose for His intimate friends Galilean fishermen who were looked upon as being "unlearned and ignorant men"? He could appreciate culture and refinement, but He "went in with publicans and sinners." And when the Pharisees demanded a reason for His conduct, the only explanation He ever deigned to give was, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." We have learned that if you want to save the lost, you must go where they are.

I have been greatly impressed with those words that recur so often in the record of His ministry,—“He touched them.” He touched the leper, He touched the blind man's eyes, He touched the dumb man's tongue, He touched the deaf man's ears. I do not attach any theological value to that phrase, but it does suggest *why* "the common people heard Him gladly." "He touched them." So many of His followers and professing ambassadors fail in their ministry, because they lack the tender touch of the Son of God.

I saw a cartoon some years ago in a paper, of a wealthy young lady distributing Christmas cheer in a poor district. She had rapped at the door and a little girl with uncombed hair had opened it, and the young lady was handing in a basket from the end of her parasol, and the child was refusing to take it, contemptuously sticking out her tongue. It was rather a rude picture, but it did suggest that the poor do not want charity from the end of a parasol. We preachers would do well to remember that the anointing with the Holy Spirit meant to Him "preaching the Gospel to the poor and healing the broken-hearted", and this needs a tender touch. Only the Holy Ghost can make us equal to this ministry.

The World Gives Its Best First, and "when men have well drunk, then that which is worse". We make proverbs about this fact,—“The best apples are on the top of the barrel”; “The bargains are always in the shop windows”; “The bait covers the hook.” The prodigal in the fifteenth chapter of Luke was fascinated by the "feasting" and dancing in that far country. Satan let him see only the tinsel, and so great was the glitter that the boy could see nothing else, and with his pockets full, he started for the good time which ended in the same old tragedy. First there was the feast, and then the famine; singing with harlots, then starving with swine. That bit of history is being repeated in thousands of lives tonight. The devil never even changes the bait. Before the blood of one victim is dry, another is in the trap.

After giving a young man something to eat one evening, I asked him if he would mind joining me in a word of prayer, and he knelt by the side of his chair while we asked God to save him and deliver him from the great drink curse. When he was leaving me at the door a few minutes later, he burst into tears and said, "I have not always been a beggar. I have not always worn clothes like these," looking at his filthy rags, "and while you prayed for me in there I could hear my mother's voice in prayer again as if it had been this morning." I said, "Where is your mother?" "She is in a churchyard in New York State." And then, trembling from head to foot in a great surge of emotion, he sobbed out, "Oh! God, look at me!" And my heart went out for that poor slave. I assured him that God was looking at him, and that he had been sent to my door not only for the bread

that perisheth, but that he might eat of the Bread from heaven and drink of that Living Water, and hunger and thirst no more. I'll never forget what he said as he left that door. "You're too late, you're too late, preacher. You do not know what goes on in here," tapping his breast. "Why," I said, "it is never too late. What goes on in there?" "Ah! there are times when I could cut a man's throat for a drink of whisky." This, before he went down the road of the prodigal in the far country to have a good time, but he was now in the afterward. He had well drunk, and the devil was giving him "that which is worse."

When Our Own Resources Fail, Then His Powers Shall Most Prevail. It was when their wine had run out that He performed the miracle. We have heard it said that God always helps men who help themselves. That is not the gospel. God helps men who cannot help themselves, if they trust Him. Indeed, He never performs a miracle until we have reached the end of our own strength. When we have no confidence left in the flesh, when we throw up our hands in surrender and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner", He turns the water into wine. There are none too bad for God. There are none too weak or sinful to be saved. Most folks are too good. They need no physician. They are too strong. They can rely upon themselves—and God lets them do it. Have you ever noticed in the Gospels that the persons whom He has delivered and saved and did such wonderful things for were all absolutely bankrupt,—a leper—incurable, and an outcast; a blind man; the woman who had "spent all her living", etc. Oh, it is our sinfulness, our helplessness, that appeal to His grace and power.

"For nothing good have I
Whereby Thy grace to claim;
I'll wash my garments white
In the blood of Calv'ry's Lamb."

Jesus Christ Would Have a Place in Our Home-Life. How significant that this Man who came from heaven to redeem the world should begin His public ministry by spending a day at a wedding with some poor family, and seemingly He was there for no other reason than to make it a happier wedding and a better day. A wedding means the beginning of a new home, which should be the most sacred of all institutions in our modern civilization. I wonder why more people do not invite the Master to their marriage? Why do we not welcome Him to our table, and fireside? Ah, methinks that many misunderstand the Christ. They imagine that He would cast a chill upon their joys; that He would put out the fire on the hearth; that He would unstring the harp and fill the air with discordant sounds. Oh! what a mistake! Did He spoil this wedding? Was this home any poorer for having the Christ at the table? There will come times in every life when the wine runs out, when reverses come. Satan will seek to cause divisions and separations, and death will visit the palace as well as the hovel; but if He is there, what a difference it will make when the wine runs out! He is the "High Priest that can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities." He only can say, "Let not your heart be troubled." Why do we exclude Him from our home-life? "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man will hear my voice and will open the door, I will come in to Him and sup with Him." He Who said those words is the One

Who turned the water into wine in Galilee. He would be guest at thy house tonight. The reason He did not attend your wedding is that He was not asked. These folks "invited Jesus". They wanted Him in their home, but alas, alas, most folks shut the door in His face. He stands and knocks and they hear His voice, but they keep Him on the doorstep. Let us open our hearts to Him tonight, and He will come in, bringing salvation, and joy and life everlasting.

LIFE'S MYSTIC SHADOW

By The Editor

There is a very significant verse in the ninth chapter of Mark, verse thirty-two: "But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him." It relates to a time in the life of our Lord when the distance between Himself and the cross is steadily diminishing; and He takes His disciples into Galilee that He may further instruct them, in what seems to us the plainest speech, of the certainty of His death. But the prediction is so contrary to all that they desired and hoped for, and the further prediction of His resurrection is so opposed to all that they have experienced, or observed, or heard, of the course of human life, that they are utterly at a loss to understand His saying.

This is not the first time His teaching has transcended the reach of their finiteness. But on other occasions, when they were alone with Him, they have asked Him to explain the parable. Now they are afraid to ask Him! Why were they afraid? They were not afraid of Him. Luke says, "And they feared to ask him of that saying." A word had been spoken which was more cloud than light: it concealed more than it revealed to them; and yet such light as they saw from behind the mystic shadow filled them with fearful foreboding, and they were afraid to ask for more light.

And do we ever stand amid such revealing shadows? Do we stand face to face with mysteries which are just luminous enough to make us afraid? In the otherwise solitary and silent places of life, are we made to listen to voices which are but echoes of the one infallible and universal Voice divine, whose pregnant words,

"Like Nature, half reveal,
And half conceal the soul within,"

and whose soul we are afraid to identify? Do we live in a house wherein are many doors which we are afraid to open, because of strange sounds we have heard from within? Is life like unto some gray castle, wherein the human soul is haunted by the invisible presence of unwelcome truths which we fear to recognize? Are we, like little children, afraid to go upstairs or downstairs in the dark? Is it desirable that all truth, like an obedient servant, should here and now respond to our call, and present itself for our full and intimate recognition? Or, is there about it a might and a majesty which makes wise men fear to know it intimately? Are there not some realms of knowledge into which wise men will fear to enter?

I.

There is an element of predictive revelation in every man's knowledge of life. We all know something. We are endowed with powers of perception by which things external to ourselves are known. And in the sum-total

of our knowledge, that which is comprehended in what we call our consciousness, there is an element which we did not find out for ourselves. We know some things intuitively, and some things also by direct divine communication. And in the sum of our knowledge there is something predictive: it anticipates the future, it belongs to the future, it has to do with things which must shortly come to pass. We cannot be unconscious of Jerusalem, the Jerusalem of pain, and sorrow, and shame. And we cannot be wholly unaware that our feet are set in the road that leads thither. The past is with us; our yesterdays follow hard after us; and we cannot leave the life we have lived behind. But so also is the future with us. We know that we were not born only to die. It is impossible for us to conceive of the extinction of being. We cannot cease to be. Life is not a dungeon where cries of agony are to be succeeded by a profound and unending silence. Our feet are on the road which leads somewhere.

And the same is true of the Word of revelation. It has to do with the future. However, you may draw upon it for present enrichment, you cannot exhaust its fulness. It is always speaking about to-morrow, and telling us of Jerusalems to be. You have doubtless observed that men most familiar with the ocean stand most in awe of its power. And it is only those who know little of the Book who presume to be able exactly to fathom and measure it. It binds the past to the future. However plainly it may speak to-day, it has a message for the future, and speaks of "things not seen as yet."

"Who dares to bind to his dull sense,
The oracles of heaven,
For all the nations, tongues, and climes,
And all the ages given?
That universe, how much unknown!
That ocean unexplored!
The Lord hath yet more light and truth
To break forth from His Word."

And in those intimate, personal communings of the soul with God, how the principle of the text is repeated! He takes us into Galilee to teach us before He leads us up to Jerusalem. We do not know that we can put in words the truth we feel, but has anything really come to us as a surprise? In the midst of untoward circumstances there springs up some recollection of its having been foretold; so that whatever the situation we are never taken completely by surprise. What was Job's meaning when he said, "Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in? 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. I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came"? Have we not all felt like that? Is it not a law of life, that we never come to a Jerusalem of treachery, bereavement, and sorrow, without being given some vague consciousness of falling eventually?

II.

Does not this consciousness of the future, the whispering of the spirit which speaks about Jerusalem, inspire us with a fearsome wonder?

Have we any difficulty in understanding the feeling of the disciples? The Master's predictions staggered them. They thought that His words must surely bear

some other construction than their plain and superficial meaning. It seemed to them impossible that they should be meant in any literal sense. Hence they understood not His saying: but they were afraid to ask, lest their fears should be confirmed.

And how many questions of life have struggled vainly within us for utterance, because we have been afraid to have them answered! If we were standing face to face with one from whose view to-morrow is not veiled, we would be afraid to ask him to tell us everything that will come to pass. Psalmists and fortune tellers flourish only because people do not believe in them! If it were really believed that they possessed power of clairvoyance, everybody would be afraid to ask them questions. We should be afraid of to-morrow: we know not what fear would fill us, if a full year were opened to our view.

All the interests and energies of life are sustained and focussed by the attraction of the unknown. We think we can see into the sphere of to-morrow; our programme is all arranged. But in our view the figures which move to and fro, are vague and shadowy; and to-morrow is like a landscape wrapped in morning mist. And it is what the mist conceals which gives us interest in to-morrow. Who knows but there—between those mystic shadows—fortune lies!

Life would be unendurable if its crosses could be clearly outlined before we come to them. It was late in His ministry that Jesus taught His disciples about His own cross, and even then, its reality, its supreme horror, was mercifully hidden from their comprehensions. They never could have endured had they known the end from the beginning. Let us read our gospels again, and see how dim and vague the Cross in the distance is; and note, too, how, as soon as it comes clearly in view, the events are hurried and how they crowd upon the heels of one another, as though the Lord of events had said to more than Judas at last, "That thou doest, do quickly!"

It is a powerful argument in support of the Deity of Christ, that knowing all, He still endured. No man could have done it. "My father," said Isaac, "behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" And Abraham could only answer, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together." But Christ had had that question answered, and knew that He was the Lamb—and still "they went both of them together." But not one of the disciples could have endured that foreknowledge.

Let us learn, therefore, that it is divine mercy which inspires us with a fear to ask some questions. Let us not complain that the future is unknown. God has many things to say to us, but we cannot bear them now. If we could, He would speak them now. Little children sometimes ask awkward and impertinent questions. We are to become as little children, but not in this respect. Let us beware of the faults of little children, and let us not look for the key to the locked doors in our Father's home.

And this will affect our attitude toward the Bible. There are some good people who are very fond of charts which are supposed to illustrate the dispensations, not only of the past, but of the future. They are fond of measuring the distance from Galilee to Jerusalem; they are never afraid to ask questions. We cannot but think that such fearlessness is due to careless hearing, and results from a misunderstanding of the spirit and purpose of divine revelation. The Bible is not a fortune-

teller. We must not come to it as Saul went to the witch of Endor. Have we not noticed how vague the predictions of the Bible are? Let us remember that concerning the doings of God in the future, it is written, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."

III.

The questions we fear to ask will be answered in our own experience. The very men who feared to ask the meaning of the Cross, lived to become its inspired expositors. "These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him." The people misunderstood His saying when He said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up": they did not then know that "He spake of the temple of his body"; but "when therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said." And Christ Himself announced the purpose of these preintimations of the divine Spirit: "Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he."

It is the purpose of divine predictions that they should be understood in the light of the events to which they refer, which is but another way of saying, for the strengthening of faith through experience, going from strength to strength every one appearing in Zion before God.

Not to satisfy our curiosity are these preintimations given; but rather that we may see the wisdom, love, and power of God in the light of fulfilled prophecy. And when life is completed in glory, and all the unasked questions find their answer in the mercy and the judgment with which our web of life He wove; when the remembrance of His predictions, in the light of their fulfilment, prove His foreknowledge and His predestinating grace; when thus we see that all of life was His planning, and its crowning glory is His enduring grace, we shall understand the principle that we were told before these things came to pass that in the end we might believe.

"When the mists have rolled in splendour
From the beauty of the hills,
And the sunlight falls in gladness
On the river and the rills—
On the river and the rills—
We recall our Father's promise
In the rainbow of the spray:
We shall know each other better
When the mists have rolled away.

"We shall come with joy and gladness,
We shall gather round the throne;
Face to face with those that love us,
We shall know as we are known;
And the song of our redemption
Shall resound through endless day,
When the shadows have departed,
And the mists have rolled away."

THE FRENCH BIBLE MISSION

By Rev. W. S. Whitcombe

English-speaking people think of France as a country divided between Roman Catholicism and Rationalism, where Protestantism is no more than a name. After a visit to

France this summer, I must acknowledge sadly that this estimate of "la Belle France" is not far from the truth. Nevertheless, God in His goodness has not left Himself without a witness in this land that produced some of the greatest leaders of the Protestant Reformation and that has been wet with the blood of many of its noblest martyrs. Thirteen years ago the accredited delegates of a number of French Baptist Churches met in the city of Paris to form an evangelical association that would bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ against the powers of infidelity and superstition on the one hand and the deadness, among those who called themselves Baptists, of a "modern" denial of the truths of revelation on the other. What has been accomplished since then by a faithful and heroic band of pastors and their flocks, in the face of inadequate means, forms a story that would stir the hearts of all who love to hear of the triumphs of the Gospel.

The first church of the "Association Evangelique des Eglises Baptistes de Langue Francaise" that I visited was the "rue de Naples" Church, near the great Saint Lazare Station in the heart of Paris. I must confess that I entered with some misgivings. Would the French Baptists be the same as the Canadian Baptists? They might, like many others, bear the same name but be quite different in spirit. Paris is not Toronto, and the barrier of language not by any means the only hindrance in meeting people of other races. But when I entered the rented theatre that formed their place of worship and listened to their singing of hymns that, though strange to me as in word and music, were very familiar in spirit, I knew that I was among brethren. My heart was warmed by the scriptural message of Pastor Guyot, and afterwards, as I formed part of the circle round about the table who partook of the emblems of the shed blood and the broken body of our Lord, I meditated in a new way on the truth that "there is neither Jew nor Greek . . . for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

One hot Sunday afternoon in July on my way from the great Mediterranean seaport of Marseilles to the picturesque old town of Nimes in the "Midi"—the South of France—I found myself in a train crowded with excursionists bound for the same destination as I. I did not suppose they were coming to Nimes to hear me preach my first sermon in French, so I made bold to ask one of my neighbours, a young French soldier in the air service, what the attraction could be. He told me that there was to be a bull-fight in the old Roman Arena, built for such spectacles nearly two thousand years ago. Seeking to draw him out further on the subject I asked him if the sport were dangerous. "Yes," he said very gravely, but in such a way as to prevent further conversation with an inquisitive foreigner, "it is very dangerous for the bull"! Thousands of people filled the great stone amphitheatre, and I wondered whether there would be any left to attend the services at the Baptist Church. There was a goodly number there, however, and the hearty singing, the spirit manifested in the prayer meeting and the soul-stirring message of the pastor, made me feel that they had come to a better place than my fellow-travellers in the train. During my stay in Nimes, I learned to know and to love Pastor Robert Dubarry, not only as a great preacher and leader (he is the President of the Association) but as a brother beloved in the Lord.

In the great industrial centre of Lyons I had the pleasure of meeting some of the members of the church in an informal gathering in the home of Pastor Nicole. There was ample proof here that the "old" Gospel still has power to reach men and women, and especially young people, in a great Catholic city. Here on this soil where the first Christian missionaries to France laid down their lives for the sake of the Gospel, our brethren feel that they are in the true Apostolic succession and preach the Apostolic message "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." The churches in Switzerland at Court and Tramelan—the centre of the watchmaking industry—are in an entirely different atmosphere. The work of John Calvin and the other Swiss Reformers is evident here, and even though the Reformed Church, a State institution, has fallen on evil days, the Baptist Churches are making rapid advances where "Modernism" is failing. Without anything approaching the spectacular, the established centres are being built up and new causes are being commenced in nearby towns and villages. In one such place named Pery, a beautiful little Swiss village nestling on the slopes of a valley in the Jura Moun-

tains, I had the joy of speaking. Mr. Waecker, formerly pastor at Mulhaus, Alsace, forced by immigration laws to quit France, has taken up the work in certain of these centres in Switzerland, while Mr. Frei, formerly of Grange in Switzerland, is taking over the work in Mulhaus. This field includes the remarkable work at Wittenheim, a rapidly growing mining town, where a building is being erected to meet the needs of the church. Until this is completed, the dining-hall of the great mining company is being used as a place of worship, and it was in this place that I addressed the French-speaking members of the local church. The manager of this company gave the church permission to use the building regularly, not because he was interested in the preaching of the Gospel message, but because the life and conversation of some of his men who had been converted by the Gospel proved to him that it was a work of social value.

Time and space would fail me to tell of all the other churches that I visited and the fellowship that I had with the French believers. I have an especially warm place in my heart for the church at Colombes, a suburb of Paris; first, because of the glorious history of the church and its present work under Pastor Emile Guedj, and also because it was there that I experienced for the first time a measure of freedom in preaching in a foreign tongue. But even in such a brief sketch as this I feel that the importance of the missionary causes at Croix, near Lille in the "black-belt" of Northern France and in the great city of Brussels, the capital of Belgium, demand some notice.

The two churches in Croix and Brussels are in strongly Catholic sections of the country, and in order to build a permanent work it is necessary not only to dig deep and lay the foundation well, but also to demolish the superstitions and prejudices of that perverted religion. Judged by our standards, these churches are small. They suffered all the

terrors of four years of war under the German occupation while all the able-bodied men were away fighting on the other side of the lines, all communication with home effectually barred. Only those who have passed through these hardships can appreciate the difficulty of keeping the Gospel light burning brightly in days of darkness and despair. In 1914 a strong church existed in Brussels but it was soon scattered, and after the war, left pastorless; others built, partly at least, on the foundations of the work thus established. But the Baptist testimony, though sadly reduced, was never silenced, and now under the leadership of Pastor Grosse and with the help of sister churches of the Association, has, by the grace of God, been used to do a splendid work in this great city where there is so little light on spiritual things.

Believers everywhere will rejoice that the simple Gospel of the grace of God, without addition or subtraction, is being preached in these French-speaking countries of Europe. The "French Bible Mission" is unique in that it is a missionary organization which seeks to give, not to receive, support. All the churches of the association except three are self-supporting and have taken upon themselves the burden of carrying on the three weakest causes as missionary centres. Even these latter churches are not far from being self-supporting, but in order adequately to carry on the work in these places and to open up new causes outside, support is necessary. Many friends in England and America know and love the President of the Association, Pastor Dubarry; we in the Seminary have a very close and practical interest in the French work by the presence of Mr. Frédéric Buhler who on the completion of his course with us will take up the work of the ministry in his native Alsace. This is a work which should commend itself to the prayerful interest and practical support of the Lord's stewards.

The Union Baptist Witness

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MEDINA

The Annual Harvest Festival of the Medina Baptist Church, was held on Sunday, September 30th, and Monday, October 1st, the church being decorated for the occasion with the fruits of the harvest.

The services on Sunday were addressed by Rev. W. W. Fleischer of Brantford; and the Lord blessed the giving forth of His own Word. The church has a membership of around two hundred and fifty, more than the capacity of the building, and so on the Sunday the building was over-crowded.

On Monday the Missionary party journeyed out from Toronto to take part in these meetings. Miss Lane and Mrs. Mellish spoke to a good gathering of the people in the afternoon and these addresses were followed by a period of testimony and singing. It was a joy to listen to these splendid testimonies from people who, one would at first judge, would be afraid to testify in public, so this speaks well for the splendid work being done by Rev. Melchie Henry amongst his own Indian people.

Following the afternoon meeting, supper was served by the ladies of the church in the hall back of the church auditorium. During the supper Mr. and Miss Thompson, the Gospel Singers, arrived, having come over from Hartford, and so we were favoured with a few numbers from them, followed by one piece in the Indian language by the members of the Medina Church.

The evening meeting was opened by a song service, including another Indian song. It is very refreshing for us to hear these songs in a language other than English, for they remind us very much of the singing of the Bassa people in Liberia who have their own hymns and negro spirituals, different from our own English hymns, some of which we have translated into the Bassa language.

The main part of the evening meeting was occupied by the showing of the lantern view of Liberia, and the telling of the needs of that dark land, especially emphasizing the need of prayer. This was followed by a short message from Rev. W. E. Atkinson in which he told of the work of our Union, and particularly in relation to the Medina Church, thus strengthening the fellowship of this church with the other churches of the Union.—G. D. Mellish.

BRISCOE ST., LONDON

Two weeks of special evangelistic services have just been concluded at the Briscoe Street Baptist Church, London. The first week the Invictus Quartette brought the message in song as well as in the preaching of the Word. Many unsaved were reached with the gospel, and a great number of strangers came to Briscoe Street for the first time.

Rev. James McGinlay was the speaker on Monday evening, September 24th, and gave one of the most stirring messages of the campaign.

On Tuesday, September 25th, Rev. C. J. Loney, of Hamilton, commenced a week's mission, continuing until October 2nd. Sunday morning, September 30th, was beyond doubt the greatest service ever held in Briscoe Street. The power of God was irresistible, and thirteen souls were saved. The evening service was akin to the morning, and another fifteen souls walked the aisle for Christ. There were girls and young men from fourteen to eighteen years of age, young people and adults, including husbands and wives. One young man whose mother has prayed for him for many years, on being led to Christ on Sunday morning, started to run from the front of the church, and did not stop until he was at

home a half a mile away, telling his mother he was saved. His mother testified on Monday evening that his conversion was real. Sunday was a day when the tears of repentance and joy flowed freely.

Briscoe Street Church sends up a united "Praise God" for the time of blessing from the presence of the Lord.

We are sure that all our readers will rejoice at this good news, and pray that the same may be the experience of every church in the Union. "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear."

JAMAICA

We were glad to hear last week from our brother, Rev. John W. Knight, who with his wife is labouring for the Lord at Clarksonville, Jamaica. Also we are glad to welcome to Toronto and to the Toronto Baptist Seminary, a member of Mr. Knight's church, Mr. Black.

"The work goes on very much as usual," Mr. Knight writes. "Several backsliders have been restored in the Clarksonville church, while over twenty are awaiting baptism. As this will be the first baptismal service in several months, the number is not so large as it would appear at first. At Tweedside a smaller number is awaiting baptism; many of them are boys and girls from the Sunday-school. Four were baptized at Mount Moriah a week ago Sunday morning in a river (you would call it a creek) when, I should judge, there were from three to four hundred present to hear the Word. There was a most unusual move in the eleven o'clock service the same day, at the end of which nine came out boldly for Christ. We asked them to remain behind at the end of the service so that we could speak with them personally. This all of them did, and just as we had finished, another who had gone home came back in a heavy shower of rain and told us that she too had given her heart to Christ."

THE PASSING OF MISS FYLE

At 4.50 Saturday morning, October 6th, Miss Reba Fyle, of Brantford, passed into the immediate presence of her Lord. Up until two weeks ago the deceased was normally engaged in the pursuits common to her busy life; indeed on October 10th she attended what proved to be one of our best (and her last) church services. It was fitting that this glorious saint of God should literally die in the harvest field, wielding the sickle of truth, and unsparingly giving herself to the task of a faithful witness. Beside teaching a Sunday School class at Shenstone Memorial Church, Miss Fyle led the W.M.S. as President; but her abiding contribution to the church was a simple, humble, and Christlike walk, maintained with unvarying consistency during years of evident blessing

and years of stress. She had faith, patience, and persistence, to go forward in the work of the Lord.

By vocation, Miss Fyle was a school teacher, having taught more than half a century. With becoming humility, this lovely soul spoke little of her achievements; but ever and anon a traveller from afar, bearing the stamp of greatness and the story of worthwhile accomplishment, came to pay tribute to a teacher who laid so well the foundation of character and integrity in the lives of the young entrusted to her.

Miss Fyle was a Regular Baptist of the pure gold variety—an intelligent, open-minded, Bible student, who adorned the doctrine of Christ her Saviour. As a church and as a Union we shall miss her. Her loss is inestimable, for to every branch of both church and Union her interest, her sympathy, and her love, were given without stint.

THE CONVENTION

Again we call attention to the fact that the Seventh Annual Convention of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec will be held, D.V., in the Central Regular Baptist Church, London, Ontario, from Tuesday, October 23rd, to Thursday, October 25th. We ask you to pray especially for these meetings.

Also, we would remind the Church Clerks to send in their Report Forms, and let us know at once the names of their delegates. This will be greatly appreciated by the Secretary of the Union.

THE SUNDERLAND DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

The conference of the Sunderland District Association will be held on the afternoon and evening of Wednesday, October 17th, in the Stouffville Baptist Church. The afternoon session, at two-thirty, will be addressed by Rev. W. E. Smalley of the Markham, Baker Hill, and Mount Albert, Circuit; and Pastor John Cunningham of the Scotch Line Church will be the special speaker at the evening session. The Christian Crusade Trio will sing at the evening service. Members of the churches forming the association, and friends from Toronto and surrounding districts, are urged to attend these meetings.

GALT

Sunday, September 30th, was a great day for the Galt Regular Baptist Church. Mr. Arthur Burnham preached at both services, and the report is that it was the best day they have yet experienced. At the evening service, one young woman was gloriously saved, and at the after-meeting, which carried on spontaneously after the evening service, practically all who remained bore their testimony, including the young woman who had just accepted Christ.

A GOOD ADVERTISEMENT

We recently saw an advertisement of a trust company which read, "Make your will—and live." Doubtless allusion was made to the fact that many people seem to fancy that making a will is rather an indication of the approach of the end. The truth is, that when one has made a will he may live longer after making it than he did before—and may, indeed, have to make many wills before the end. But it is always well to have your will made.

You may not have much money to leave, but perhaps you have a little that you would like to feel would be employed in preaching the gospel after you are gone. We can suggest no more profitable investment than for you to leave something to Toronto Baptist Seminary. This Seminary is dedicated to the principle that the Bible is the inspired and infallible word of God. Students are trained for pastoral and missionary work at home and abroad. While the Seminary is about six years old it already has graduates preaching the gospel in Central America, Jamaica, China, Africa, Palestine, Ireland, the United States, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec.

Make your will to-day. Or, if you have already made it, add a codicil leaving something to Toronto Baptist Seminary. And in order that there may be no mistake, stipulate that what you leave is for "Toronto Baptist Seminary, connected with Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto."

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 9

No. 4

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 43 Fourth Quarter October 28th, 1934

JOB READY FOR THE DEFENCE

Lesson Text: Job 16, 17.

Golden Text: Job 16:2-4.

Bible School Reading: Job 16:1-22.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—Lam. 2:10-22; Tuesday—Psalm 22:1-15; Wednesday—Psalm 35:1-17; Thursday Eccles. 12:8-14; Friday—II. Corin. 1:1-11; Saturday—Matthew 26:57-68.

I. JOB'S OPINION OF HIS FRIENDS (16:1-6).

In previous lessons we have studied the speeches of Job's friends, and his replies to the same. Bildad and Zophar had each spoken once, Eliphaz had spoken twice, and the present discourse of Job is in reply to the latter's second attempt to console and correct the suffering one. Job had much to endure from his friends, notwithstanding their good intentions, and we can understand somewhat the feeling which led him to express himself as in these opening verses. They had come to console with him, but they were miserable or troublesome comforters (v. 2). The reason for this conclusion we have observed in previous lessons as being due to their lack of understanding of Job's condition. It is clearly evident that wisdom is required on the part of those who would help others. Continuing his statement, Job retorts upon Eliphaz respecting his reference to "vain words", or "words of wind"; he asks why his friends weary themselves in contradictions, and informs them that he could speak as they do. He could heap up words against them, shake his head at them, indicating probably a gesture of scorn, and strengthen them with his mouth, an ironical intimation to make clear the superficial nature of the ministry of his friends, in contrast with the real consolation springing from the heart. But whether he spoke, or kept silent, his grief remained (v. 6). Note Job's frankness of speech, his unfavourable opinion of his friends, and the lessons manifest in the dialogue respecting the right and wrong ways of seeking to aid others. One must be careful in comforting others that we do not make their trouble worse. The golden rule may guide us in our approach to them (Matt. 7:12).

II. JOB'S PITIFUL CASE (16:7 to 17:16)

Following his expressed opinion of his friends, Job describes his pitiful case. He was weary, and had been deprived of his company, or band of witnesses—probably referring to his children and servants who, as witnesses, could attest his innocence. His loneliness is evident in this statement, together with his weakened physical condition, and the unfair advantage over him possessed by his friends. He refers to his emaciated physical state as witnessing against him (v. 8), although he knew that the same had not been caused by any particular sin. Care should be exercised in forming a judgment based on circumstantial evidence. One should be in possession of certain information before reaching a conclusion.

Continuing his statement, Job vividly depicts his trouble. He had been torn in wrath, teeth had been gnashed upon him, eyes had been sharpened upon him, men had gaped upon him with the mouth, and smitten him upon the cheek, and had gathered themselves together against him (vs. 9, 10). God had turned him over to the wicked, and he had been broken asunder, shaken to pieces, and made a mark for archers. In this is apparent Job's keen appreciation of his acute suffering. He esteemed himself as helpless under the divine affliction. His weakness—and that of human nature in general—is evident in his circumstances. He could not deliver himself, and was compelled to look to another for deliverance. Note man's insignificance in the universe, the greatness and power of God in contrast, the marvellous divine consideration which takes notice of man (Ps. 144:3,

4), and man's absolute dependence on God. Observe also the application of Job's descriptive statement (vs. 9-14) to the Lord Jesus Christ in His sufferings. He was buffeted by His enemies, and made to suffer in a cruel manner, even to the extent of dying on the cross (Matt. 27:67; 27:35). He submitted to this affliction that our redemption might become possible (I. Peter 1:18, 19); and thus manifested the greatness and depth of divine love (John 3:16; Romans 5:8).

The reaction of Job to his affliction is next described, wherein his humble attitude is emphasized. He mentions the sackcloth upon his skin, in conformity with eastern custom, the horn defiled in the dust (v. 15),—implying a prostrate position, the face foul (or red) with weeping, and the heavy eyelids due to weeping. And this affliction was not due to any outward unrighteousness, and he was evidently pure (v. 17). He was not conscious of any particular sin as the cause of his suffering. He therefore calls upon earth not to rest until his innocence is declared, and states his conviction that God knows his record, and is aware of his innocence (v. 19). His friends scorned him, but his eyes poured out tears unto God (v. 20). He then expresses his longing desire that one would plead for him with God, and refers to the end of his earthly life (v. 22).

Observe the reality of the heavenly record respecting every human being (v. 19). Every deed is recorded on high, and some day we shall be brought face to face with our record. It is of interest to note that we make our own record, and therefore cannot blame another for any consequences which may ensue. God is just, and will reward His own according to their works; and will punish the wicked according to their sins (Luke 10:10-15). The expressed wish of Job for divine advocacy is of deep interest. He desires God to plead with God for him. We know not how much this early saint knew about this heavenly work, but to us the fact is clearly revealed in the New Testament. There we are informed of the advocacy of the Son of God on behalf of His own (I. John 2:1), and also that of the Holy Spirit (Rev. 8:26, 27). Note the blessings accompanying such advocacy, and the free access to the throne accorded those thus blessed (Heb. 4:14-16). The third matter of interest is the certainty of one's earthly end (v. 22), and the lesson arising therefrom respecting preparation. The nature of this preparation in Christ may be explained (Acts 16:30, 31).

Continuing his statement, Job likens his life to an expiring light, and intimates that the grave was ready for him. So great was his affliction that he felt he would not be long spared on the earth. The grave would soon receive him. He had evidently nothing to look forward to on the earth. The grave was his only release. This, we fear, is the attitude of many who are sick, and they are in need of sympathy and understanding helpfulness. Job then states that had it not been for the mockery which he was called upon to suffer he would have had rest (v. 2). This must have been difficult to endure. He calls upon one, probably God, to go surety with him in attestation of his innocence (v. 3), and requests Him not to exalt, or grant victory to his friends (v. 4). They sought to deliver him as a prey (found in the term flattery), and the eyes of their children would fail (v. 5). They had referred to his children (8:4), now he has something to say about theirs. Note the law of retribution (Ex. 20:5), and its accompanying lesson of parental responsibility.

Job further intimates his miserable condition by comparing his former state with that of his present. God had made him a byword among the people, whereas before he had been as a tabret (v. 6; Deut. 28:37). His eye was dim by reason of sorrow, and all his members were as a shadow (v. 7), indicating his sad appearance. The righteous would be astonished at this, and would be stirred up on account of the prosperity of the wicked. But by this they would be encouraged to continue on their way, becoming stronger and stronger (v. 9). Witnessing the innocent suffering, and the wicked prospering, does not lead the righteous person to leave the way of righteousness, but makes him more determined to pursue the right way. Job then calls upon his friends to speak if they had anything worthwhile to utter, although he rather doubts their wisdom (v. 10). And he informs them of his own hopeless condition with his days past, and the grave near (vs. 11-16). Job's hope was not on this earth (v. 15). Job's question, "Where is now my hope?" is worthy of a personal application. Note the foolishness of a hope limited to this earth, and the necessity for a hope beyond the tomb (Col. 1:5).