

The Gospel Witness

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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, June 9th, 1935

(Stenographically Reported)

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."—Eph. 1:7.

I call your attention particularly to this single phrase, "The forgiveness of sins." The whole purpose of Christianity; including the coming of Christ into this world, the mystery of the Incarnation, the indisputable fact of the death and resurrection of Christ—the function of the Christian religion taken in its entirety—is really reduced to these simple terms: it all means "the forgiveness of sins". I ask you to think with me for a little while this evening of the implications of this phrase, and their relation to the whole Christian revelation.

I.

I begin with this statement, that the CHRISTIAN REVELATION EVERYWHERE ASSUMES AND INTERPRETS THE FACT OF SIN. The whole philosophy of the Christian religion is based upon the assumption that "sin entered into the world, and death by sin". I say, it assumes sin to be a fact.

Suppose, for the moment, we set aside all definitions, and concern ourselves with the self-evident fact of universal human experience. There is something in human life, call it what you will, which makes for dispeace, which causes conflict, which gives pain, which makes men suffer, which overwhelms people with sorrow, which issues at last in death. Anyone of ordinary intelligence must accept that as a fact of human experience. It is not easy to live. There are disabilities from which no human power, nothing within the range of human resource, can save a man. Disease may overtake him; disasters of many sorts may come upon him, as they came upon Job. Neither wealth nor position will avail to secure for him immunity from these things. Eliphaz was right when long ago he observed—whatever be the explanation of it—that "man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward".

What is that thing in human life that occasions all this suffering and sorrow? There is a philosophy—I shall not dignify it with the name of science, for it never pretends to any exact knowledge—but there is a philosophy of things that would lead us to assume that that something in human life which effects all the confusion and suffering and sorrow is really an essential element in human experience; that it is something that inheres in a scheme of things which makes for progress and continuous ascent. I wish those who so believe could see more clearly the implications of that strange delusion which has fastened itself upon the human mind, which has coloured the thinking of the world, and which is usually called Evolution. It teaches that the world, by some means or another, in its physical existence, and in its march toward the realization of moral values, considered in the individual life, or in a man's social relationships, in a small community, in the nation, or in the world at large—that all the elements that go to make up that tremendous struggle are but the outworking of some potentiality that was resident in the origin of things.

For a minute let us suppose that to be true—and remember, it is what is being taught in our high schools, in all our universities, and in nearly all our theological institutions. I have used the term often, but I use it again, advisedly and deliberately, and say, if ever there was a system of thought, a philosophy of things, that was inherently worthy of the scriptural epithet, "damnable heresy", it is the doctrine of Evolution. If ever there was a delusion outside an insane asylum, it is that. They may call us "unlearned and ignorant" if they will, but they are unlearned and ignorant who, without an infinitesimal element of proof, base their philosophy of life upon a mere speculation. They

are the "unlearned and ignorant" people who subscribe to that delusion.

But for a moment let us assume it to be true. Look upon the world to-day. Select an individual life as a subject of study; subject it to the most careful analysis, and see the evil that is in it. View that life in its enlargements, and all its ramifications in society at large, observe the multiplication of evil everywhere, until you have the national unit, whatever it be. I would not incur the risk of seeming to be pharisaical by assuming that we are better than others. You have only to look upon—what do they call it?—a "cross-section" of Canadian life anywhere, in any realm—domestic, business, political—to see the mass of evil that is there. But we are told that it is inevitable! It is part of the structure of human life, and such experiences are indispensable to our getting on, and to our upward climb. If that be so, who put it there? What effect must that philosophy have upon one's view of the Author and Architect of it all?

Last week I read of a woman of fifty-five and her son of twenty-seven years of age being hanged together for the murder of the woman's brother. The night before their execution she was permitted to see two other sons, one of whom had been sentenced to life imprisonment as an accessory to the same crime, and another to a long term of imprisonment for some other crime. When I read it I said, What must have been the feeling of that woman as she looked upon those three sons, one to be hanged with her, another to be confined in prison for the rest of his natural life, and a third under the condemnation of the law, and removed from contact with his kind—how must she have felt as she realized that they were her own flesh and blood, and that she had started them on the road of evil-doing? If the woman had an infinitesimal element of moral sense, surely she must have cursed the day she was born, and wished she had never seen the light, rather than to have given to the world three criminals of whom Society had said, "They are not fit to live with us. One of them shall die; another we will put out of sight; and still another will be removed, in the bare hope he may learn to do better."

Look to-day upon Germany, Russia, Japan, China, Italy, Austria, France, Britain (and the lesser nations of Europe), and the United States, the warring Republics of South America, and the other distant places of the earth still full of the habitations of cruelty—and consider the implication of the evolutionary theory that God, or whoever the originator of the universe may be, is responsible for all that. It is a lie! It is a lie that must have been coined in hell itself! Do not tell me that the Creator of all things deliberately planned a thing like that.

The Bible does not tell us so. The Bible assumes the fact of sin—and interprets it as well. The Bible says that "sin entered into the world, and death by sin". The revelation of God tells us that that moral evil which it calls sin is an alien thing; it is a disease, and has in it the potentialities of hell. The Bible says that that thing called sin is an "abominable thing" which God hates. The Bible does not make the infinitely holy God "an accessory before the fact" in all the evil of the world: the Bible reveals God in opposition to it. It shows His holy nature as flaming in anger against it. It reveals sin as a thing that is opposed to God, and everything that is godly. Notwithstanding, the Bible tells us that there is not one of us free from the taint of that terrible

malady: "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

II.

Let me take a step further and say that THE CHRISTIAN REVELATION REVEALS GOD AS ALWAYS TAKING COGNIZANCE OF SIN, AND DEALING WITH IT. God never ignores or condones sin. He does not encourage us to seek deliverance from it by denying its reality, as does that strange thing that is called by the name of Science, and denominated "Christian", that you conquer evil by denying its existence. In order to become a Christian Scientist you must believe a lie. To be a Christian, you must believe the truth. There is an immeasurable difference between the two positions. The Bible does not ignore the fact of sin, but deals with it, faces it for what it is. It clearly defines its nature, and then deals with it.

Have you thought in these days of the necessity that lies behind that simple principle of the Christian religion that sin, like fire, must be dealt with? You ignore it at your peril. If there is a fire in the basement, you must recognize it. You dare not say, "I will see about it in the morning"! There would be no morning for you! Similarly sin must be faced for what it is, and dealt with for what it is.

There was a time—and I suppose that time is not wholly past—when certain vain dreamers dared to say that if we sent the school-master abroad, and made education general, the world would be better; just as we were told twenty years ago that if women were given the franchise they would vote all evil out of existence: they would close all the bar-rooms—because women were such angelic creatures that, although as yet they had not wings, they could be depended upon to oppose evil! A woman can be just as big a sinner as a man. Ahab was the most evil of all Israel's kings, and it is said of him that his evil was chiefly the result of the stirring up of Jezebel his wife. The feminine franchise has not bettered conditions very much. I am not against it, but I cannot see that it has affected any great moral reform.

Similarly, what has education done? I remember some years ago, perhaps a month after I became Pastor of this church twenty-five years ago, I went out to a field beyond the city limits, in the general direction of Long Branch, to see Count de Lesseps, the first man to cross the English Channel in an aeroplane. He flew about the field, and then flew to the city and around the City Hall—and we thought it was very wonderful. And it was wonderful! I remember the first motor ride I ever had. A friend asked me to go for a ride, and the car ran perfectly for a while. I turned to him and said, "Brother, this is the finest way in the world to run away from trouble." But within an hour I told him I thought it was the finest thing to take one into trouble I ever knew! The motor-car has its uses: so have all modern inventions. I appreciate scientific achievement. Nor do I refuse to recognize that science in its application to material, physical, life, has accomplished marvels. When I have time to turn on the radio I am rather glad to be able to listen to a symphony orchestra in New York—without having to pay for a ticket! I say, What a marvel of science! How we were thrilled at the time of the King's Jubilee by hearing those messages from all parts of the Empire, and at last the message of the King himself! A man would be very stupid if he did not recognize the immense possibilities for good which lie in many

of the discoveries and applications of science. We might direct our thought to other machines that men have invented. You women must bless the man who made the electric washing-machine possible. I should, if I had to do the washing. And the man who made the electric iron possible, and the man who substituted electric light for oil lamps or dip candles. How comfortable life could become on the physical plane if all these inventions were in godly hands! But did you ever hear Hitler over the radio? Do you understand German? I do not—but I understood him. I could understand him in any language! I could feel the impact of his utterly satanic personality. When I heard it I said to myself, God help us if human fiends like that are given an opportunity to set the world on fire.

The motor-car ceases to be a motor-car, and becomes a tank, a death-dealing instrument. The aeroplane, the bird, the flying thing, no longer is a dove, but a vulture, a bird of prey; and now the great battleships, and the great fortresses, and the countless thousands of armed men, amount to nothing. What possibilities lie in the science of chemistry! What wonders the chemist has performed! And what blessings that science has conferred upon humanity! If every chemist were a Christian, and if the science were laid at the feet of Christ, what a blessing it would be! But it is not. You see in the paper a photograph of some ugly bipeds—one wonders whence they came—but those ugly faces are gas-masks, and you see them represented as spreading something on the streets of a city to neutralize the poison-gases they fear will be rained upon them from the clouds. Thus every faculty of the human mind, every discovery of science, has been prostituted to the most devilish purposes.

Why? Because of sin. "From whence come wars", the Bible enquires; and then answers, "Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members. Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war." They are the result of lust, covetousness, ambition, desire after forbidden things. It is that in the human heart which the Bible calls sin that has let hell loose on the world. My Evolutionary friend says, "It will be all right a million years from now. There will be an ideal race produced in the countless eons to come." That is a kind of altruism in which I am not interested. I thought the Great War was bad enough. I thought when one or two nations combined to plunge the world into that deluge of blood, the rest of the world was justified in defending itself—and I still think so. I cannot see that it could have done otherwise. But you can sometimes forgive a man, or at least admit that there were some extenuating circumstances, if he is suddenly surprised into an act of violence. But when a man is suspected of murder the question is asked, What was the motive? Could he have planned to do this? Was it deliberate? And if in the trial he is proved to have killed with *malice prepence*, then he is adjudged a murderer indeed. And when you find half the world spending all its energies in deliberately planning the destruction of the other half, subordinating everything to that one ambition, you must admit there is something radically wrong with the world's morals.

Let your imaginations have play for a moment, and let us suppose that these things which we see on such a magnified scale to-day, which is only an enlargement of sin—let us suppose these things never to be dealt with. Suppose Hitlerism could persist and project itself into an-

other life. Suppose all the evil ingenuity of the human mind were given infinite time in which to develop itself. Suppose there were no check, no sovereign power to say, "Thus far shalt thou come, and no farther." What would be the result? Hell would become universal. It could not be otherwise. But blessed be God, there is One upon the throne Who has sovereignly determined that it shall not be; and therefore He deals with sin. He will not ignore it. He sees the finished product, the ultimate development, in the infinitesimal germ. He sees the act in the thought; and therefore in sin the abominable thing, which God hates.

How did God condemn sin? By permitting His Son to take our sin upon Him, and, by a sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. There never has been—there never could be—such an exhibition of the impartiality of justice as that which the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ displayed; for when He, out of love for us, took on Him our nature, and was "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law that we might receive the adoption of sons", though He was God's Well-beloved, it "pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief".

"Jehovah lifted up His rod;
O Christ, it fell on Thee!
Thou wast sore stricken of Thy God;
There's not one stroke for me.
Thy tears, Thy blood, beneath it flowed;
Thy bruising healeth me.

"The tempest's awful voice was heard;
O Christ, it broke on Thee!
Thy open bosom was my ward,
It braved the storm for me.
Thy form was scarred, Thy visage marred;
Now cloudless peace for me.

"Jehovah bade His sword awake,
O Christ, it broke 'gainst Thee;
Thy blood the flaming blade must slake,
Thy heart its sheath must be.
All for my sake, my peace to make.
Now sleeps that sword for me."

Jesus Christ did actually, in His own proper person, make atonement for the sins of the world.

And mark you, I say that I am glad—and this will shock you perhaps—but I say it with all sincerity, I am glad, I rejoice in the scriptural doctrine of hell! "Oh, shocking!" someone says. Not at all! There ought to be a hell. There must be a hell. There must be a time of judgment, when justice will have its way; otherwise there could be no heaven; for if it were not true, then I say without irreverence that I should be philosophically forced to the conclusion that this world was under the government of an almighty devil, not a holy God. I cannot conceive of a holy One failing to resolve that that thing which has wrought such evil in the world should be terminated, buried out of the sight of God Himself. If that be so, we need a religion that will not ignore the fact of sin. These are the fundamental things. These principles relate to the life of the individual, of the community, of the nation, and of the world at large.

And I would dare to make the assertion that it is the failure to recognize these fundamental principles on the part of teachers and preachers of the world that has brought us to this present deplorable state. I want you to think this through. Take the map of the world, and bring to bear upon it your knowledge of the nations there represented, and see if your observations do not support the assertion that the present world condition

is the inevitable result of the philosophy of evolution which found its flower and culmination in Germany in the teaching of Nietzsche and others.

III.

But compare the simple story of the gospel with the facts of human observation, experience, and history. The gospel assumes the fact of sin, reveals the fact that God deals with sin, and GRACIOUSLY PROVIDES A WAY WHERE-BY THE SINNER MAY OBTAIN "the forgiveness of sins." The penalty is paid. I am glad there is a way of escape from the consequences of sin. Call me what you will, but I thank God it is possible for me to avoid the necessity of having to face all the details of my life, and reap all that I have sown. There is not one of us here that has not made, by his own act, the beginning of hell—not one. If there were no hell, left alone your sin would kindle one. I am glad that judgment is past for the believer. I am glad that the price has been paid, that there is no "fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries". I am glad I have no fear of punishment. Are you? Are you really?

Is that the conception of you who are Christians, of what it means to be a Christian, that first of all you have been forgiven your sins? "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." I at least am thankful for that, that I can close my eyes this evening and say, "Thank God, I am washed in the blood. My sins are forgiven. I do not deserve it, but my sins are forgiven for His name's sake." Praise be to His name forever for that tremendous fact!

Yes; He forgives us our sin. How would you like to be forgiven in this way?—You owe a sum of money which you cannot pay, and you are threatened with suit for its collection. You know that you have nothing to stand upon, that you would lose your case. Then your creditor, for some reason, consents to forgive you the debt. Suppose him to be a man who had once been your friend. He says, "All right; if you cannot pay it; I will forget it"—and, forgetting it, he forgets you! The next time you meet him on the street, he does not recognize you. You say, "He may not punish me, or make me pay, but I fear he still holds it against me that I owed him that debt."

Our God did not save us from hell to keep us out of heaven, or to put us in a position remote from Himself. When Absalom returned from Geshur after Joab had interceded for him, David said, "Let him turn to his own house, but let him not see my face." A long time passed in which Absalom dwelt in the king's city, but he was not permitted to see the king's face. Not thus does our gracious God forgive. Having forgiven us the penalty, and freed us from the punishment of sin, He is graciously disposed toward us; and He receives us unto Himself.

How I wish there were time to pursue my exposition farther, and tell you that all this is according to the "riches of His grace"! He put all the resources of Deity under tribute, utilizing the wealth of the universe, in order to set us free, and bring us back to Himself.

Is there anyone here this evening without the assurance of the forgiveness of sin? If someone were to bring you a communication this evening, informing you that you had become the possessor of some vast estate, that

you were no longer poor, but suddenly incalculably rich, I suppose the shadow would pass from your countenance; the gladness within would manifest itself without. But if you had all the world's fortunes together, they might not last twenty-four hours. And as we must at last stand before God, it would be an unspeakably terrible thing to die in one's sins. To receive the assurance of the forgiveness of sin is more than an assurance of the possession of the wealth of all worlds—and that is exactly what the Word of God brings us. Having dealt with your sin, having put it away in the person of Christ, redeeming you by His blood, having forgiven your sins on the simple terms that you confess them, He gives you the assurance of God Who cannot lie, that never again will they be laid to your charge. They are blotted out as a thick cloud, cast behind His back—wherever that is; I do not know except that it is where neither man nor devil can find them again. Forgiven! Saved! Washed in the blood! Hallelujah, what a Saviour!

A JOURNALISTIC JUBILEE

It has been our great privilege for a number of years to enjoy the personal friendship of Rev. W. Percy Hicks, Editor of *The Christian Herald*.

The paper itself has a unique standing. It has the largest circulation of any religious journal in the world, a little over a quarter of a million weekly; and it touches nearly every corner of the earth.

Mr. Hicks has been associated with the paper—the greater part of the time as Editor-in-Chief—for forty years. During all that time he has kept the paper absolutely true to evangelical principles. Nothing that is inconsistent therewith is permitted even in its advertising columns: Mr. Hicks was a journalist even before his association with *The Christian Herald*, and has just completed fifty years of journalistic work. We can scarcely believe this possible because, notwithstanding a serious illness which laid him aside for nearly a year, he is still a very young looking man to have fifty years of journalistic experience behind him. He must have begun at a very early age.

Mr. Hicks has recently been honoured by the Council of the Institute of Journalists, by which he has been made a Fellow of the Institute. *The Christian*, London, May 16th, reports the matter as follows:

The Council of the Institute of Journalists, incorporated by Royal Charter, has unanimously elected Rev. W. Percy Hicks to be a Fellow of the Institute (F.J.I.) in recognition of his journalistic jubilee. For the greater part of the half-century Mr. Hicks has been associated with *The Christian Herald*, and is well known as a speaker and writer on Prophecy and the Second Coming of Christ. He is a member of the Council of the Advent Testimony Movement, and has been a member of the Institute of Journalists for over thirty years. It will be remembered that a year ago Mr. Hicks underwent a serious operation. He has been slowly recovering, and hopes to resume some of his public work at no distant date.

THE GOSPEL WITNESS heartily congratulates Mr. Hicks on this honour, and congratulates *The Christian Herald* also on having as its Editor, one whose ability as a journalist, and whose fidelity to evangelical principles, are recognized to the ends of the earth.

We rejoice in the improvement in Mr. Hicks' health, and pray that he may be spared for many years to continue his testimony to the gospel of the grace of God.

HILARIOUS GIVING

The Scripture says, "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver", which implies that there are some people who give, but who do not give cheerfully. It is the motive, the will, behind the gift which determines its quality in the sight of God. The Lord Jesus commended the poor widow who cast in but two mites to the offering of the Lord; where the rich men gave larger gifts, but of their abundance. But the One Who was God's best gift, and Who in Himself comprehended all lesser gifts, estimated the gift of the widow as being greater than that of any of the rich men, because they of their abundance had cast in to the offerings of God, while she of her penury had cast in all the living she had.

It is a blessed thing to learn the secret of cheerful giving, to give, not because we have been cudged into doing so, but because we find real delight in giving. How many a professing Christian has lived but a dwarfed and stunted life, and has never grown up into Christ and become as an abundantly fruitful branch of the true Vine—all because he has never opened his heart to the Spirit of God, nor his mind to the teaching of the Word of God respecting the high privilege of giving.

It is doubtful whether the most generous church in the world is doing half what it could do, if only it could learn the secret of hilarious giving. To give is just as much a part of the Christian's duty and privilege as to pray. It is just as impossible for one to be spiritually healthy without giving, as it is to be in spiritual health without praying. The man who does not give of his money, his time, his service, himself, his life, for the glory of God, and the service of men, has not learned the secret of joyous giving. With some professing Christians the church collection is about as painful as the experience of sitting in the dentist's chair. Some there are who put a copper in the plate, and cover it with their hand when they do so, so that one wonders whether they are ashamed of their giving, or whether they are bidding a reluctant good-bye to the smallest coin.

But practice makes perfect in giving, as in other godly exercises. The more people give, the more they want to give; because they find joy in the exercise. The less they give, the less they want to give, because the pain of surrendering anything from their control constantly increases.

Many years ago we heard a story which we have never publicly repeated. But the story was told by a very dignified representative of a certain university, and perhaps we may be justified in repeating it; for this gentleman told the story to illustrate the principle we are discussing. He said two men who were alike in this, that each was well thatched with a heavy shock of hair, on one occasion met. They met in quite an informal way, and where there seemed to be nothing inappropriate in the act of one in indulging in his friend's presence in an exercise which had become habitual. He ran his fingers through his heavy shock of hair, and then drew from his pocket a pocket-comb, and ran that through his hair. The other, a shaggy, unkempt customer, observed the man's act in wonder, and enquired, "Why, man, how often do you comb your hair?" The other replied, "Several times a day, or as often as I think of it and it may be convenient." Said the other, "You seem to do it quite easily. I comb mine only once a month, and it hurts dreadfully!" There is a moral in the story:

people who give but little, and infrequently, are likely to find their giving rather a painful act.

The Silver Jubilee Fund of Toronto Baptist Seminary, for the most part, has come from people who carry a pocket-comb. The Fund now stands at approximately \$6,700.00.

We publish below several letters received from those who have given to the Jubilee Fund. Every letter is inspiring, but we call special attention to the letter from a young woman in New York City, and another from three sisters in Fort William. Such a sacrificial spirit as these letters manifest would very soon fill the treasury of the Lord.

Have you sent an offering to the Jubilee Seminary Fund? Please help us to raise the remaining \$2,300.00, in order that we may begin our Seminary Year in October with a clean sheet. We would remind our supporters that the figures we have given, have had to do with the Seminary deficit accumulated over four years, and states the case as of March 31st. Therefore, we need the most generous help of all our friends if we are to clear this amount and maintain the Seminary during the summer months.

Following are the letters to which we have referred:

Cobourg, May 16, 1935

Dear Dr. Shields:

Enclosed please find cheque for \$50.00, for one block or share in The Seminary deficit. There has been in my business career many times that I have purchased blocks of stocks but none of which has any value to be compared with this privilege. I am quite sure that the amount will be over-subscribed. The Seminary has not been overlooked by me in my will. Kindest regards to you. I am exceedingly interested and will rejoice when I hear that all is well.

We motored up to hear you two weeks ago Sunday night. No place in the world would I rather go.

New York City, May 16, 1935

Dear Miss Stoakley:

I have your letter of appeal for the Seminary and I am assuredly deeply concerned that that load should be lifted and if I can help through God's permission I will. I am not rich in worldly goods, yet God has blessed me with a modest income barely enough for my needs these days of increasing taxation, yet like the boys in the Seminary by sacrifice I find I can wear last season's hat and my coats which are all made by my own hand to begin with last four, five and six years and I get a real thrill out of the fact.

Well, to get down to the business in hand, in spite of the fact we are all bearing unusual burdens (brother of mine unemployed four years, please pray for him), God seems to call on us to do things for Him. Now out of my salary I could not spare it but from God's munificence in years gone by I would like to send one of my Canadian Victory bonds which is worth one hundred dollars if you will instruct me how I shall go about transferring it. I have changed coupons different times at the Canadian Bank of Commerce, the last time July, 1931. Would my signature on the form you sent me be enough along with this letter as I am not permitted to do any writing on the bond. Could you procure a form of any description from the said bank (which is close by Eaton's store, Yonge St. opposite side). I shall wait for your advice. I do want to help the work of the Lord which I know is going on effectively in Jarvis St. Baptist Church.

Yours in His service.

Fort William, Ont., May 23rd, 1935

Dear Miss Stoakley:

Your letter of appeal for financial aid for the Seminary received and in answer my two sisters and myself are sending a money order for six dollars. Sorry it is not more. We would be glad if we were one of those who could send \$100.00, for we believe the Seminary is carrying on a grand work. The students are doing nobly in this cause too.

We fully appreciate their financial difficulties for we, too, are not in a position to indulge in luxuries. I believe though,

that I tasted ice cream three or four times last summer and perhaps four or five times the summer before. We do not indulge in such extravagance ourselves.

In fact we have to live very simply not even having meat except as we have company and we sure can make our clothes last well. Coats usually do us six seasons but somehow a couple of seasons finish a hat as we rarely pay more than \$2.95 for one and therefore they soon go. I am the only wage earner in the family so when the house expenses, with taxes, utilities, insurance, etc., are paid we have not much left. Of course my tithe comes out first when I get my cheque cashed but my extra free will offerings are not as large as we would like. Still the Lord is good and has blessed us wonderfully. When one looks around and sees the unemployment situation one is glad to have a job even if it is not as remunerative as one could wish.

You will see the money order is dated May 14th, but we have been so very busy in the office and also at home that I didn't seem to get time to write before.

I must close and send this to the post so that it will go in the morning.

Yours in His service.

London, Ont., May 18, 1935

Dear Miss Stoakley:

Please find enclosed a money order for fifteen dollars for your special anniversary fund. I am glad to do anything that might bring blessing and joy to the Doctor in his great work in the Seminary. I hope your ambition regarding this fund may be fully realized to God's glory. Excuse the delay in mailing this order.

Winchester, Ont., May 4, 1935

Dear Mr. Brown:

Mrs. — and I received your letter of the 27th ult., and I am glad to be able to enclose her cheque for \$50.00 and my own money order for \$25.00. We feel that any money given to the Seminary is in a direct line of carrying out the Lord's commission just before He left His little group of disciples. We are very thankful that we have been kept in the faith and realize that it is a privilege to be able to give to a cause that is working true to Biblical lines. We trust the response to the scheme may be very successful and fully repay the effort of those of you who have been instrumental in its creation.

We find THE GOSPEL WITNESS a source of spiritual food and situated as we are somewhat distant from any Regular Baptist Body we appreciate its pages perhaps more so.

With every good wish for the success of this campaign,
I am, very sincerely,

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

Sunderland District Association

Delegates from thirteen churches assembled in the Scotch Line Regular Baptist Church, Wednesday, June 5th, 1935. After Rev. M. B. Gillion of Bobcaygeon read God's Word and petitioned the throne of glory, many of the congregation engaged in prayer and testimony. Pastor John Cunningham gave the visitors a word of welcome, to which Rev. W. E. Smalley of Second Markham replied in the evening. To conclude the afternoon's conference, Rev. W. W. Fleischer, of Fenelon Falls, delivered a good message concerning Paul's viewpoint and teaching respecting giving.

To the spacious lawn of Mr. W. Robertson, the great company then gathered for a relishing repast. The Scotch Line people deserve commendation for such hospitable entertainment.

After the usual business in the evening, Pastor C. S. McGrath of Stouffville, who was introduced by Rev. John Byers of Orillia, brought a thoughtful discourse on the great doctrine of Justification. Music was admirably supplied by a quartette from Scotch Line, and a duet from Fenelon Falls. The church was literally crowded both afternoon and evening. The delegates signified their desire that the offering, after the deduction of expenses, be designated to the work in Liberia. The Lord visited the conference with blessing and power, for the which we thank Him. The officers appointed for the ensuing year were: Pastor C. S. McGrath, Moderator; Pastor J. B. Cunningham, Vice-Moderator; Pastor R. E. J. Brackstone, Sec.-Treas.; Mr. C. Harvey, Rev. M. B.

Gillion, and Rev. A. Penman of Lindsay, whom we gladly welcome into the Association.

R. E. J. Brackstone.

Bethany, Winnipeg

We have received a letter from the pastor of the Bethany Baptist Church, Winnipeg, which we are sure our readers will appreciate, so we pass it on. He says, "Thank you for your last letter, and also for the insertion in THE WITNESS. We have been having much better success ever since sending out the letters for prayer. Two more people have joined us, and the unsaved have been more approachable.

"I hope you have received the mission money for last month. We keep two boxes for such offerings. In this connection I have a touching little story to tell you, and I hope you will pass it on to the Davey's. When I read about the fire in the Church, two children, a boy of nine and his sister, five years old, heard me. They noted particularly the statement about baby Neal. When they got home that night they consulted together, and gathering up all the pennies, and nickels, and dimes, they had been saving up for nearly a year, put them in a bag and decided to send them out to Liberia, 'to buy clothes for baby Neal'. On the following Tuesday the little girl came here with the bag and put them in the mission box. But they have not stopped there. The boy of nine had a toy tool chest given him at Christmas, so, without a word to anyone, he went down to his mother's cellar, found some wood, and made a mission box, complete with lid and small hole for coins; and has it in the house for his own and his sister's contributions to missions. He even drew the picture of a man bearing a cross on the box. Such practical love and good sense in one so young is rare, but it shows that the Word of Christ can touch very youthful hearts.

We are very glad to hear the news concerning the Seminary Jubilee Fund, and the honours paid to Dr. Shields. May the Lord continue to be gracious to every servant of His in the Union and elsewhere."

Vacation Supplies

During the months of July and August many of the Pastors in Ontario go on vacation and often times it is difficult to secure suitable supplies for their pulpits. The Union Office is happy to announce that the following Brethren will be available: Rev. Richard Jones, of Sawyerville, Que.; Rev. Roy Hisey, of Verdun, Que.; and Rev. Morley Hall, of Calgary, Alta. Any Church desiring the services of any of these visiting brethren would do well to communicate with Union Office, 337 Jarvis Street.

News from Liberia

In a letter from Mrs. H. L. Davey, dated April 1st, 1935, she says in part, "Am glad to say the work is going along steadily in all departments. There is a good increase in the Sunday-school, and the teachers who are all students in the Bible School are keen to see souls saved. . . .

"This last year of our service in Liberia has been the happiest one we have ever spent, the sweet fellowship existing between all workers making the work a continual joy. Our prayers are continually yours every day, and as God has provided so far, I believe He will continue to do so, provided we are simply seeking to uplift Christ to these people and to glorify Him. . . .

"Every now and then there crops up a wave of superstition and witchcraft, strange deaths, and every one fears various forms of witch medicine. This seems to have been the case this year, and we feel our utter weakness and dependency on God alone. On the other hand there is a new and very wonderful desire on the part of many to listen and enquire into the way of Life. The Lord is giving real joy in village work, and rejoices our hearts from time to time as we hear of those believing. We heard of one case a couple of weeks ago; an old woman died. She had been a constant attendant at the Sunday services in the Mission, and had quietly accepted Christ as her Saviour about six months ago. She went back to her town, and constantly witnessed to the other women there, so that on my visiting the town for a service the people were eager and willing to come and listen; something new for this town. We long to see the time when there will be a witness for Christ in every town.

"Fires seem to be unusually bad this year. Owing to the continued dry spell the grass is very easy to burn, then the

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Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 10

No. 2

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 26

Second Quarter

June 30th, 1935

THE SECRET PLACE OF THE MOST HIGH

Lesson Text: Psalms 90-92.

Golden Text: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."
—Psalm 91:1.

Bible School Reading: Psalm 90:1-17.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—Gen. 3:17-24; Tuesday—Deut. 32:29-36; Wednesday—Is. 43:8-13; Thursday—Jer. 33:1-9; Friday—Matt. 15:32-39; Saturday—John 15:12-17.

PSALM NINETY

This psalm is a "prayer of Moses the man of God", and records his longing after the Lord, while contrasting man's frailty with God's eternal nature. It opens with a statement expressive of God's near relationship to His people. He was their dwelling-place, their home. They were a people without a country; Egypt was behind, the promised land was before, while they were in the wilderness. They were pilgrims travelling onward to their goal, but they were not alone on their journey. God was with them, and sustained them in all their trials. In Him they were constantly at home. Note the sign of His presence (Ex. 40:34; Lev. 16:2); also the fact of His choice of Israel in Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3), and in Egypt (Hos. 11:1; Ex. 4:22, 23); His manifest goodness toward them throughout their national life (Hos. 11: 3, 4), and the present day relationship of the saint with God (Eph. 2: 5, 6). The child of God is in the world, yet not of it (John 17: 15, 16). He is travelling onward to a better land (Heb. 2: 10), accompanied and sustained by the heavenly presence (Matt. 28:20).

Following the opening declaration the psalmist refers to the eternal nature of God, then contrasts man's frailty therewith. Man returns to dust; even though he should live for a thousand years, that would be but a short period in God's sight; and his life is of short duration, like the grass of the field. These statements are true and suggestive, and ought to humble us before the Almighty One. Brevity and frailty are our lot on this earth. The reason for this condition is then stated. It is due to the wrath of God (vs. 7-9). Sin brought this punishment upon man (Gen. 3:19; I. Cor. 15: 21, 22), and led eventually to the limitation, in general, of man's years to three score and ten. Moses lived longer than this (Deut. 34:7), and others exceed it; but most people fail even to reach it. Note the labour and sorrow in life. In the light of such a condition, the psalmist's petition for understanding and application of heart unto wisdom should find an echo within us. Life should be lived with eternity in view; and with the determined purpose of carrying out the will of God faithfully. The closing part of the psalm contains an appeal for a change of attitude on the part of the Lord, which would result in the restoration of gladness to His people (vs. 13-17). Note the utter dependence of man on God, the certainty of death, and the necessity for preparing to meet God (Amos 4:12). How may we spend life most profitably? How may we begin to live profitably?

PSALM NINETY-ONE

This psalm, probably of Davidic authorship, describes the blessedness of the one who dwells in the secret place of the Most High. Such a dwelling place indicates very close relationship with God. It means abiding under the shadow of the Almighty. The secret place in a physical sense was the holy of holies, beyond the veil of the tabernacle, where the cherubim overshadowed the mercy-seat with their wings (Heb. 9:1-5). Only the high priest was permitted to enter this sacred enclosure, and he only once a year on the day of atonement (Heb. 9:7). But with the passing of the dispensation of law, we are permitted to enter the holiest of all in our Great High Priest, and enjoy the closest intimacy with our God (Heb. 9:24; 4:15, 16). Note the privilege,

responsibility, and duty, of such a position; also the necessity for carefulness in life, lest sin enter and sever the fellowship.

To the one who lives in such close relationship God is a refuge, and fortress, and deliverer (vs. 2-4). The psalmist is thinking of protection from physical evils. In these days we apply the truth more to spiritual dangers, though not omitting the other. Our Lord's protection is complete, ever-present, unassailable, eternal, personal, conditional upon obedience to Him, and free to whosoever will. Abiding, thus in the presence of the Lord results in the removal of fear. The terror by night disturbs not, nor does the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor the destruction that wasteth at noonday. "Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see the reward of the wicked." Note the comfort of such knowledge, together with the courage which it engenders in the Lord's servants. Salvation is effective in this life, as well as in the next.

Continuing in this train of confidence, we are informed no plague shall come nigh the dwelling of the one who has made the Lord his refuge (vs. 9, 10); the reason being that the angels of God shall have charge over such an one, protecting him from danger. He shall also have power over the animal world (vs. 9-13). Further promises are made relative to him, respecting deliverance, answered prayer, honour, long life, and salvation. Observe the devil's quotation of part of this psalm during our Lord's temptation in the wilderness (Matt. 4:7). Note also the tender care of God over His own, the blessing of angelic ministry (Heb. 1: 13, 14), and the attitude of the recipient of the promises. He has made the Lord his habitation, and has set his love upon Him. God desires our love, and richly blesses us with His own (I. John 4:10). This emphasizes the fact of His personality, and His benevolent attitude toward men. His promise to be with His own in trouble is encouraging (Jer. 33:3), as is His further promise to honour the one who honours Him (I. Sam. 2:30). The person who is faithful to God receives help in times of trial, that the world can neither give nor take away. What should be our general attitude in times of grave danger? How may we constantly dwell in the secret place of the Most High?

PSALM NINETY-TWO

In this psalm thanksgiving to God is urged on account of His great works in blessing the righteous, and judging the wicked. It opens with the statement that "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O Most High". Such an attitude is right as well as good. It gives God His due, and it takes the attention from troubles, and centres it on blessings. Encouragement is the result, and increased strength is given to face the troubles. Thanksgiving is, therefore, both a duty and a privilege, as well as a manifestation of character. The one who does not give thanks is unappreciative, and undeserving of further benefits. Thanksgiving should be a daily affair, showing forth the lovingkindness of God in the morning, and His faithfulness every night. This implies both anticipation and remembrance of blessing. God may be trusted in advance, and His promises may be accepted as certain before their fulfilment (Mark 11:24). The psalmist expressed his thanksgiving with the use of musical instruments, and so may we, for the Lord through His work has made us glad. Note the promises respecting joy (John 15:11).

Continuing his praise, the psalmist refers to the great works and deep thoughts of God (v. 5). These are manifest in both the material and spiritual realms; in creation and in redemption. "A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this." Such persons are to be pitied, as well as blamed. Sin blinds the eyes to the things of God (2 Cor. 4:4), and prevents understanding of the divine realities (2 Cor. 4:6). Servants of sin who thus reject God may flourish for a time, but eventually destruction comes upon them, while the Lord exists forevermore (vs. 7-9). Note the contrast in this statement, also the certain doom of all who reject the Lord. The children of God are also contrasted with the wicked, in their increased power and refreshment (v. 10), their victory over enemies (v. 11), and their general prosperity and fruitfulness (vs. 12-15). They are graceful, verdant, and fruitful, as the palm tree, and strong as the cedar of Lebanon. And their state is perennial. They bear fruit even in old age. Note the permanence of the righteous, in contrast with the transitory nature of the life of the wicked. Do we really enjoy our salvation? In what ways may we show our thankfulness to God?

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

(Continued from page 6)

natives are busy cutting and burning farms for the rice crop already. Yesterday one enterprising native started a fire with a high wind blowing. It was about a mile away, and in about half an hour the fire swept right to the foot of the Mission Hill. There followed some anxious moments for us. My husband formed a 'bucket brigade', every pail, can, bath, and in fact everything that would hold water was given to the school children, who raced down to the stream, and brought up water to pour over the Church roof. For a time it was in real danger, for sparks from the burning bush all around us blew up to the dry thatch. The Lord graciously heard our cry, however, and preserved our little Church building. We shall be glad when all the buildings have zinc roofs; this lessens the fire danger considerably."

Timmins

Word of continued blessing has come from the First Baptist Church, Timmins, of which Rev. H. C. Slade is the pastor. Last Sunday evening they had the joy of seeing three take their stand for Christ. We rejoice with them.

Waverley Road

Mr. Jas. Forrester, formerly of Hillcrest Baptist Church, preached very acceptably at both morning and evening services on Sunday, June 2nd.

"Branching Out"

In a sparkling little sketch of a schoolmaster of Old England, the author says his "was the sort of school which, when mentioned, would sometimes make snobbish people confess that they rather thought they had heard of it." Toronto Baptist Seminary cannot yet boast even that distinction! But we have a work to do, we are at it, and we believe that in days to come, should He tarry, the cause of Evangelical Christianity may profit by it.

This summer we have sixteen men who have gone out into full-time service. Pray for them daily, for they have a difficult task.

In addition to the list published two weeks ago we may now announce that Mr. Geo. B. Hicks has settled as student-pastor of the Gospel Mission at Tottenham, Ont. Here a group of Gospel lovers have met together weekly. A few miles south a Sunday afternoon service is held in an Orange Hall, called Black Horse. Mr. Hicks hopes that he may be used of the Lord to build up these causes.

Mr. D. S. Dinnick is summer pastor of the Regular Baptists at Avoca, P.Q. A personal letter says twenty-five attended the first service. Arrangements have been made for a service in a school house

three miles southwest of Avoca on Friday evenings. At another "settlement" three miles to the northwest, a village hall, formerly refused, is now offered

for Gospel meetings Sunday afternoons. There are here some fifty souls. Remember these efforts to "branch out".

Sunderland

Word has just come to hand from the Pastor, Mr. Robt. J. Brackstone, of blessing at Sunderland. He writes, "During the winter and spring our own people and members of other denominations met together in the homes for prayer meetings. The attendances gradually increased. Last Wednesday approximately thirty crowded into one of the homes to attend the meeting.

"Lately I have had the great joy of being used by God to lead a young woman to decide for Christ. When a little girl she had heard Rev. W. W. Fleischer preach in Haliburton, and the seed was sown in her heart. When she came to Sunderland recently she attended the Church, heard the gospel, and decided to take her stand, and at the same time applied for baptism. Truly, 'God works in a mysterious way His wonders to perform'."

Otterville

Rev. P. B. Loney of Runnymede Road Baptist Church, Toronto, conducted a two weeks' campaign at the Otterville Baptist Church. For a number of years Mr. Loney was pastor at the Tillsonburg Baptist Church, and has a number of staunch friends in the vicinity. The Otterville Church is in a splendid condition, and should bring forth many souls for the Kingdom of God. Under the leadership of Rev. Leander Roblin the work has gone steadily forward, and it is to be hoped the special meetings will result in many others being added to fellowship of the Church.

-Niagara Falls

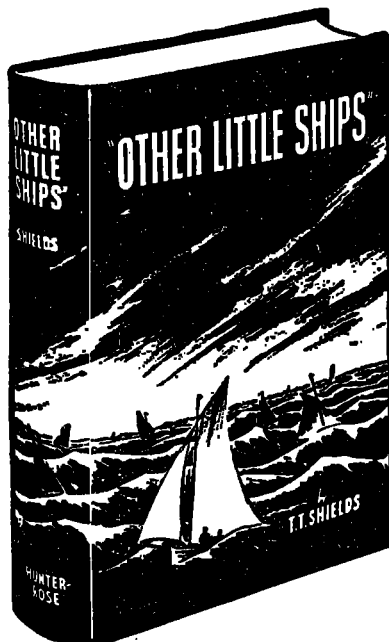
Rev. Gordon D. Mellish and the Secretary of the Union, Rev. W. E. Atkinson, spent Sunday, June 2nd, at the Trinity Baptist Church, Niagara Falls. Mr. Mellish spoke at the morning service on the worship of the Bassa people of Liberia, W. Africa. In the evening Mr. Atkinson preached on the subject, "The Great White Throne".

Rev. John F. Dempster of Niagara Falls preached at both morning and evening services at the Runnymede Road Baptist Church, June 2nd.

Here and There

Special services are to be held at the Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church, Toronto, commencing June 10th. The special speaker will be Rev. Jas. McGinlay of London.

Rev. David Alexander, formerly of Waverley Road Baptist Church, now of Burton Street Baptist Church, Waterloo, Iowa, was in Toronto a few days the week before last. His many friends at Waverley Road were glad to have him at their largely attended mid-week prayer service and have him tell of the work in his new charge. He left with his family on Thursday morning to take up his residence in Waterloo.



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