

The Gospel Witness

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

Editor: T. T. SHIELDS

Associate Editor: ALEXANDER THOMSON

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

Address Correspondence: THE GOSPEL WITNESS, 180 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2, Canada.
Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada.

Vol. 14, No. 6

TORONTO, JUNE 20, 1935

Whole Number 683

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"AND THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, June 16th, 1935

(Stenographically Reported)

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."—Ephesians 2:8.

Prayer before the Sermon

We are assembled, O Lord, in Thy name. We are here in response to Thy call, in obedience to Thy command. We have come to present our petitions to the King, to render to Him the homage of our hearts, gladly, joyously, to acknowledge His sovereignty over us. We thank Thee, O Lord, for what Thou art. We thank Thee that Thou art the same, and that Thy years do not fail. The high and lofty One inhabiting eternity, yet Thou dost condescend to dwell with him who is of a humble and contrite spirit, and who trembleth at Thy word.

We thank Thee first of all that there may come to every one within these walls a sense of the reality of Thy presence. We cannot see Thee; we cannot, like the woman of old, put forth our hand and touch the hem of Thy garment; we cannot hear Thy voice as did the poor leper to whom Thou didst say, I will, be thou clean. And yet Thy presence is just as real, and Thy power is undiminished. We thank Thee that Thou art with us still, that it is true that Thou art ever at the call of those who are in need.

This evening we pray that even those who are unaccustomed to pray, if there are any here, those who have not seen the light of Thy glory in the face of Jesus Christ, may be made to realize that God is here; for we have sought Thy presence, and we believe Thou hast already answered our prayer in this respect. Help us rightly to appraise this privilege that is ours, that by the merit of Him Who is the Mediator between God and man, through the efficacy of His cleansing blood, we are permitted to come into the presence of a holy God. We could not lift up our faces to Thee, we should not dare even to mention Thy name, were it not that Thou hast come to us in the person of One Who is our Fellow, Who is now our great High Priest, Who is passed into the heavens. O Lord, help us that we may exercise our privilege this evening, and that even now as we are bowed before Thee, prayer may rise from every heart, that so no one will be unvisited of God.

This may be, in the outworking of Thy providential purpose, an hour of crisis to some life. It may be that Thou wouldest bring men and women this evening to the great divide, to the forked roads. Oh that they may hear a Voice behind them, saying, This is the way; walk ye in it.

We acknowledge our ignorance. We have no means of discovering that which is hidden from our view. We have

no light which we can kindle whereby we can penetrate the mysteries of the gospel. Only as Thou dost make Thy light to shine shall we be enabled to understand Thy truth; in Thy light only can we see light. So may we come with teachable spirits, submissive wills, and yielded hearts. Help us all to come as Joseph's brethren, with empty sacks; and, thus coming, to plead Thy promise, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Fill us all this evening. Bring us into Thy banqueting house, and give us eyes to see Love's banner waving over us. Give us the comfort of the Holy Ghost, and save us all for Thy name's sake, Amen.

Because of the principle therein enunciated, I shall direct your attention particularly to this phrase, "And that not of yourselves."

There are people in this city to-day in the various hospitals, and many in their own homes, concerning whose state their attending physicians say, "It is now hopeless." They suffer from various ailments, and the disease has made such progress that it has got beyond the power of human science to check its further development. Now the doctor says, "We can do nothing." But if you could speak with him in respect to many of these cases, he would tell you that in the beginning it was a very simple matter, that if the malady had received proper treatment in its first stages, its further progress might have been arrested. But the doctor says that though it was only a slight indisposition, they neglected the cold until it became tuberculosis. Or of other diseases, that they neglected to consult a doctor until the case had become hopeless.

It pays to deal with some things in their beginnings. I have seen the fire-brigade dashing through the streets at a terrific pace—two or three motors, with their ladders and all their fire-fighting apparatus. They stop at a house, or some place of business, rush in, and the fire is extinguished in a few minutes. It was only a little fire! Was it worth while making so much noise, and

travelling so rapidly? Every sensible person will say, yes. "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" If you hear the alarm-bell at night, and the fire is in someone else's house, you may be disposed to wish they would move a little more quietly, however quickly, so as not to disturb the slumber of those who have nothing to do with the fire. But we must put up with the noise, not only for our neighbour's sake, but because if it is not extinguished our neighbour's fire may become ours.

Evil of any sort needs to be dealt with at its beginning. In this place we have had occasion, in the exercise of our duty, for a number of years, to warn people against false teaching. Of course our alarm-bell has disturbed the slumberers, and in some cases it may have put them rather out of temper with us. We are supposed to be somewhat fanatical; somewhat—I might use an ugly word, cantankerous; spoiling for a fight! No, we are not! Our offence is that we are concerned for the spiritual health of people, and endeavour to save them from the machinations of the devil's quacks.

Does it matter? For twenty-five years I have spoken the same message from this pulpit, that the "carnal mind is enmity against God", and that whatever issues from the carnal mind is bound to be, in the nature of things, antagonistic to God. Clean things never come from an unclean fountain. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." The philosophy of Modernism—you do not need to be a theologian to understand that term—is nothing less than the repudiation of divine authority, the substitution of human reason for divine revelation, the setting up of the conclusions of the natural mind in opposition to the disclosures of the divine will as represented by the inspired Word of God, which we call the Bible.

I ask, Does it matter? There was a time when great evangelical denominations in this country, while they differed in respect to some things, were in substantial agreement so far as the essentials of evangelical faith were concerned. Then certain of these bodies came together, and people called Presbyterians, people called Methodists, and others called Congregationalists, formed themselves into a great church, which they called the United Church of Canada. Beyond question in that great church there are tens of thousands of people who have been born again, and who know the Lord. But the United Church in its public and representative meetings, seems to be concerned with effecting a change in the political systems under which we live. Having apparently lost sight of eternity, they are particularly occupied with considerations of time; and quite recently a Communist leader, formerly a minister of one of these churches, was, by vote of the assembly, welcomed to its platform, and permitted to speak. I am not surprised, for Modernism, by its repudiation of all objective authority, is bound to bring forth anarchy in the end.

And the same is true of the Baptist Denomination in part in the United States. Openly some of their theological leaders have avowed Communistic principles. I published some weeks ago a set of resolutions passed by a Baptist gathering, to send on to a general gathering, asking for a radical change in the American Constitution, and the substitution of socialistic principles for the individualism—though it did not state it in so many words—of the Bible. The poison that might have been corrected in its incipient stages has now apparently spread through the body, until it appears to be beyond correction.

Why do I speak thus? Because even among those who would never subscribe to such extreme positions as those to which I have alluded, but who profess acceptance of the Bible as the word of God, are yet to be found those who, in their thinking, are influenced by these extreme doctrines; to the extent that the religion of Christ, in their thought, is being reduced very largely to a system of human endeavour. Salvation is conceived of as something which men may do for themselves, and for each other; utterly ignoring the fact that the Christian religion consists in a message that is a revelation from Heaven, and a proclamation of what God proposes to do for ruined men. Between that conception of the Christian religion, and that entertained by the United Church of Canada in their assemblies, there is such a great distance that no one but the astronomer, with his countless millions of light years, could properly estimate it.

Christianity is not of ourselves but of Christ, which is to say, of God. Whether we like it or not, we face the fact that the professing church, in the main, is utterly apostate. It is not loyal either to the Book of the Lord, or to the Lord of the Book.

Here the Spirit of God defines salvation, tells us what Christianity really is. It is something that comes from God, and such as are saved are saved by grace "through faith". But He tells us that even that is not of ourselves. Even that principle which seems to involve the exercise of a human faculty, and which seems to be the human element in the transaction, the connecting link between the source of supply and the needy sinner, is set aside by the Spirit of God. The Word of God will not allow us to glory even in that. It tells us that even that is "not of yourselves: it is the gift of God". Will you think with me a little while this evening then as I try to elaborate that principle?

I.

To begin our exposition, let me say that Christianity, salvation, that something whatever it is which makes a man a Christian, IS DERIVED FROM EXTRA-HUMAN SOURCES. It is a something from outside of the man; it is something that does not belong to him naturally; it does not inhere in him; cannot be developed from him, but is entirely from outside of himself.

That is true of the religion of Christ, *insofar as it relates us to eternal principles of righteousness*, to the law of God, to the moral constitution, not only of this world, but of the universe. Insofar as the religion of Christ takes hold of a man and reconciles him to the law of God, attunes him to it, brings him into harmony with it, so that between that which is deepest in him and the essential constitution of things, there is no dissonance, no conflict—insofar as Christianity does that, the miracle is effected by extra-human power. A man does not do it for himself. He cannot thus relate himself to a holy God and His holy law.

The other day a great telescope near Toronto was commissioned. I envy those who have the privilege of uninterrupted use of it. What it must mean to be able thus to see afar! Science has done much in developing such an instrument, and has done much in enabling men to interpret what they see. But ask any astronomer, if it were possible for one of those distant worlds, even the smallest of them, by any means to swing from its orbit, to get out of proper relation to the laws that govern it,

and to swing into space, how could it be restored? What wrecking machine could ever put it back into right relationship? Certainly no human power could accomplish it. If this earth, this planet on which we live, were somehow to be removed from its orbit, and started on a wild career through space, who could recover it? It would, I know, be impossible for such a thing to occur. It is impossible only because there is a never-failing law which holds it to its appointed course. But if such a disaster could occur no human power could restore the relationship.

And for a man to become inherently sinful—as we all have become so that our whole natures are biased against every law that radiates from God—is for him to come into conflict with the law of God, to be out of harmony with it, out of his orbit entirely. How can he possibly, by the exercise of his own power, or by the exercise of the collective skill and ability of all his fellows, bring himself back into the place where, by a holy Creator, he was placed, when God made man in His own image and likeness? To ask the question is to answer it. As you survey that tragedy of man's fall you are bound to acknowledge its correction is beyond human power. Hence the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." And in the dispensation of the fulness of time He is to gather together in one all things in Christ. There is no other way. A committee of the United Church will never do it. A conference of all the professors of economics will never effect it. Only the Creator can recreate. Only by the restoration of the moral equilibrium, by that readjustment of things which was effected by putting into the scale the perfect righteousness of the God-man, can that relationship which is indispensable to salvation, be effected. Hence, "that not of yourselves."

The same is true in respect to *the realization in the individual life of the creative purpose of God*. What were you made for? I saw a man on our street the other day with two crutches, and one leg. I knew who made the crutches—that is to say, I knew they were man-made. He had lost one of his limbs, and man could give him an artificial one. But only the God Who made him could remake him physically, and give him a perfect body. Science finds itself impotent to do it.

We, by nature, have become morally deformed. "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." Early in man's history "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." That is true of all the faculties of the mind. I do not mean that we are as corrupt or as bad as we could be, but I do mean that every human power is biased in the direction of evil. There is not a man or woman here this evening who will not admit, if he or she is honest, that it is always easier to do wrong than to do right. As sparks naturally fly upward, so do man's natural inclinations lead him downward.

How can we be made right? Who is to effect that miracle? It is not merely a new dress, an outward reformation of character, we need. A man may appear to be honest, but be a thief at heart. I am not speaking of externals. But what power can effect such a change, not merely of the character, but of the nature of a man, as to put within him new and holy desires, so that the natural bent of his life shall be upward instead of down-

ward? Oh "not of yourselves"! We can never do it of ourselves. There must be a power from without ourselves.

Let me pause a moment here. I may have instituted such comparisons before, but perhaps it may assist you in your thinking if I refresh your memories. There are many things which simulate Christianity, which take to themselves the Christian name, that, in their very nature, are anti-Christian. For example, Christian Science. What does that propose? It proposes a realignment of such powers as a man naturally possesses. It proposes a control of his imagination, of his judgment, of his reason—of all his thinking—by a will turned in a given direction. But it is like someone who goes into a house that is all topsyturvy, where there is no order and no cleanliness. He looks through the house and says, "The house is all right. We do not need a bit of new paper on the walls. We only need a rearrangement of things. We will shut the doors, and do it ourselves right in this house. We will convert this hovel into a palace. We will not ask help from anyone: we will do it ourselves." That is Christian Science. It turns your thoughts upon yourself, and tells you to remake yourself. It assumes that any change that needs to be effected can be done by the exercise of human powers. You are offered a religion that shall be distinctly of yourself.

Wherein lies the error of the teaching of the Oxford Group? Psychologically, it is precisely the same, only of a positive instead of a negative order. It teaches a man that he has human resources which, if commandeered, and properly directed, will make him over again. There is no extra-power from without. You have exactly the same principle in Pentecostalism. Theoretically, they discourse about the Holy Spirit; but they work themselves into a state of hysteria, effect some sort of emotional upheaval, until in a state of exhilaration, they imagine they have a new religious experience. A man, who used to be a member of this church, came to me some years ago to tell me of his "experience". As he talked with me, I reached for my Bible. "Never mind that", he said, "nobody can deny my experience." "But let us bring your experience into the light of the Word." "I want you to understand that I have had that experience, and that experience will determine my course. There is nothing further to be said." "But if your experience is scriptural, you can surely bring it into the light of God's Word." But he would not listen. His authority was "*my* experience". Thus the subjective standard is made the norm, the guide. There is no objective authority. It is all human.

How subtle it is! Well does the devil know that if he can drive one back upon himself, he has ruined the man for time and for eternity,—anything to prevent men, in their bankruptcy, from coming to the Source of all help.

In respect to *our relationship to our fellows, the fulfillment of such obligations as are ours, can be effected only by a power not of ourselves*. One may say, "I do not see that. I do not see why a man cannot be true, and honest, and just, of himself." But when a man robs you of a thousand dollars? "That is another matter." I expect it is! Can you adjust yourself to that? When a man so relates himself to you that he grinds you under his feet; and you have nothing left at all, what about that? Can you accept that? What about the bitterness inside? I have known people who have carried a root of bitterness of that sort, because someone dealt unjustly with them, until it ruined their whole life.

A professed infidel and a professed Christian once held a debate. How wise it was for them to do so, I do not know. But at one point in the debate the infidel said, "Look at the case of Stephen. According to the testimony of the Book you defend, he was a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, yet he was stoned to death. What did your God do for Stephen?" To which the Christian replied, "He enabled him to show the face of an angel, and with his last expiring breath to pray, 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.'" You cannot do that of yourselves. You can no more love your neighbour as yourself by your own power, than you can love God of yourself.

As to the future, I am glad we do not know very much about heaven. I suppose when you are tired, and hungry, and hard up for cash, you picture to yourself a condition of life where there will be no limitation; where everyone will have abundance; where gold will be under your feet, and precious stones will be built into the walls of the city. That is an entrancing picture in the Bible; but never forget that even in that picture nobody could see the gold; and nobody could see the precious stones; and nobody could see the beautiful river flowing through the streets of the city, and nobody could see the fruit hanging from the branches of the trees that bring forth all manner of fruit—nobody could see the wonders of that city if it were in darkness. But it is a city of eternal light, for "there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light", and "the Lamb is the light thereof".

"That not of yourselves." Oh no! What is it to go to heaven? The idea came to me a while ago when at a funeral, and I pass it on to you. It has been a great comfort to me. There are some people who do not tell everything they know the first time you meet them: they reserve something for the second visit. But there are some other people who put everything in the front window, and tell you all they know at once—and that is not very much. The Apostle Paul wrote the greater part of the New Testament. He was marvellously used of God, but did you ever think of this? He tells us why and how the thorn in the flesh came to him: "Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me." He says he was caught up into heaven and that he "heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter". In effect he said, "I cannot tell you what I saw—you could not believe me if I did. The Lord gave me a glimpse of it, that it might be in the back of my mind, that I might understand some things. But I have been to heaven, and I know something of the glory which awaits us." To the Philippians he said, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be"—where? In heaven? No!—"having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better." "Paul, will you not tell us what you mean by that pregnant phrase, 'far better'?" I think he would answer, "Roll all the glories of earth, of all the ages, together; and the glory of heaven exceeds it all. But I may tell you only this: it means to be *with Christ*." "That not of yourselves." Christ is the determining factor in all things.

II.

That in general; and that I may not be too vague, this in particular. FAITH, WHICH AS I SAID A MOMENT AGO, APPEARS TO BE THE HUMAN LINK, CONNECTING THE

RECIPIENT WITH THE DIVINE BOUNTY, THE CHANNEL THROUGH WHICH THE GRACE FLOWS, even that is "not of yourselves". The Lord will not give us a foot of ground on which to stand and boast. There is not an inch of human merit or ability to stand on: "Not of works, lest any man should boast."

It may be there is someone here this evening who has been troubled with doubts, and some others who may be still in unbelief. Doubt has no kinship with unbelief. Doubt is negative. Doubt says, "I do not know. I am not sure." And with that understanding of the significance of it, Tennyson's words are true,—

"There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds."

Doubt is a question-mark respecting the truth: "I do not know yet, but I am not inhospitable to it. The truth would not be unwelcome to me. But I do not know." Or it is an agnostic attitude. There is a great difference between agnosticism and infidelity. There may be a justifiable agnosticism. A man who asks questions, and says, "I should like to know", is deserving of consideration. The jailor asked, "What must I do to be saved?" He was not an unbeliever, nor as yet was he a believer; there was a question-mark in his mind. Nicodemus came to Jesus and said, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God." And when our Lord expounded the great principles of salvation to him he said, "How can these things be?" He asked questions, but he was not antagonistic to the truth. He was a doubting enquirer who wanted to know. And while he never, until Jesus Christ was crucified, mustered up courage to acknowledge his Lord, he was really a disciple.

It may be there are some here to-night who are doubtful, and some who are rather antagonistic to what I have said. There may be some who say, "I do not believe." If so, you are not asking a question: your attitude is one of positive unbelief. Unbelief is a positive quality. Unbelief shuts the door and bolts it, it draws down the blinds and puts up the shutters, and says, "I do not believe, and I do not want to believe." That is a serious state of mind to be in. We have all met people of that sort. Argument is useless; information is not wanted. The mind is closed to truth.

What will you do with unbelief? Have you any master-key that can unlock the door it has locked? Have you any means of penetrating that darkness with which the man has deliberately enshrouded himself by shutting out the light? Your answer must be in the negative.

Nor can a man convert his own unbelief into faith. If that is the settled attitude of mind, he cannot resolve that he will have done with it and become a believer. He has shut out the light, and now he cudgels his imagination to try to picture God. The god he pictures is not worthy of faith, and he cannot trust him. He goes into memory's storehouses and tries to call from there something that will provide material from which to weave some kind of faith. But he cannot find anything there. He does not know God, he has no experience of God. Anything he has read about God was by the hearing of the ear. He cannot believe of himself.

If the power that comes through these electric wires, and that we see in this incandescent glow, were shut off, what would you do? Would you attempt to rekindle it with a match? This light is dependent upon a subtle energy that comes from without, and if that be cut off there is no light here. How does faith come? By hearing? What enables you to believe intelligently respecting

anything? You must never suppose that faith is mere credulity, an acceptance of unreason, a setting aside of your thinking powers to accept something because someone says so. That is not faith: that is presumption. What is faith? It is believing God. Believing whom? Believing God. Let me say it again: faith consists in believing God.

Who is He? He is God. What God? *The* God. The only God. What do you know about God? "I have read about Him. I have heard about Him. I received some knowledge of Him." You did? Did your professor tell you? Did you read it in some human book? Listen! "No man hath ascended up to heaven." There is no one who can tell you anything about God. "No man hath seen God at any time." How can you believe God? You have never seen Him. You have never been to heaven to see Him. How can you believe God? The only way you can believe God is by knowing God. You have some idea about God, how will you verify it, or correct it? Where will you go to appraise your ideas of God, and ascertain whether they are true or not, whether the God you have conceived for yourself is worthy of your faith? How will you do it?

If there is some man in whom you are interested, almost invariably you picture in your mind what he looks like. Sometimes that conception is true, and sometimes it is not. But if you can obtain the man's address, if you are a just man, you will not judge him unfairly, you will not judge him by reports you have heard: you will go and see for yourself. But if you have a false conception of God, how will you correct it? Where will you go? Let me finish the quotation I started a moment ago: "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." Said Jesus, "I monopolize the knowledge of God. No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." You can never find out Who God is until you see Him in the person of His Son: "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." You are dependent upon a revelation. Our faith must rest upon God's communication of Himself to us. And when at last He dawns upon our spiritual consciousness, and the soul awakens to a view of another realm, we say in a reverent whisper, "That is God."

"We have seen the Lord." Thomas ought to have been a LL.D., a Ph.D., and a D.D., for he was a very reasonable man! He was not one of your easy believers. He said, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." But Thomas was not guilty of the vulgar touch. Down on his face he went, I think, as he exclaimed, "My Lord and my God."

Why did he believe? Because Jesus showed Himself to him. And when He had done that, there was nothing left for Thomas to do but to believe. "Brave man,

Thomas." "No! No!" He would now be the first to exclaim: "That not of myself. I never could have believed had He not come to me in such a way that it was impossible longer to doubt. Now I worship Him as my Lord and my God."

What is the Christian religion? What is salvation? What is faith? I met a friend on the train one day, who had once been a minister. Some question was raised, in answer to which I quoted a scripture. I saw a cynical expression on his countenance, and said, "But perhaps you no longer believe in the principle of revelation?" "Oh," he said, "if you mean any kind of extramundane revelation, no. If you mean that there is any kind of revelation from beyond this earthly sphere, I do not believe it."

What is Christianity? It is a Voice from heaven. It is the word God has spoken. Nay, more. It declares that God has gathered up all that He has ever said, and spoken to us at last in One Who was the Word made flesh. It asserts that God came down from heaven in the person of Jesus Christ. You say, "I do not believe that. I do not believe He was virgin-born. I do not believe he was the Son of God?" Then you are not a Christian. "But I know many ministers who do not believe those things." I care not who the man is, he is not a Christian if He does not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. "He that believeth on the Son hath life." No man is a Christian who does not believe that Jesus Christ is a manifestation of God.

Faith recognizes that God knows more about the moral order than we do, and that at the cross, in a way that no mortal mind can understand, He effected a balancing of the scales, a reconciliation of a wayward and rebellious world unto Himself; that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself"; that He was buried, that He rose again and ascended into heaven. I will go farther: Christianity declares that Jesus will come again. I do not know when He will come, I do not know the details of it: I know He will come. And the second, personal, visible, coming of Jesus Christ is just as much an essential element in the Christian revelation as the truth of His first coming. "Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself . . . and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

Someone may say, "But Jesus Christ is not here as He was in the days of Thomas." I know He is not, but I have read of a man who was a great scholar, a man who was deeply religious, who not only did not believe in Jesus Christ, but was distinctly and definitely and implacably, His enemy: "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem." And while he was in the midst of his task of persecuting all who believed on Christ, on his way to Damascus, there shone a light such as never was on sea or land; there came a Voice—and that great scholar asked a question. Mark that! As yet not a believer, still only a doubter, an agnostic, he asked, "Who art thou, Lord?" That one word settled everything for him. "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." All doubt was dispelled, and like Thomas he said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

I cannot make you a Christian: I can only tell you that there is One Who can come to the spirits of men

as truly to-day as He came to Thomas, or to Saul of Tarsus. And when He comes—when He comes—He enables us to believe. The sun dawns upon the soul's darkness and makes a new world inside. That is the meaning of the scripture which says, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

A WORD TO GARDENERS

The Bible has much to say about gardens. The first scene in the Book of Beginnings is laid in a garden; our Lord prayed in a garden, and many of the parables and illustrations of Scripture are taken from the art of gardening. We shall, then, be on Scriptural grounds if we tell the story of a garden, and draw a lesson therefrom; and though the lesson is of a different kind from that contained in most sermons, it is very practical and will be welcome for that reason to many of our readers.

The garden to which we refer is situated in the beautiful village of Fenelon Falls, on a piece of rising ground just behind the church building. A few weeks ago the pastor of the church, who is a bit of a gardener himself, and a man of vision to boot, asked one of his farmer-members to bring his plough and prepare the soil for cultivation. Then he invited the young people of the church to what is known in country districts as a "bee". This member of the species has no sting, but does much hard work; and as a result row after row of beans, beets, peas, tomatoes, and corn, were planted. The women of the church have undertaken to can the produce of this garden, and the pastor has promised to transport to Toronto as many jars as the women prepare, for use in the Seminary Dining Room next winter. Thus far the young people have transformed their labour of love into a sort of garden party where people work as well as talk, and we trust that the women of the church will make light work of their part of the task, and that the whole venture will be blessed of that Chief Gardener Who gives seed to the sower and bread to the eater.

This is the story of one garden, but it could be multiplied many times in our churches within motoring distance of the Seminary, and we could make use of the produce of many such fruitful gardens, for we are like the

Old lady who lived in a shoe
Who had so many children
She didn't know what to do.

The chief difference between that celebrated lady and ourselves is that we do not live in a shoe, and we *must* do something for our "children", of whom in the neighbourhood of forty sat down to our table regularly five days of the week for thirty-two weeks last school year. Almost all our students whose homes are not in Toronto rent a room and prepare their own food; two or even three students live, eat, sleep, and study, in one drawing-dining-parlour-kitchen-bedroom; and manage to make ends meet on a budget that scarcely assumes even microscopic proportions. The Seminary has found by experience that the most effective way to help such men, and at the same time the most economical, is to provide a substantial dinner once a day at less than cost price (and this is about one-third the price paid in neighbouring restaurants). Bread, milk, meat, and other staple articles of diet, must be purchased at city prices, but in past years friends from nearby churches have sent us considerable quantities of vegetables, canned goods, fruit, and other foodstuffs. One farmer, with whom ready money is a scarce commodity, found an excellent way of helping. When he killed a calf he sent in enough veal to provide two excellent meals for hungry students; on another occasion it was pork; and several times fresh eggs enriched some delicious rice puddings that only Mrs. Cullington knows how to make. Another brother, who, like Nimrod, is a mighty hunter, provided a rabbit dinner one day.

There is little need to say more about the lesson of this garden, but we hope that many other churches will emulate the splendid example of the Fenelon Falls Church. There are some who will read these lines that will not be able to work in a "bee" with others, but who could consecrate a row or two of their garden to the Lord's service, and an hour or two of their time each week for hoeing them, and a few jars in their cellar for preserving the produce, and who

could then make arrangements in the fall for seeing that the fruit of their labour gets to the Seminary kitchen. May your garden be fruitful!
W. S. W.

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

Mount Albert

The third Anniversary of the Mount Albert Regular Baptist Church was held Sunday afternoon, June 9th, with Rev. C. J. Loney, of Hamilton, as the guest speaker, who was used of God in bringing a real blessing to all with a message from I. Tim. 3:15—"The Church that Jesus Built". It was a clear, convincing and scriptural declaration of what the church of Jesus Christ ought to be. Many expressions of appreciation were heard from the visitors as well as our own people, and we are eagerly looking forward to another visit from Mr. Loney.

The Ratcliff Male Quartette from the II. Markham Baptist Church was present and assisted in the song service by three numbers which were spiritually uplifting and Christ-honouring. We look back over the past with praise to God, and toward the future with faith and trust.

Otterville

Sunday, June 9th, was a climatic day for the Baptist Church which has been enjoying the rich ministry of Rev. P. B. Loney of Toronto for the last two weeks. Mr. Loney's evening message, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you", was an inspiring deliverance on the necessity of the shed blood of Christ to our salvation. Those who were present will never forget either the message or the fervid manner of its presentation. After hearing Mr. Loney for two weeks in his able preaching of the Word, it is not difficult to understand the reason for the blessing that has attended his ministry through the years. One night of the services a group of over fifteen were present from Tillsonburg, many of whom were saved while Mr. Loney was pastor in the Tillsonburg Baptist Church fifteen years ago. Their bright faces testified to their joy at meeting their pastor who had led them to Christ years before.

The meetings were significant in their reviving of the Christians, many of whom consecrated their lives wholly to Christ during the services. It is expected that a number will follow Christ in baptism a week from next Sunday night. In spite of a very decided opposition to the meetings in the village, the meetings were in the very fullest sense a great success. Otterville Church will anticipate having Mr. Loney back again at some future date to enjoy his sound, expositional, fervent preaching of the Word.

News from Liberia

In a recent letter from Mr. Percy Clubine, M.A., he relates some of the difficulties encountered by our Missionaries in endeavouring to learn the language of the people among whom they minister. We pass it on to our readers, to give them some idea of the patience required on the part of the Missionaries.

"That the Bassa language is very difficult to learn is generally acknowledged by all who have come in contact with it. Even the head boys of our Mission agree that this is so. Kanga, who is one of our interpreters, says that men from the Mano or other tribes come to Bassa county and often remain for a lifetime without becoming fluent speakers of the language. On the other hand, a Bassa man may learn Mano or Pessi in a year by simply residing in the midst of these people. It is true that none of our Missionaries as yet have mastered Bassa, although some of them are able to hear fairly well, especially when the line of thought is known or anticipated. We can often make ourselves understood about the Mission or vicinity, but we are often embarrassed when speaking to strangers when we find them totally unable to understand us.

"I am of the opinion that the trouble does not lie with the grammatical construction of the language, but in the words themselves. Often the grammar is almost the same as that of English, and in many ways is much simpler. Almost all words begin with a consonant and end with a vowel, and the language may be said to be chiefly monosyllabic. This uniformity makes it harder to differentiate words, and a lot of them can pass one's ear in a second if a rapid speaker is talking. Many words at first seem to us to be the same although we find them having widely different meanings.

(Continued on page 8)

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 10

No. 3

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 27

Third Quarter

July 7th, 1935

THE JUSTICE OF DIVINE GOVERNMENT

Lesson Text: Psalms 93 to 96.

Golden Text: "Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength."—Psalm 96:8.

Bible School Reading: Psalm 94:1-23.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—Ex. 4:10-17; Tuesday—Job 35:9-16; Wednesday—Prov. 8:25-36; Thursday—Is. 28:23-29; Friday—Heb. 4:1-9; Saturday—I. Cor. 6:15-20.

PSALM NINETY-THREE

The subject of this psalm is the reign of the Lord. His reign is stated, together with His kingly garments, the stability of His kingdom, the eternal duration of His throne, His almighty power over nature, and the proper attitude of men toward Him. Observe the significance of the divine rule. God has not abrogated the throne of the universe. Satan as the prince of the power of the air is allowed to tempt men, and they in their unrepentant state transgress the laws of God (Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 3:23); yet over all, and manifest in the history of man, individual and collective, there is the sovereign will of God (Gen. 50:20; Acts 2:23). Many in these days are rejecting Him as King (Luke 19:14), but some day every knee shall bow unto Him, and give Him glory (Phil. 2:10, 11; I. Cor. 15:24). Note also the self-existent nature of God. He girded Himself. He was not crowned by another. He is also the eternal, omnipotent, One. And with this in mind, we should worship Him in the spirit of holiness (I. Peter 1:14-17). Men know something of the laws of nature, but many, unfortunately, fail to recognize that behind all law, and the source and upholder of it, is the Lord God Almighty. What evidence is there that God is reigning in this world? What should be our constant attitude toward Him?

PSALM NINETY-FOUR

In this psalm there is an appeal to God to take action against the wicked on account of their evil deeds, together with an expressed confidence that He would do as requested. The psalm opens with an acknowledgment that vengeance belongeth unto God, and an appeal to Him to show Himself and render judgment respecting the wicked (vs. 1, 2). Sometimes we are inclined to take vengeance ourselves against our enemies; we feel they deserve punishment. Such may be true, but it is better to leave them to the judgment of God. He will deal justly with them, and with us. A description of the deeds of the wicked follows (vs. 3-7). They triumph; they boast; they afflict the people of God; and lull themselves into a false security by stating that God would neither see nor regard their iniquity. Note the wickedness and foolishness of such conduct, and the reason for it in the heart at enmity against God (Jer. 17:9; Rom. 8:7). The answer to the statement of the wicked is given in the reference to the divine Omnipotence and omniscience (vs. 8-11). Nothing escapes His notice. He may not take immediate action against sin, but He hears and sees what is going on, and in His own time He deals with it (2 Pet. 3:8-10). Observe the teaching respecting God as Creator (Gen. 1:1; Ex. 4:11; Prov. 20:12); and as Teacher (Job 35:10, 11; Is. 28:26; John 6:45).

The righteous are called upon to suffer under the chastening rod of God, and at the hands of their enemies; but such chastening is for their benefit (Heb. 12: 5-13). It will teach them matters relative to the law of God, and then they will be released from its exactions (vs. 12-15). Such an unpleasant experience does not continue indefinitely; it is but for a brief time, and God is with us during the whole period, "For the Lord will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance". Note the comfort of this in these days of depression. A testimony to the efficacy of divine

help follows (vs. 16-23). The Lord had been the psalmist's help in the midst of enemies, and had prevented him from slipping into the grave. God had been his defence and refuge in time of trouble. Note the attitude of the wicked, "framing mischief by a law", as is done these days in many countries, and even our own land, in the beer parlour, the race-track gambling machines, and other ways; and gathering themselves together against the righteous, and condemning the innocent. Their punishment is sure (Is. 10:1; James 5:1). Observe also the conduct of the psalmist with his suffering at the hands of the wicked, and his confident trust in God. The Lord as a refuge for the oppressed is near, accessible, certain, safe, free and eternal. What has the Lord meant to us in times of trouble? How may we experience to the fullest extent His protecting, comforting care?

PSALM NINETY-FIVE

This psalm contains a call to worship the Lord for His goodness and His greatness. It opens with an invitation to sing unto God, and to come before His presence with thanksgiving. Praise becometh those who have received blessing from on high, and children of God have much for which to thank God. He has given us a new song (Ps. 40:3), which glorifies Him, and thus differ radically from the foolish songs of the world. We shall sing in eternity (Rev. 15:3), and we are counselled also to sing here (Eph. 5:19). Such singing is intimated to be joyful, thankful; and having as its subject the goodness of God. The greatness of the Lord is then referred to. He is a great King above all gods, and by Him were the sea and land created. In thinking of God as the Father of His own people (Deut. 32:6; Matt. 6:9), we should not lose sight of the fact that He is also the Almighty One, Maker of heaven and earth; and our conduct should be governed thereby in reverence and obedience. A call to worship then follows (vs. 6, 7). We are His creatures, and the sheep of His hand. Worship is, therefore, His due, and humility and submission our proper attitude. Note our Lord's teaching respecting worship (John 4:24), and examples of acceptable worship (Ex. 34:8; Neh. 8:5, 6; Job 1:20). A warning against disobedience, taken from the history of Israel, closes the psalm. Unbelief kept the Israelites out of the promised land (Num. 14:26-34), as it hindered the Lord from doing mighty works in Nazareth (Matt. 15:38); and we are warned not to commit a similar sin (Heb. 4:1). Unbelief makes God a liar (I. John 5:10), and is, therefore, a heinous sin. Faith glorifies Him (Rom. 4:20), and consequently receives blessing (Matt. 15:21-28). What are some of the blessings received through faith? How may we increase our faith?

PSALM NINETY-SIX

This psalm contains an exhortation to praise the Lord for His greatness and power, manifest in nature and among men. It opens with a call to sing unto the Lord, and declare His wonders among the people. Note the nature and purpose of the song. The greatness of God is then declared (vs. 4-6). His greatness is contrasted with the impotency of heathen idols, and His majesty, strength, and beauty are stated. Because of what He is He should be both praised and feared. This is further intimated by the psalmist in his call to the people to give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name, to come into His courts with an offering, and worship Him in the beauty of holiness (vs. 7-9). Note the necessity for holiness of character in worshipping God (Eph. 1:4), and the way in which the same may be secured (Rom. 6:19-22); also the practical nature of His worship in the bringing of the offering. Our gifts follow our love, and if we truly love God we are certain to show it in our gifts to His service. The Israelites gave offerings of various kinds (Lev. 1-5), and we are enjoined to give our bodies (Rom. 12:1, 2), and our possessions (2 Cor. 9:7). It is likewise our duty to give testimony among the heathen concerning the Lord (v. 10), bearing witness to Him (Acts 1:8), that others may know Him, and come to serve Him (Matt. 28:18-20). The closing verses of the psalm call upon heaven and earth to be glad, and to rejoice before the Lord "for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth". Note the certainty of the future judgment of the world (Heb. 9:27), and the righteous nature of such a judgment. Wickedness will then be punished, and righteousness rewarded. How may we glorify God in our everyday activities? How should we give testimony to Him among our friends and neighbours?

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

(Continued from page 6)

Similar words may be differentiated in several ways; by a slight variation of the initial consonant; by lengthening the vowel; by nasalizing the vowel, and by the tone of the vowel. There are two slightly different 'd' sounds, one ordinary, called explosive 'd', and the other sucked in by enlarging the larynx, called implosive 'd'. Three 'b' sounds distinguish words and cause trouble. They are explosive, implosive, and an implosive 'gb' formed by articulating 'ag' and 'b' inwardly at the same instant. For the sake of clarity we may write these sounds, d, nd, b, mb, and gb, although no 'n' or 'm' is really present in nd and mb.

"Of all our troubles the tones are worst. Every vowel in a word has its own particular tone. Thus the sentence is really a little song, and unless we are able to keep perfectly in the musical groove as we speak, the native finds the sentence song meaningless. There are four tones which we may call high, mid high, mid low, and low. These have been found on the organ to be, for the ordinary speaker, G, Eb, C, Bb, respectively. When a vowel is doubled each vowel may have a separate tone. There is a mathematical problem for you. How many different words might occur using one consonant and its variations and one vowel which may be doubled? Suppose we use the word which sounds like bo. There are three 'b' sounds, and four tones for the 'o', which gives us at once twelve different words. Each 'o' may be nasalized or not nasalized, which doubles the number making it twenty-four. Now if the vowel is doubled and the tones varied on the two vowels with one consonant, there are ten possibilities. With the three consonants we make it thirty, and with nasalization or no nasalization we get sixty. Thus with the word bo we might make eighty-four mistakes. Of course such combinations do not occur so completely worked out, but we might easily have a dozen or more similar words. For example, if I tell our school boy, Bo by name, to carry ripe banana to house, I seem to say, 'Bo kpa bo bo bo bo bo' in which only two of the bo's are the same. They mean ripe. I must also be very careful not to use such words as leg, swear, stumble, waist, for, and poison for killing fish, when I tell him, for all these words are translated by some variety of bo. It seems to me that the way to overcome this obstacle is to get a complete dictionary of Bassa words.

"During my first three months in Liberia I got the Bassa equivalent for all the common words that come to mind, but later I discarded this work for another plan. I at last took out my big dictionary and went through it from cover to cover picking out the English words which I thought would be useful in every day conversation or in translation of the Scriptures. In this way I got about three thousand words. When at length the Bassa was put beside each English word, I went through all this work and sorted out the Bassa words, putting them in alphabetical order. When this was done I had about two thousand different Bassa words. By February, 1935, the time of the fire, I had also completed a Bassa grammar with notes, exercises, and vocabularies of some eighty pages. All this was lost in the fire. By the end of May I hope to have both vocabularies again finished, although not so complete since I have had to use another

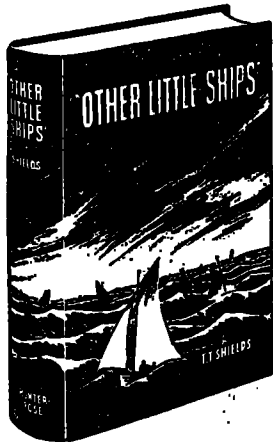
boy this year whose command of English is rather limited. The tonal work, however, is probably improved. Grammar will also consume much more time after the vocabularies are done. All this time I had planned to use to do some translation work for exercise, and to really learn what I had compiled. Although language work is interesting, I find continued study very wearisome, and tiring here in Africa. As far as I can tell I am in perfect health, but I do find the climate very trying. Being raised on a farm, I used to be accustomed to using a hoe or fork or axe all day long for weeks at a time, without any apparent evil effect, but here if I use a hoe for half an hour until I begin to perspire, I feel almost exhausted for the rest of the day. I try to avoid physical effort as much as possible, but occasionally, as this last week, one wants to plant some bulbs or shrubs in the garden, etc., and no one can do it quite so well as oneself. I remember how in the war some brothers were put in a steam chamber for punishment and left there until almost exhausted. The heat and humidity here, reminds me of the steam chamber sometimes, and I have no doubt that in time this climate would become just as exhausting.

"I wish I had time to tell you of school and church work, but perhaps I can write about that later. I am praying that God will raise up for Himself a Christian witness in every town in our district, although our Christians meet with much opposition in their towns."

MANY HAPPY RETURNS

Babies are always interesting, even baby churches! The Regular Baptist Church of Galt celebrated its first birthday, with much rejoicing of members and friends, on Sunday, June 16th. A year before the first Bible School had had an attendance of six, but the 16th last saw ninety-three. A year ago last winter Rev. W. N. Charlton, of Hespeler, held cottage prayer meetings, and during the following summer, Student D. S. Dinnick (class of '37) wore the very shoes off his feet, visiting from house to house in the apostolic fashion. In October, Mr. Arthur Burnham (ex-'34), led by strange but wonderful Providence, became pastor. Under his ministry the congregations have grown, the Sunday School has increased, a young people's society with an attendance of twenty-five has lately been organized, souls have been saved, and a number have been baptized,—three young ladies were immersed at the recent gathering of the Pastors' and People's Conference of the Brantford-Hamilton District, at Hespeler.

And then the first birthday. The little church, which the brethren rent from the Seventh-Day Adventists, was filled for the Bible School at 10 o'clock, and Rev. W. N. Charlton gave an interesting and profitable address to the School. Many visitors and friends were present at the morning service, and in the evening the ushers needed a large variety of shoe-horns to get one hundred and fifty people in! There was a fine response in the special offering. Mr. Richardson, of Paris, and Mr. Day and the Gospel Quartette, of Brantford, furnished enjoyable music for a congregation who themselves sang the old hymns heartily. The writer was blessed in preaching the Word to appreciative people. It was a great day, but "God's to-morrow will be better than to-day".—W.G.B.



ORDER FORM FOR DR. SHIELDS' NEW BOOK

THE GOSPEL WITNESS
130 Gerrard Street East
Toronto, Ont.

Please find enclosed \$1.50 for which send me, postpaid, one copy of "Other Little Ships". (If remitting by cheque, add 15 cents for exchange.)

Name.....

Address.....