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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"LET US GO ON"

A Sermon by Rev. John Wilmot

Of Highgate Road Baptist Church, London, England.

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, July 28th, 1935.

(Stenographically Reported)

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

"Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."—Hebrews 6:1-2.

Prayer by Dr. Shields

We come to Thee, O Lord our God, as to the great Storehouse, in Whom are hid all the treasures which we so urgently need. We thank Thee for Him Who is the Door thereto, for the One Whose name is our password, to Whom Thou hast pledged Thy word in everlasting covenant, and for Whose sake Thou art able to have mercy even upon sinners. We thank Thee that if we have Jesus Christ we have everything, and we are rich for time and for eternity. Draw near to us this morning, we pray Thee, and fill our hearts with joy, and our lives with practical thanksgiving because of all that Thou hast done for us in Christ Jesus the Lord.

We thank Thee for that godliness which is profitable to the life that now is. We thank Thee for all the joys of the Christian life, for all the delightful experiences that are ours because, by Thy grace, we have been brought into fellowship with Thyself; for the earnest of our inheritance which is ours until the time of the redemption of the purchased possession.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for that which Thou hast given us while as yet we have not come of age, nor are entitled to our full inheritance in Christ. Help us that we may take full advantage of all the riches of Christ, the spiritual blessings wherewith Thou hast blessed us in heavenly places in Christ.

We thank Thee for this prospect of which we have read this morning, of a day of ultimate victory, of spiritual completion, when we shall be like unto our glorious Lord. Help us this morning by Thy grace that we may not be unmindful of that which is reserved for us in heaven who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Bless us in our meditation upon Thy word this morning. Speak to us through Thy servant, we pray Thee, as he declares to us the unsearchable riches of Christ. Look this morning upon every member of this congregation, men and women, boys and girls. Make us all to be partakers of the grace of life, sharers in the victory of Jesus Christ. Save such as are unsaved, and sanctify those who are Thy children, and glorify Thyself in us all, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

The content of this chapter is somewhat depressing, but it concludes with the certainty of hope in Christ.

There is a saying in England—I suppose you use it over here as well—that "fools and bairns should not see things half done". We need to take into review the whole of the chapter in order to see clearly the whole truth. A half truth is sometimes a lie. You will be familiar with the term Calvinistic as descriptive of the manner in which some Christians hold the truth. They believe in the sovereignty of divine grace; that if once they are in Christ they are in Christ forever; that it is God Who has begun the good work in them, and He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Your Pastor is one of those ("Amen!"); and I am another! I trust you all are such who profess faith in the Saviour.

There are, however, professing Christian people who take another view. The reason why some speak of their salvation as dependent in measure upon themselves is possibly because they do not take into account the whole counsel of God on the subject. They will cite texts which, if read apart from their context, appear to place the responsibility for their final salvation upon themselves. And there are passages of Scripture which, taken out of their context, might seem to teach the reverse of that which, with their context, they are obviously intended to teach. So there are people who say they believe they may be saved to-day, and lost to-morrow!

The salvation which is in Christ Jesus is eternal. When once God has begun the good work we may be certain that He will perfect it. The comforting assurance of salvation may be received from separate passages of Scripture; but it is most clearly perceived from the whole New Testament doctrine of the salvation wrought

for us by the life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here, however, is a passage of Scripture which, if it be not rightly understood, may occasion doubt respecting the believer's final destiny.

I have noticed that this passage is by some dismissed from application to Christian people in general because it is written in an epistle addressed to the Hebrews; and they, being Gentiles, consider that it is not addressed to them! But I would remind you that this epistle would never have been written at all were not these Hebrews also Christians. It was not written to them because they were of the Hebrew race; but because they had embraced the Christian faith. And it has application to all who are Christians, whether they be racially Hebrew or Gentile. The epistle takes into account, necessarily, the religious customs of the people to whom it was written, and the conditions which obtained among them. It is peculiar in its character, and cannot be compared with any other epistle in the New Testament.

Have you heard the simple couplet respecting the Testaments—

"The old is by the new revealed,
The new is in the old concealed?"

The reason then why we do not have such a book as Leviticus in the New Testament is that we have the epistle to the Hebrews. The "shadows" of Leviticus are revealed in Hebrews, and the realities of Hebrews are concealed in Leviticus. Hebrews explains those things ordained of God and observed by Israel during the dispensation of the types; which were pictures of the salvation accomplished by Christ Jesus. And so this epistle is intended to show us, by comparison and contrast, that the Reality has come! And yet we could not possibly apprehend the fulness there is in Jesus Christ our Saviour but for the ministry of these types and shadows. I question if any believer could have perceived in the one offering of the Lord Jesus upon the tree the fulfillment and fulness of Divine requirement, but for the revelation in the Old Testament of many sacrifices as types of His one perfect Sacrifice. Could we ever have understood without the Old Testament, that the one sacrifice of Christ fulfilled the sin offering, the trespass offering, the burnt offering, the meal offering, the peace offering, and many lesser sacrifices? The Old Testament supplies the figures of the true; and the New Testament points out the realities; because in Christ the shadows have passed away, and the true light now shineth.

Last Sunday morning I suggested to you that in this epistle the key to its revelation of Jesus Christ is given in those words occurring in both the first and last chapters which speak of His immutability; there is no change in Him or in His achievements. But of those who profess allegiance to Christ the reverse is the case—there is change in us. We need not to be told that: we are reminded of it in a thousand different ways. And so, it would seem, the key words in respect to Christian people, are given in the exhortations—"Let us go on", and on the other hand, *Let us not be drawing back*. "Let us go on unto maturity", that is the word here; and at the end of chapter ten we read: "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." And blessed are they who with assurance can say, "We are not of them who draw back unto perdition: but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

The Apostle in this chapter refers, not so much to backsliders, as to those who become apostates. The

opening half of the chapter describes apostasy: the disavowal or abandonment of the position previously held; and the latter half of the chapter speaks of our assurance—if faith in Christ is genuine, if we are truly founded on Him; if the root of the matter is in us. And we can give proof of the root of the matter being in us by our going on, by growing up into Christ in all things. To a Christian himself the evidence of the reality of his profession, of his possession of spiritual life, is that he makes progress. If there be no growth where is the evidence that he has living root? (vs. 7-8). That is the principle of this chapter. The Scripture sometimes places the responsibility for evidence upon us. We are to make our calling and election sure; that is, evident. The Lord Jesus and His apostles spake in this manner: "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him." "If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them."

I.

We are admonished, then, to *leave certain principles in order to obey this precept: "Let us go on"*. What are these principles which we are bidden to leave? Sometimes we get a clearer understanding of our version by a paraphrase, or another translation. It would be in accord with the meaning of this opening sentence to substitute the words—"Starting out from, and leaving behind, the word of the beginning of Christ, let us go on unto maturity." As applicable to Hebrews the word first of all might have reference to the Old Testament typical revelation of the Lord Jesus, as though that were the word of the beginning of Christ conveyed to Israel in those types and pictures and shadows. The shadows were to be left for the substance in Christ. But passing to New Testament doctrine in general, the explanation is given in six principles here enumerated. The principles of the beginning—"the first principles of the oracles of God" (v. 12)—are laid down here so that there may be no mistaking what they are. We have them in three couplets. They constitute the foundation, namely: "Repentance from dead works, and faith toward God"; "the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands"; the "resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment". They are foundation principles essential to the beginning of the Christian life.

The first two, Repentance and Faith, represent the inward and individual aspect of the case. They pertain to the sinner's heart and conscience. They are first principles which an evangelist must preach. They are solemn subjects which the apostle Paul told the Ephesians he had preached among them to which their conversion must be attributed (Acts XX:21). He declared all the counsel of God, but he mentions these two essentials especially because they concern the question of our sin and guilt, of which we need to repent, and of salvation in Christ Jesus which is received through faith.

Secondly you have the ordinance of baptism, coupled with the laying on of hands. You do not require to be reminded in this place that baptism is enjoined to be observed at the beginning of the Christian life. There are two ordinances given by the Lord Jesus to His Church. One is baptism, to be received by each professed believer upon his believing. It is the foundation ordinance. The second is that of the Lord's Supper, a Church ordinance, for the observance of the whole company of God's people banded together in Christian fellowship, a memorial feast to be kept until the Lord

shall come again. The laying on of hands, here associated with baptism, might be taken to represent the method by which the baptized believer, the newly converted person, was apostolically received into the fellowship of the Christian Church. So that these two principles indicate the outward and corporate aspect in laying the foundation.

In the third place there are named, "resurrection" and "eternal judgment". They respect the future, for the gospel is designed rightly to relate the believing sinner to the future. Here then is the forward and eternal aspect. The Christian life at its inception has regard to future destiny. Therefore, these principles of the beginning, individual, corporate, eternal, being settled, "let us go on unto maturity".

Having started out from these principles we are to leave them, in the sense of not laying again the foundation—but not, of course, to abandon them. Our church has a stone pulpit, rather ornate in appearance, a good piece of sculpture; but it has no stairway into the auditorium. It is entered by a door at the side. Before I came away I looked over a sketch prepared by an architect, of stairways proposed for the two sides of the pulpit. The draughtsman remarked that he had shown no foundation, and the builder would require to allow for some brick or stone work under the floor. This was not shown on the plan, but was understood as being absolutely necessary to the scheme. You cannot build a superstructure save upon a foundation, but you do not finish with the foundation: you begin with it. The foundation is for the sake of the superstructure. That, I think, is a very simple illustration of what the Apostle had in mind when he wrote those words. We leave the foundation, not by abandoning it, as though it were obsolete; but by building upon it.

So it should not be necessary to be repeatedly laying down foundations for people who are already professed Christians. You plant a seed in the ground. It germinates: It forms root. Then the stem comes up. The seed and the root are for the sake of the stem and the fruit. But you are not content with the root; your objective is fruit, yet you could not have the fruit without the root. And that, to change the figure, is the meaning here. Some things belong to the beginning, but they suppose, and are for the sake of, the intended course and end. Thus the Apostle writes: "Leave these things of which you have already been persuaded, which relate to the beginning of your faith, and go on unto maturity"; that is, until you have reached the complete and the intended end; until the spiritual building is finished; until the fruit appears; until the babe has grown to full manhood.

II.

Now to "go on" supposes that a *beginning has been made*. If not there can be no advance. It may be that not all of us have made the beginning. It is a solemn prerequisite to the fulfilling of this exhortation that we begin by being founded upon Christ. The beginning is made by the communication to you of the gospel message, and the embracing by faith of its first principles. When you have thus embraced them once and for all, cleave to them as you would a foundation to rest upon. Paul said to the Corinthians: "I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon". Everywhere this apostle-evangelist went, to every company of unconverted hearers, by preaching the elements of

the gospel he would be laying the foundation of Christian faith and life and confession, and of Christian Churches, by preaching, and re preaching those old truths. But having so done, he rightly expected to observe in those who had been founded upon Christ, and who had confessed Him in baptism, and reception into Christian fellowship, an advancement unto maturity. And if that were not the case, doubtless he would as reasonably question whether there were any reality in their profession.

In the vestry just before this service began, your Pastor remarked to me that the history of a church is a history of decline and advance. You do not abidingly have your fruitful seasons, although it is always true of the genuine believer that his leaf does not wither: Only in the heavenly city does the tree bear twelve manner of fruits every month. Yet, my friends, if we are united to Christ, and so have the Spirit of Life, if we have the earnest of that inheritance, is it not to be expected that we should grow, that we should advance—and in some degree be fruitful Christians, and so go on unto maturity?

Somewhere I have read that Mr. Spurgeon watching his son, when he was a lad, learning to ride a bicycle, made this remark, "If my son does not go on, he will come off." Did you ever prove that? Mr. Spurgeon applied the illustration to the Christian life. If we do not go on we will draw back, there is no standing still.

In our road in London I noticed one day that the concrete pavement was cracked, and breaking without apparent cause. Then I noticed that the root of a small tree in the garden behind the fence had penetrated under the wall, under the path, and gently, but surely, by the life-force that was in it, had broken the pavement, and lifted it up. So is the spiritual life. It will surely overcome obstacles, and manifest its growing strength unto maturity.

III.

The Bible is a book whose words are full of meaning. If our Bibles gave the full translation and the full content of the inspired words of the original Scriptures, we would be carrying much larger volumes, as big as a pulpit Bible! Take this little expression: "Let us go on". It contains several suggestions, and three of them I desire to mention.

First: It means, just what it says—*Go on*. But does not the Apostle, in writing thus, have in view the danger of our stopping? How many there are who having professed Christ seem to think that that is all, and the end! But when we have received the Lord Jesus, and are founded upon Him, we have only begun, and there is a journey we must pursue. We are pilgrims, not settlers, and we have to go on. By stopping there we are in danger. Have you noticed how the apostle Paul, thanking God for what he had heard of the Christian life begun, immediately indicated some thought of danger, in his assurance of ceaseless prayer for advance? Take the epistle to the Colossians for example. How glad was the spirit of the Apostle when he received the news of the conversion of those people: "For this cause", he writes, "we also, since the day we hear of it (i.e., of their conversion) do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every

good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." He realized the peril of this new position and how necessary it was for the saints, having begun, to go on; and so he prays to that end. We do not usually slacken off abruptly: decline is generally a gradual process. You remember the first Psalm, of the blessed man: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." There is represented a progression in evil. The reverse would be true of the ungodly man, who does so "walk" and "stand", and at last is found sitting in the very seat of the scornful. We go on step by step to the glory land, or we go back little by little. Oh how needful it is that we exhort one another continually to go on, to follow on to know the Lord; to take up our cross daily and follow Him; to go on in the labour of the Lord, not wearying in well doing, lest we should lose heart, and not to be content with the elementary truths with which we are already acquainted, precious as they are to us, but seeking ever to understand the deep things of God, the depths of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God. "Supply in your faith", says Peter, other graces—which he enumerates—so being neither barren nor unfruitful, and putting your salvation beyond all doubt!

Secondly, the word bears the sense of *pressing on*. That term would indicate another danger—that of discouragement. We shall have troubles, and trials, and difficulties, and obstacles in our path all the way along. I believe Bunyan's analogy of the Christian pilgrimage is true to Bible teaching, and to experience. It may not represent the path of discipleship proposed from many pulpits to-day. We are not always enjoying a picnic; the way to heaven is not by choruses and clapping! Albeit there are rich compensations. But we have to "press on". Have you not found it so? One of our hymns has it—"Twas tribulation ages since, 'tis tribulation still". To "go" is simple; but to "press" is strenuous. I believe that tribulation is especially pertinent to the Christian dispensation. Many teach that the tribulation has nothing whatever to do with Christian people; but it has; and is designed to test our faith. "He that endureth unto the end shall be saved." Thus we prove that we have received the grace of Christ. We are not saved, because we endure, but our enduring is the evidence that we are saved. We are to strive to enter in at the "strait gate". We are to strive against sin. We have not yet resisted unto blood in so doing. What is the meaning of such words if the Christian life is not a pressing on?

I heard a Baptist minister, speaking of the Victorious Life, say, "God will never help a man who struggles against sin". I profoundly disagreed with that statement, and I immediately produced this passage: "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin". Yes; we strive, and we struggle in the assurance that we shall win. In our lesson this morning (Phil. III.) toward the end of his Christian journey, the Apostle said that he had not then attained, he had not yet fully grasped that for which the Lord Jesus Christ had apprehended him. We should always be pressing on "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." In some of our hymn books words are changed. The hymn: "Art thou weary, art thou languid", has an alteration in it—I do not know

whether it is so in the book you use or not; but in a number of books the alteration has been made presumably because the compilers considered that struggling and striving were not appropriate to the Christian life. So, in place of the words: "Finding, following, keeping, struggling", they have it: "Finding, following, keeping, trusting". But in finding we trust; and in following we trust; and in keeping, we trust; and in struggling, we trust. It is trusting all the way through.

"Finding, following, keeping, struggling,
Is He sure to bless?
Saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs
Answer—"Yes!"

Thirdly: *The word will carry this meaning: "Let us be borne on."* Here is suggested the danger of our supposing that God leaves us alone, and so we have included in the word the thought of His carrying us along. A child may go on! We heard an illustration a week ago given by Dr. Shields, of a little girl who wished to go alone, and who would not take her mother's hand, and who consequently stumbled! As beginning the Christian life then, we go on, we are but children; and, as we grow up, and become confronted with the many spiritual and moral obstacles to our going, and the sin that surrounds us, and the fierce hostility of the Evil One who makes us his special target, then we find that our going must be a real pressing on. But lest we should think we are our own saviours and the accomplishers of our own salvation during pilgrimage, the word is, that we are carried along. It is of God from beginning to end! Our commencing and our going, are accounted for by the work of the Spirit of God, and so also are our pressing and striving. For this is the secret: We are borne along. You know how the Scriptures came to be written. They were written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost", that is, as they were borne along by the Holy Ghost. And that is the word we have here. In the account of Paul's shipwreck given in The Acts of the Apostles, we are told how the time came when they released the ship of cargo and "let her drive"—that is to say, they committed her to the wind, and the wind carried her along.

So is the Christian life, my friends. We go on, we press on, only because we are borne along by the Spirit of God, Who began the work, and as we pursue the pilgrim path, and press onward, is still performing and will perfect His work until the day of the Lord Jesus.

I have a great liking sometimes for children's hymns. We sang one last night in the prayer meeting about little children, redeemed, who will be displayed as His jewels when the Lord shall come. And this is another hymn we sing when in Sunday School:

"Yield not to temptation, for yielding is sin,
Each victory will help you some other to win;
Fight manfully onward, dark passions subdue,
Look ever to Jesus, He will carry you through."

That is good theology; that is true to Scripture. We have to resist the devil; we have to flee youthful lusts; we have to strive against sin; but all the time He will carry us through.

There are two sides to this question, my friends; and we shall manifest a genuine work of God in our souls if we are found going on, and pressing on, while trustfully depending all the time upon Christ our Saviour, Who by His Spirit will carry us through!

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 10

No. 3

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 33

Third Quarter

August 18th, 1935

THE LAW OF THE LORD

Lesson Text: Psalm 119.

Golden Text: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word."
—Psalm 119:9.

Bible School Reading: Psalm 119:1-24.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—Deut. 4:7-13; Tuesday—Psalm 19:7-14; Wednesday—Prov. 11:23-31; Thursday—Jer. 9:1-8; Friday—John 8:28-36; Saturday—Romans 7:7-17.

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND NINETEEN

The identity of the person who wrote this psalm is unknown, but it is evident he was one who had an all-consuming desire for the law of his God. He knew it, meditated on it, and bore public testimony to it. In the psalm he deals with the surpassing excellence of the law, and his familiarity with his subject, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is manifest in the fact that with but two exceptions (vs. 122 and 132), the term "law", or some synonym for it, is found in every verse. Another striking feature of the psalm is its acrostic arrangement. Its content is divided into twenty-two sections, corresponding to the number of the letters in the Hebrew alphabet. Each section contains eight verses, and the first letter of each verse in each section begins with the same letter, and gives its designation to the section. The psalm has been memorized by some, but this feat is impossible for all. We can, however, understand its significance in relation to the divine authorship, and purpose of the word of God as a whole; we can permit its truth to influence our lives, and we can remember choice portions of it.

There is no progressive continuity of thought in the psalm, simply a reiteration of the theme; therefore there can be no precise division of content other than the original sections; but certain general characteristics may be pointed out, after which the leading thought of each section may be intimated wherever possible. First, respecting the surpassing excellence of God's law. It is righteous (vs. 7, 62, 106, 137, 138, 142, 144, 160, 172); good (v. 39); faithful (v. 86); settled (v. 89); sweet (v. 103); wonderful (v. 129); and pure (v. 140). Second, respecting its power. It cleanses (v. 9); prevents sin (v. 11); gives counsel (v. 24); liberty (v. 45); comfort (vs. 50, 92); understanding (vs. 99, 100, 104); light (vs. 105, 130); joy (v. 111); and peace (v. 165). It produces a life which is blessed (vs. 1, 2); does no iniquity (v. 3); and walks in God's ways (v. 3).

The psalmist's attitude respecting the law is worthy of consideration, for this governed his attitude toward God and the world. He longed to keep the law (vs. 5, 8, 17, 24, 44, 56, 106, 115, 145); he hid it in his heart (v. 11); he desired to know it (vs. 12, 26, 27, 33); he bore witness to it (vs. 13, 46, 172); he meditated on it (v. 15); he delighted in it (vs. 16, 35, 47, 77, 92, 143); he longed for it (vs. 20, 40, 131); he loved it (vs. 48, 97, 113, 127, 140, 159, 163); he remembered it (v. 52); he delayed not to keep it (v. 60); he forsook it not (v. 87); he would never forget it (vs. 93, 141, 153, 176); he had not departed from it (vs. 102, 110); and he stood in awe of it (v. 161).

The psalmist's attitude toward God is equally clear. He praised Him (vs. 7, 164); sought Him with the whole heart (v. 10); remembered Him (v. 55); claimed Him as his portion (v. 57); entreated His favour (v. 58); gave Him thanks (v. 62); feared Him (v. 120); and desired Him to work (v. 126). Respecting his attitude toward the world, we are informed he desired the way of lying to be removed from him (v. 29); his heart inclined unto the way of God's testimonies, and not to covetousness (v. 36); horror had taken hold of him because of the wicked who had forsaken God's law (v. 53); he was a companion of all those who feared God (v. 63); he refrained from evil (v. 101); and

he was grieved on account of those who kept not God's law (vs. 136, 158).

Studying the psalm in accordance with the alphabetical sections, we do not find one particular phase of truth dealt with in each section, yet we may venture to point out some leading thought in each one. This may be set out as follows:

1. The blessedness of those who are obedient unto the law, such blessedness being evident in the holy life resultant therefrom.
2. The way of cleansing, wherein the power of God's word is emphasized.
3. Longing for the law, the outcome of close relationship with God, and realization of its need in the midst of sinners.
4. An intense desire to understand the law for the purpose of making it known to others.
5. An earnest request for divine teaching in order to understand the law, and to obey it unto the end.
6. Prayer for the coming of divine mercies, that witness might be borne unto God.
7. Confession respecting remembrance of the divine name and judgments.
8. Testimony concerning the Lord, as one's portion; resulting in faithfulness to Him.
9. The blessedness of affliction in the understanding which it gives of the will of God.
10. Prayer for understanding in order to learn the divine commandments.
11. Steadfastness in persecution, with a petition for spiritual quickening.
12. The enduring nature of the law; forever settled in heaven.
13. The blessing of meditation on the law.
14. The law as a light to the feet.
15. Hope in the word of God.
16. A place for divine action in view of the attitude of the wicked.
17. A request for light and deliverance.
18. A testimony to remembrance of the law in the midst of trouble.
19. A promise to keep the law, and request for protection in the face of enemies.
20. A prayer for quickening, according to the law; and to divine lovingkindness.
21. The great peace of those who love the law.
22. Praise to God because of the law.

Several things are evident in the study of the psalm. First, the precious, enduring, purifying, nature of the word of God. This is understood by all those who know Him, and live in contact with Him. He is the source of the Word (2 Tim. 3:16), consequently it will never pass away (1 Pet. 1:25). Its message is powerful (Heb. 4:12), and relates to the essentials of life in time and eternity. It reveals the true nature of sin (Rom. 3:9-18), makes clear the divine plan of salvation therefrom (Is. 53:5; 1 Pet. 2:24); gives guidance and comfort for the present life (Eph. 4:1; Heb. 4:15, 16); and hope for the future (John 14:1-3). Its teaching is profound, yet simple; not easy of understanding by the carnal mind; yet capable of comprehension by the spiritual mind, even though deficient in learning. Its message is suited to the needs of every race, white, yellow, or black; of every class, high or low, learned or unlearned, wealthy or poor; and of every circumstance in life, favourable or unfavourable. God's word alone could thus meet the needs of all classes and masses; and this observable fact may be accepted as evidence of the divine inspiration of that which we term, the Word of God.

The consecrated life of the psalmist may next be considered. He loved the word of God, because he loved the God of the Word. He meditated on the law day and night. He obeyed it, spoke about it, and received rich blessing as a result. He also became aware of God's attitude to the world, saw things as He saw them, and consequently hated sin, and wept over sinners. His life was cleansed, his view clarified, and his testimony made effective. The Word of God was powerful in his experience, and the Lord Himself was a very real presence with him in every circumstance of life.

The necessity for proclaiming the Word of God to others is impressed upon us as we meditate on this psalm. The world is ignorant of its nature and blessing, and is acting contrary to its message; conscious in some measure of the evils affecting it, yet not aware of the underlying cause of them, it is seeking to apply remedies that are entirely inadequate and ineffective. Man's wrong relationship with God is the root of all the trouble; and repentance and faith in Him constitute the remedy. God made man for Himself, and not until the divine will is wrought in him can there be real peace, joy, or satisfaction. And not until then will the golden rule be carried out in a satisfactory manner (Matt. 7:12). Note therefore the duty and privilege of making known the divine message. How much do we know of the Bible? Are we obeying what we know? Are we giving it out to others?

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 10

No. 3

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 34

Third Quarter

August 25th, 1935

THE DIVINE KEEPER OF ISRAEL

Lesson Text: Psalms 120 to 127.

Golden Text: Psalm 125:2.

Bible School Reading: Psalm 120, 121.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—Josh. 1:1-9; Tuesday—Joel 2:15-20; Wednesday—Isaiah 62:1-7; Thursday—Jer. 31:1-9; Friday—Acts 22:6-16; Saturday—Matt. 8:23-27.

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY

This is the first of a series of fifteen psalms designated as "songs of degrees". Difference of opinion exists as to the significance of the title. One view commonly held is that these psalms were sung during the journeys of Jewish pilgrims to Jerusalem on the occasions of the great festivals (Deut. 16:16). Another view relates them to the degrees incident in the life of king Hezekiah (Is. 38:7, 8), intimating that they were meant to be used in part singing in the temple service. Hezekiah lived for fifteen years after his sickness (Is. 38:5), and he expressed his intention of singing his songs to the stringed instruments all the days of his life in the house of the Lord (Is. 38:20). The contents of the psalms might be related to incidents in his reign, but we cannot at this date be certain of this.

This psalm records the cry for deliverance of one in distress. If connected with Hezekiah it possibly relates to the invasion of Sennacherib (II Kings 19:3; Is. 37:3). Note the fact of the cry, the consciousness of being heard by God, the nature of the requested deliverance, the distraught condition of the psalmist, and the determined opposition of his enemies. Whether or not descriptive of the circumstances of a king, the psalm is suitable in its application to many a man more lowly placed. The tongue is a small member, but it can do a tremendous amount of harm (Jas. 3:6), and the peaceful heart desires to be delivered from its lies. Note the condition of the world with its deceitfulness, the state of the human heart (Jer. 17:9), and the refuge in God for all His own. Do we always tell the truth? Are we always fair to others in what we say about them?

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-ONE

In this psalm complete confidence in the Lord is described. In verses one and two the psalmist contrasts looking to the hills, with looking to the Lord. "From whence cometh my help? my help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth." God is not in the hills, but in the heavens. We look to the unseen for aid, not to any religious system of man connected with hills, or buildings. The anticipated blessing is then described, pertaining to complete divine protection. Note the confidence of the psalmist, the constant watchfulness of the Lord, and the preservation accorded God's servants, affecting feet, head, and way. Faith in God brings complete salvation in time and eternity. Observe the kindness of God, His almighty power, and His constant attention to the needs of His people. He is seen as Creator, Keeper, Protector, and Preserver. Note also the steadfastness, security, and salvation of the one who trusts in the Lord. He is saved from falling (I. Sam. 2:9; Jude 24), protected from the powers of nature, and preserved from all evil. Are we truly looking to God for help, or are we trusting in the devices of the flesh?

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-TWO

The joy of one going into the house of the Lord is described in this psalm. There is the invitation to enter the house, the standing within the gates of Jerusalem, wherein the house was built, the laudatory statement respecting the city, and the exhortation to pray for its peace. The Israelite loved Jerusalem because it was the city of his God, and therein stood the house of worship. There is no central place of worship in this day, but there are centres given up to this

purpose, which ought to be loved, and attended by the children of God (Heb. 10:25). Note the nature and purpose of true worship, the joy and blessing attending the same, the duty and privilege of inviting others to attend such a service, and the need of prayer connected therewith. The presence of God sanctifies places (Ex. 3:5). They become associated with Him, and His people love to be found in them. How often should we attend the house of God? How should we behave when we attend?

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THREE

This psalm records an earnest appeal for divine aid by one suffering the scorn of the wicked. In it we note the humility, wisdom, and confidence, of the psalmist; his sad condition; the source of his help; and the nature of his petition. He looked to God for deliverance (II. Sam. 22:2). Children of God may expect the opposition of enemies (John 15:19), but they may also be confident of victory in Christ (John 16:33). Observe the identity of the psalmist's foes, and his attitude of supplication. He took the place of a servant before a master, and of a maid before a mistress: lowly, self-surrendered, obedient, and patient; and he waited on God. It is such a position which gains the favour of God. His earnestness and definiteness may also be noted. How do we act when facing the scorn of the world?

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FOUR

This is a psalm in praise of divine deliverance. The people of God were evidently in a desperate condition, when the Lord came to their assistance and saved them from the power of their enemies. This happened in the reign of Hezekiah (II Kings 19:35); and at other times in their history—and similar deliverances have occurred in individual experiences. When the enemy came in like a flood, the Spirit of God has lifted up a standard against them (Is. 59:19). Note the figures of speech used to denote the frustrated victory of foes; emphasizing the importance and essential nature of the deliverance. It was great, opportune, necessary, joyful, complete, and divine; and as a consequence, confidence in God was increased, testimony was given to His power, encouragement was given to others, and salvation from destruction was experienced. Do we have any real definite experience of divine deliverance?

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE

The blessedness of those who trust in the Lord is set forth in this psalm. They "shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever". The Lord is roundabout them; He sustains them in trials (I. Cor. 10:13); and rewards them with peace (Phil. 4:7). Note the reasonableness and wisdom of trusting implicitly in God, the divine protection afforded such an one, and the eternal permanence of such a life (I. John 2:17). Are we experiencing the peace which comes from complete trust in God?

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SIX

This psalm records rejoicing over divine deliverance from captivity, probably relating to victory during the Assyrian invasion (II Kings 19:32-37). The effect of the deliverance on the Israelites, and the heathen, is stated; and the consequence of it is made clear in the sowing and reaping (vs. 5, 6; Gal. 6:7). Note the great joy of those who were delivered, the glory given to God by them, and the testimony to the power of God manifest to the heathen. Spiritually, the teaching may be related to any experience of divine deliverance, either at conversion or later on in life; and the sowing and reaping may be applied to Christian activities. Does the world see anything of divine power in our attitude and actions?

PSALM ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-SEVEN

The necessity for entire dependence on God is emphasized in this psalm, and the blessing of such implicit trust is shown. God is needed as builder and protector, and those whose dependence is in Him can sleep confidently without worry or care. Hezekiah knew something about this, and many another child of God since then. The part relating to children may have its application in Hezekiah's experience. According to tradition, and it would seem also from Scripture, he almost died without issue, as Manasseh, who succeeded him, was not born until three years after his recovery (II Kings 21:1).

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

Calvin, Toronto

Services are continued in the Revival Tent every night, except Monday, by the Calvin Baptist Church, Toronto. Last week Rev. W. E. Atkinson, Secretary-Treasurer of the Union, was the speaker, and he is continuing until Friday the second of August. Rev. M. B. Gillion was the special speaker for two weeks previously. In spite of the hot weather there were good attendances at the tent. One man advanced in years was very clearly and definitely saved. The people of God were revived, and all who attended were richly blessed through the faithful preaching of the gospel of our salvation. The pastor, Rev. Frank Roblin, desires the prayers of our readers for this evangelistic effort.

Wanted: A Rain-Proof House!

It is now the rainy season in Liberia, where our Missionaries are faithfully proclaiming the gospel. But they have many difficulties to hinder them, and we publish below a letter from Mr. Percy Clubine, dated June 11th. "It is cheering to know that the Executive and constituency at large are considering erecting permanent buildings at New Cess. With the present style of buildings we are continually busy repairing when we should be free to publish the gospel abroad throughout the villages. For example, when I returned to Géah-bar Zondo in February I had planned to do regular evangelistic work among the villages not in our immediate vicinity every week-end. Friday and Saturday the boys are free from school and we had chosen these days for short trekking trips every week. I soon found, however, that there was so much work to be done about the mission that neither I nor the boys could get away. I found that

The White Ants

had eaten off every post under the floors of the house. Not having money to hire town men, I had to set the school boys at it. Before we were finished the work had extended over three or four weeks. A hundred or more posts had to be cut, toted from the bush, and put in after the old ones were removed. The piazza posts were eaten off at the ground and had to be torn out and replaced with new. In some cases new joists had to be put in under the floors because the bugs had eaten the whole post from top to bottom and also had devoured the joist all but the shell. The main corner posts are also for the most part gone at the bottom and should be replaced, but since this entails a demolition of the walls at the corner, I have left them until Mr. Mellish shall arrive so that he can advise. We thatched half of the school, which was as much as time and money would allow. The house should have been re-roofed also but we shall have to try to get through somehow, for it cannot be done now. The house here is four years old and has had two roofs already. The natives have told us that a cheaper way would be to buy zinc, which is corrugated iron at home. Whenever it rains it becomes interesting to see where

New Leaks

have suddenly developed. I am often at my wit's end to know where to find tins or basins or pans to put up in the attic to catch the drips. Fancy coming in from school one rainy afternoon to find that the 'windows of the roof' had opened above my air-tight trunk and that the top was flooded with water. It is a wooden trunk, and I am afraid that the wet will soften the glue, or at least cause the boards to warp. In this trunk I keep my Canadian clothes and other precious things which must be kept free from moths and moisture. On another occasion it was one of the beds that was soaked, and rest assured that mattresses are hard to dry when it rains every day for weeks at a time. A few nights ago I was awakened by the drip, drip, drip of rain on the ceiling over my head. I climbed out of bed slipped on my slippers and jerked the bed into the middle of the room and went to sleep again, after wondering if I had escaped the rain after all. One afternoon I was working at my desk when a stream of water suddenly decided to descend from a crack in the ceiling on to my work. The ink began to run immediately, but having a blotter handy enabled me to save the work. Then I had to scurry around and climb up the ladder to put a tin in place to catch the drip. The cupboard containing my tinned food is under a favourite leaky

place. There is no other place for the cupboard, and the wet rusts the tins so that the food spoils. We have tried to patch the roof without success for a long time, and a day or two ago one of the boys, Sammy Hwi-pu-ga (Sammy Civilized-white-man) by name, tore the old thatch off the spot and put new there. It seems to be holding. The boys have become tired of patching and re-patching, and they say that the thatch is 'rotten too much'. Certainly we shall have to have a new roof next year, even if it necessitates an expenditure of several pounds in thatch and labour."

Our readers may judge for themselves how badly permanent houses are needed by our Missionaries. We have some money in hand for this purpose, but need several hundred dollars more. Let us have your contribution as soon as possible, so that as soon as the dry season commences the work may be begun.

Rest Acres Summer Camp and Bible Conference

The one and only Summer Camp and Bible Conference held under the auspices of the Union has come and gone.

The Place

Rest Acres Reserve is a beautiful private ground owned and operated by Miss F. Gage of Hamilton, and is located about eight miles from Brantford, near Burford, Ontario. The facilities for just such a Conference are excellent and in many ways surpass many older Conference grounds on this continent. The commodious auditorium with its several flanking cottages makes a delightfully quiet and pleasant place to hold services. The shady glens and rippling streams and illuminated waterfalls add much to the beauty of the grounds and give it a wholesomeness seldom found except by the seashore.

The Time

The Conference opened on Sunday, June 30th, with an afternoon service at which Dr. P. W. Philpott spoke. In the evening, Rev. Alex. Thomson, B.D., President of the Union, spoke and brought a soul-stirring address.

The Picnic

Monday, July 1st, Dominion Day, was doubtless a great day. Hundreds of people came from various points in Ontario to enjoy a day of sociability and good will. The afternoon was spent in games and races under the supervision of the Picnic Committee. In the evening about six hundred people gathered to hear Dr. Philpott speak on the subject, "Why loose ye the colt?" It was a soul-refreshing message given in his own inimitable way which greatly strengthened the spirits of the people.

Tuesday came, and the camp routine started. Dr. J. J. VanGorder, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Butler, Pa., called to say he was in Brantford and the Secretary was despatched to bring him out to the Conference grounds. He is a rare soul. So kind and genial is he that one marvels to think of him as a controversialist, and yet he is. He has been the chief thorn in the flesh of the State Convention officials for many years. Each time he has triumphed over them and won out in his own church. Will anyone forget his sane and sensible teaching of the Word of God? It was so clear and distinct that the wayfaring man, though a fool, could not err therein. For four mornings he broke the bread of Life to the campers and from their eager faces and satisfied looks they all greatly enjoyed his rich messages. Rev. C. J. Loney spoke in the evening, and a good time was enjoyed by all. It was difficult because the crowd of the previous evening had vanished away, but Mr. Loney never faltered in his address, and with an unwavering confidence poured forth the eloquence of his soul. Seldom have we heard him when he was better.

Wednesday evening Rev. Jas. McGinlay spoke. The writer was not present as he had to be in Orillia with Mr. and Mrs. Hancox and Miss Stacey. The Kinsman Quartet was present and rendered several selections.

Thursday was another good day. The gathering was small, but Mr. Loney brought another good and refreshing message.

The morning sessions each day were in charge of the President, and he graciously gave most of the time to Dr. VanGorder.

The Friday evening messages were brought by the three Missionaries returning to Liberia. Miss Lane spoke first,

after which Mrs. Mellish spoke. Mr. Mellish spoke from the Missionary slides and a lasting impression was made on those present. Six of our Liberian workers were present. Led by Miss Stacey, they sang some of the Choruses in Bassa, and also Liberian English, to the delight of those present. This was the only service which in numbers and offerings lived up to the expectations of the Committee. It was a great night and will long be remembered by our people.

Saturday, the day was free, and the Campers were entertained by the President in many ways. The evening came, and with it our esteemed friend and brother, Mr. J. H.

Hunter, who gave his lecture on "East and West of the Jordan". It was the most informative presentation of life and places in Palestine to which it has been my pleasure to listen. Every church should hear it and see the beautiful pictures of the Holy Land.

Sunday, July 7th, was beyond doubt a wonderful day. The auditorium was comfortably filled afternoon and evening. Dr. T. T. Shields brought two great and inspiring messages. The one in the evening will live as one of the great masterpieces of Biblical exposition.

(To be continued)

What Others Say of "Other Little Ships"

THE EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN

Toronto

"Other Little Ships". By T. T. Shields, D.D., Toronto: Hunter-Rose Co. \$1.50.

Here is a volume that every lover of great preaching will hasten to secure. The author of it has been the storm centre of controversy for years, and many of the fourteen sermons included have no doubt been born in tribulation. A sub-title of the book tells us that they are "freighted with comfort". Many will find solace and strength in the pages of this volume. It takes its title from the first sermon, which is one of the best in the book. It is foolish, however, to make comparisons with such rich, spiritual material before us. Dr. Shields is a great preacher. Of that there can hardly be any question, and here is evangelical preaching at its highest and best.

THE WATCHMAN-EXAMINER

New York

"Other Little Ships". By T. T. Shields. The Hunter-Rose Company, Limited: \$1.50.

Preaching is still the most fascinating art in the world. Millions listen to sermonic themes every week. The rich discoveries of the study and the still richer treasures of personality and attestations of divine power make the sermon the center of Protestant worship. Thus books of sermons are interesting to vast numbers of people. When the writer of sermons in such a dramatic and interesting personality as the popular Toronto pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields, there is an added incentive to get the book. Dr. Shields does not disappoint his readers. He is not the power as a writer that he is as a preacher. However, the silent, written word reveals the richness of mind and great spiritual purpose of the author. These sermons were spoken to uncountable multitudes in churches and over the radio. While lacking the vibrant personality which thrilled the hearers as

they were preached, they hold to the truth of the Gospel, are stimulating to thought, and the heart is frequently moved by the simple appeal and the common form of illustration which Dr. Shields uses. We hope many

readers will profit by the thoughtful earnestness of these sermons. They are refreshingly human and deeply spiritual.

THE MOODY MONTHLY

Chicago

"Other Little Ships". By T. T. Shields. 261 pages, 7¼ x 5 inches. Hunter-Rose Company, Toronto. C.H.B.

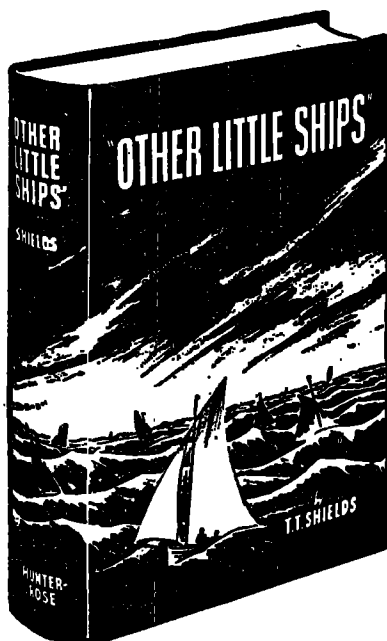
Sermons of this well known Toronto preacher are now being published weekly in THE GOSPEL WITNESS and some of them are reprinted in *The Christian Herald* of London. The selections made for this particular volume are those which have been repeated from the pulpit and reprinted, and in many instances the supply of copies exhausted. The simple message that gives the volume this title was printed four times, and the sermons entitled, *Is It Nothing to You? Eternal Life, and The Second Mile*, have likewise been reprinted in various papers, reaching a circulation of hundreds of thousands. The reader will appreciate in all these sermons a devotion to the gospel message and an unusual appeal to and an understanding of human nature.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES

Philadelphia

"Other Little Ships". By T. T. Shields. (The Gospel Witness, 130 Gerrard St., Toronto, Can., \$1.50.)

It is not at all difficult to credit the announcement regarding this book,—that three of its sermon-talks were each published four times in a noted religious journal, the supply of copies in each case becoming immediately exhausted. A great variety of subjects is herein presented; sometimes those particularly suited to young people, again, that which makes the theologian prick up his ears; here, a ready dart is thrust at the "philosophical simpleton" who decries our "slaughter-house religion"; there, parents are shown the result of using such modernized commandments as, "Children, obey your parents"—"I'll give you a penny if you do." But most often the weary and disheartened are addressed, the Mr. Fearings and Ready-to-halts in church and home life,—those too seasick to crawl on deck and see that "other little ships" are likewise buffeted by storm of wind and wave. The book abounds in seed-thoughts: "There is a tendency to welcome all the inhabitants of Shundem and yet to have no place for the prophet of God." "Never has God asked anyone to work for him, but with him." These sermons are sound in exposition, inimitable in illustration, and brimful of well-mixed admonition and comfort.



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