

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.

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

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Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada.

Vol. 14, No. 19

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 19, 1935

Whole Number 696

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

THE END OF ANTICHRIST

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, September 15th, 1935

(Stenographically Reported)

"So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

"Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

"Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

"Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

"When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."—II. Thessalonians 1:4-10.

"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."—II. Thessalonians 2:7, 8.

In this place, without apology, we confess our conviction that the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is the inspired, and therefore infallible, and consequently supremely authoritative, word of God. We know what that means—but we are undisturbed by those who put us in the class of "unlearned and ignorant men". So be it. We are willing to be accounted fools for Christ's sake.

I remind you that that attitude toward the Bible puts upon us an obligation to seek to discover with all diligence, under the illumination of the Spirit of Truth, exactly what the Bible teaches. We are not to read into the Word of God our own theories, nor give our imaginations play and conjure up some picture of the future to be clothed allegedly with prophetic sanction: we must believe and teach only those things which the Word of God clearly and unmistakably supports. Acceptance of the Bible as the word of God logically involves a recognition of its supreme authority; and an acceptance of that principle imposes upon us the obligation not to

handle the Word of God deceitfully, but to endeavour, so far as it is humanly possible, with the help of the Divine Spirit, to understand exactly what the Bible teaches. Upon that principle I shall endeavour to proceed this evening.

Last Sunday evening we observed that the passages of Scripture which specifically mention antichrist, attribute one distinctive characteristic to him, and to the spirit of antichrist wherever it is found, namely, that it denies the reality of the Incarnation, with its inevitable, logically, corollary, the essential Deity of Jesus Christ. The spirit of antichrist denies that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, that God has been manifested in the flesh. Further, we observed that from the beginning until now there have been many antichrists. There were in John's day. That is to say, the spirit of antichrist has always opposed the Spirit of Christ, and from the beginning has denied the cardinal, central, truth of the Christian revelation, that the Son of God is come. That denial has been age-long. We observed, further, last

Sunday, that there is, according to the teaching of Scripture, a "mystery of iniquity" already working. It was so in Paul's day—not fully manifested, but a system of some sort, a confederation of evil powers; "principalities, and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world", always at work, against which Paul says in one place "we wrestle"; hence the necessity of putting on the whole armour of God.

But that "mystery of iniquity" is to find its culmination and climax in some towering personality; for although the lawless one of Thessalonians is not called antichrist, surely we are justified in identifying him with the antichrist that shall come. Who else could he be?

When Jesus Christ came into the world, God provided Himself with witnesses, which were "chosen before of God". The Lord Jesus "shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God". Toward the conclusion of that period of manifestation of Himself as the Risen One, He said to His disciples, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." That is to say, the Lord Jesus committed to His church the great truth that the Son of God is come. And, said He, "Witness to that fact; that is your mission." "Whom say ye that I am?" And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

That is the gospel summed up. As Paul has it elsewhere, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." That apostolic witness to the reality of the Incarnation; and to the truth of the essential oneness of Jesus Christ with the Father and the Holy Ghost, has been perpetuated through all the ages. "We are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." The Lord Jesus said, "I am going away, and during my absence, during the period of my invisibility, the Spirit of God will be with you, and by His help you shall bear witness to the fact that I have come." And as the antagonism of the spirit of antichrist will find its culmination in the revelation of antichrist, so the age-long witness of the blood-bought church of Christ to the reality of the salvation that is in His Incarnate Son will find its culmination in the "glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ". Sooner or later antichrist and Christ will meet, and the powers of antichrist will do battle with Him Who, blessed be His name, is "stronger than the strong man armed". In that great day He will take from him his armour wherein he trusted, and spoil his goods. That is the line of my argument this evening.

I.

I begin my exposition with this proposition, THAT THE SPIRIT OF ANTICHRIST WILL PERSIST UNTIL ANTICHRIST HIMSELF IS REVEALED. That means to say that the gospel will always be opposed. You cannot make the gospel acceptable to the carnal mind. The gospel is really a summary, a full-orbed revelation, of the law of

God—as of the love of God—for the law found its complete fulfilment in the person of Jesus Christ. All that God wants a man to be is disclosed in the revelation of His Son, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven. His righteousness is the measure of our righteousness. "To be conformed to the image of his Son", is the end of all faith; and it is the function of the gospel to effect it.

When Jesus Christ is presented, the carnal mind is "not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be". You may be the most expert psychologist in the world, but you cannot so present the gospel that it will be acceptable to the unregenerate human heart. The spirit of antichrist will see to that. And, indeed, whenever the gospel is preached, as surely as the Holy Ghost is present to energize it, and make it effectual, so is the spirit of antichrist present to deny its truth, and to dissuade men from its reception.

That being so, we need not expect that through the preaching of the gospel the acceptance of Christ will become universal; for until He shall come, the spirit of antichrist will be here. Many such spirits are here now, and will persist unto the end of the chapter. This is a long war in which we have enlisted. The victory is not to be won by a few battles. Thank God, it is to end—and of that I shall speak presently. These two forces of good and evil, light and darkness, compete with each other; but they will come into conflict at last. The age-long war will reach its climax in a great battle in which evil will be defeated.

Therefore, the children of faith will, to the end of the chapter, need such patience as the apostle here so highly commends. He says, "We glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure." Those of you who believe have need of patience, that you may ultimately inherit the promises. It is not an easy thing to "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth". It never was: it never will be. Persecutions and tribulations are the lot of the children of faith inevitably, because, I repeat, the spirit of antichrist is with us, and will see to it that this vile world shall never be a friend to grace, to help us on to God. If you are travelling a rough road, give God thanks for it. If it is paved and easy, and all is comfortable, you may seriously consider whether you are on the right track or not. It is the infallible evidence of faithfulness to Jesus Christ that a believer is subjected to persecution and tribulation.

I know that the preacher nowadays is expected to be what they call in some quarters a "good mixer", to be able to meet with all the clubs, and to be "hail fellow well met" with multitudes of people who know not Christ. It is no compliment to a man of God when he is welcome in the society of ungodly men. They may seek his counsel in distress, but in their hours of recreation and lightness, they will not want him if he is what he ought to be. It is the mission of the church to bear witness against the evil of the world that lieth, the Scripture says, "in the wicked one", the lawless one. Satan is called "the prince of this world". And when antichrist comes, he will come in the power of Satan: his working will be after the power of Satan. He is a confederate of his, his generalissimo.

There is one truth of the gospel to which all other truths of the gospel are related, that is especially objectionable to the spirit of antichrist. Have you observed that you may speak of the Lord Jesus as a Teacher, as a

Reformer, as an Example—in almost any character you like but one—and people will offer no objection. But there is one truth against which the spirit of antichrist always manifests his antagonism. Preach the Deity of Christ, that “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself”, that the blood of the cross was not merely the blood of a man, but the wealth of the universe in solution, that flowed from the heart of Incarnate Deity—preach that, and you will find that even the mildest people will gnash their teeth at it.

A lady said to me not very long ago, that in a company of friends she was asked what church she attended, and she replied, “I go to Jarvis Street Church.” Whereupon a woman present said, “Jarvis Street! Do not go there. I have heard that man over the radio. I cannot endure him.” “Why not?” “He says that Jesus Christ is God.” What an offence! What an unpardonable offence to declare that “the Son of God is come”!

I wish I had time to develop that truth further, but I leave it with you for your further thought. Preaching that is worth anything ought to make people think, and keep them thinking. And I declare to you that, if it be so that the Son of God is come, that Jesus is the Son of God, that therefore He was the summary of the Old Testament, the Word made flesh, He stamps with His imprimatur the entire Scripture. If that be so, the Bible is the word of God! God has spoken! It is no wonder men hate that cardinal truth. But that is the spirit of antichrist,—more of that in a moment or two. “The Son of God is come.” That is the great truth against which all the forces of evil are arrayed, and will be arrayed to the end of Time.

II.

Let me take you a step further, and point out that THIS AGE-LONG ANTAGONISM TO CHRIST, TO THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL, WILL FIND ITS CULMINATION IN THE COMING OF THE ANTICHRIST HIMSELF, in the revelation of the lawless one. That being so, *we must not expect the gradual inauguration of a millennium of righteousness.* That is why I am a premillennialist. I do not know so much about the Millennium as many of my brethren—and if they think they know all about it, and are perfectly sure, I shall not quarrel with them. But whatever the Millennium may mean, whatever its programme, I cannot see from the authoritative Word any promise of a reign of universal righteousness short of the personal coming of the Lord Jesus; for the reason that this condition which I have described will continue until antichrist shall come.

The revelation of antichrist *will be preceded by a very general apostasy.* Do not be angry with me if I do not agree with you, for I have just as much right to be angry with you for not agreeing with me. It is six of one, and half a dozen of another. But I call your attention to the fact that in his letter to the Thessalonians the inspired apostle does name a particular condition which must be precedent to the coming of the Lord. And he tells the Thessalonian Christians that they are not to be carried away even as “by letter as from us”. I think he refers to his first epistle. “Do not misunderstand what I say to you. That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first.” There has always been a falling away. John said of people in his day, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have

continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not of us.”

And he said that in connection with the principle laid down for our guidance in the identification of antichrist, and his spirit. That has always been so. It is well that we should not lose our perspective, and that we should recognize that there have been periods of great spiritual declension before our day. I am not prepared to say that this is the final apostasy. I know nobody who can say that authoritatively. But I do call attention to the fact that it is all but universal, that such apostasy was never so widespread before.

Let me ask you, What is the cardinal principle that Christendom, churches of every name, deny? Do not think I am assuming that I belong to a company of people who are any better than others. Frankly, I have had to dissociate myself from many people called Baptists; and I admit that I have more in common with some Roman Catholics than I have with some Baptists. But, taking the professing church of Christ as a whole, of all denominations, and the rapid spread of what we are now accustomed to call Modernism, to what does it lead in the final analysis? You say, “A denial of the authority of Scripture?” Yes. But with that, liberty to deny the record of the virgin birth of Christ; to delete everything from the Book that magnifies the Deity of Christ. In the final analysis, Modernism is antichristian, I care not where it is found. It may be in the colleges of the various denominations in this city, or in McMaster University, or somewhere else. I know it is in the majority of our Baptist theological seminaries throughout the Continent: in Chicago, Rochester, Colgate, Crozier,—all of them. They are not in any sense Christian: they are antichristian. They implicitly or explicitly deny that supreme fact that Jesus is God.

Whoever the man is, whatever his scholastic standing, I will dare to tell any man, on the authority of the infallible Word of God, if he rejects and repudiates the truth that Jesus Christ is God, he is not of God, but is of antichrist.

I have an opinion, an interesting opinion to me. I will not be dogmatic about it, still less oracular. This second chapter of the epistle says that “God shall send them strong delusion, that they shall believe a lie”, who believed not the truth, but who had pleasure in unrighteousness. A “strong delusion”! There was a time, when I was younger, and had not investigated the matter as I have been privileged to do in later years, when I was half afraid of this thing called Modernism. When first of all, in my earlier ministry at least, we were accustomed to speak of it as the “higher criticism”, I was afraid of it. It is the denial of the supernatural, issuing in the denial of the greatest of all miracles, the manifestation of God in the flesh. I used to ask myself the question, Can it be that these allegedly wise men, these scholars, have found access to some storehouse of knowledge from which some of us are excluded? Is there any possibility of their being right? My mind asked that question: my heart said, “We know that the Son of God is come.” And because I knew Him, I said, “It cannot possibly be true.” I have studied it since, with the result that I refused to admit the intellectual superiority of the system.

I believe that the mother of it all, the prolific mother of all modern heresies, is that strange philosophy—for it is not science—which, without uncharity, may be de-

nominated the philosophy of fools, and which is called Evolution. There is nothing in the whole field of human history, observation, or experience, to justify its acceptance for a moment. All the facts of the case are entirely against it. And yet men of unquestioned mental ability and intellectual keenness and vigour accept it. Why do they accept it?

An election campaign is in progress. You would not say that the men of this party, or of that, are mentally superior to their opponents, would you? I know men of all parties, I think; and if their brains could be weighed, and their mental capacity determined by some sort of instrument, I dare say we should find they were fairly evenly balanced. But they differ in view. The men who have given themselves up to this or that party, will accept whatever the representative of that party says as being the final word; and of the thousands of people who will vote in the next election, I do not believe that five per cent will think. They will go like sheep to the slaughter—or to something else. People do not think, do not want to think. We receive the truth only as we love the truth.

Years ago there was a woman in this church for whom everybody had the profoundest respect. And there was a man whose record we had discovered, who paid court to this lady. My then assistant came to me and said, "I have this man's record. I know that from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet he is a wastrel. It would be ruin for that woman were she to marry him. What ought I to do?" I replied, "It is a difficult situation, but you have the facts. Go and see her, and tell her what you actually know. Then you will not be responsible for what follows." He went! That woman had always been his friend, always had she been ready to receive his counsel in other matters. But when he laid before her all the facts as he knew them—not theories, but the record of facts—and told her she might better commit suicide than marry that man, a cloud came over her countenance, and looking at him somewhat contemptuously she said, "I do not care what you say, I shall marry him." And out the door he went. Why? She could not believe the truth because she loved a lie.

That is where the Bible puts the responsibility: it is "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness". Men who have received not the love of the truth can accept a strong delusion like the doctrine of evolution, and every other antichristian representation. They do not want to admit that they are lost and undone, guilty sinners before God; and they are glad to escape responsibility, and are willing to accept anything that will save the conscience, and enable them to go on in their iniquity. This rejection of the salvation of Christ, and the widespread opposition to the gospel, are due, in the final analysis, to an unwillingness to consecrate one's self to God, and accept the consequences of that consecration.

At last this mystery of iniquity will bear fruit, and I submit to you that *the spread of Modernism has certainly done much to bring about the present state of almost universal lawlessness.* Modernism is a denial of the supernatural, but it is also a denial of all objective authority. "We will not have the will of God; we will be a law unto ourselves. If Jesus Christ is come, that is another matter; but if we deny that, we are our own masters, and may live as we please."

Do you know that the hotbeds, the culturebeds, of every kind of political heresy, culminating in red Com-

munist, are not in the slums, but in our universities? It is these godless professors who are propagating the damnable heresies that are undermining the family, the state, and all international relationships. The Baptists of the United States have come out openly, led by Rochester University, in their expressions of sympathy with Socialism which leads to Communism. Why? Because of the inoculation of the people with this virus, the very spirit of antichrist, the denial of a revealed religion of divine authority. So will it continue; and this widespread teaching has prepared the way for the present lawlessness. Thank God, we have not come to such a pitch in this country, or in England; but how soon that sort of thing may develop if we go on, I do not know.

But the lawless one will come at last. I said to you last Sunday evening that I do not know when he will come, nor how he will come, nor from what system he will emerge. Nor would I dare to say that this is the final apostasy. But inasmuch as the Spirit of God will abide with His church until antichrist shall be revealed, I can see no reason why there should not be a revival right up to the last day. As a matter of fact, there is a principle here—I wonder can I make it clear to you?—"We ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer." That is to say, the Lord maintains a witness to the truth of Christ in opposition to the spirit of antichrist, in order that He might be just, that no one should be permitted to go the way of darkness without warning.

I believe, while I cannot quote any specific promises to the effect, that the general principle of the New Testament might well be construed as leading us to expect that before the culmination of evil in the revelation of antichrist, God will, for Himself, raise up a special witness, as He has done through all the ages; so that when at last antichrist shall be revealed, He will still have a great company of believing souls on earth to bear witness against all untruth.

III.

May I lead you to this concluding observation. **ANTI-CHRIST WILL BE DESTROYED BY THE COMING OF CHRIST.** Again I say, do not be displeased if what I say runs counter to your preconceptions on this matter. Reject what I say if you find it is not in accord with the teaching of the Word of God. But the inspired apostle here says that that wicked one shall be revealed, "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming". His coming will be so bright that by the brightness of His coming, He will destroy antichrist.

I do not think He will come secretly. *The tribulations of the people of God will continue until they culminate in the great and unparalleled tribulation.* You say, "We are going to escape it"? Blessings on you; I hope you will. I should like to go with you. I have no objection on the ground of the palatability of that doctrine. But I have searched the Scriptures in vain to find a shred of justification for the position. If I am wrong, I wish you would present your argument; for remember, our text says, "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us"—when?—"when

the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." That is how He will come at last.

And, my dear friends, when He comes, so far as the unrighteous are concerned, *He will inaugurate a day of vengeance*: "Taking vengeance on them that know not God." Again some of you will disagree with me, and again I must ask you not to be displeased. I read deliberately that passage from Peter, and in saying what I now say, I dissent from many of my closest friends, but *I cannot find in the New Testament the remotest suggestion that the dispensation of grace will be prolonged for anybody beyond the revelation of Jesus Christ*. You say, "I have always been taught the reverse; that the Jews are going to be saved after Jesus Christ comes." Some of my friends have told me that after the church, the salt of the earth, the light of the world, and the Spirit of God, shall have been withdrawn (The hinderer, is sometimes said to be the Spirit of God, Who will terminate His specific ministry with the coming of Christ)—after the church is gone, and the Spirit is withdrawn, the world is to witness the greatest revival it has ever seen. I do not believe a word of it. I do not believe there will be a chance for mortal man after Jesus Christ comes down the skies, be he Jew or Gentile.

Peter says, "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish." Why does He delay His coming? In order that people might be saved. But if millions were to be saved after His coming, then surely He would come quickly to inaugurate that great period of grace and salvation. Instead of that, Peter says, "I ask you to account that the long suffering of God is salvation, and that Christ delays His coming in order that people might be saved."

Furthermore, Peter said, "Even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things." In effect he says, "I am in perfect agreement with my beloved brother Paul when I tell you that He delays His coming for the salvation of men. When He shall come He will take vengeance on them that know not God; and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The greatest sinners of the world are not the men in the penitentiaries, not the men who stagger along the street drunk, not the men necessarily who are addicted to the sins of the flesh, vicious as they are. The greatest sinner on earth, and the man who deserves the righteous judgment of God without measure, is the man who rejects God's utmost, expressed in the gift of His Son—who "obey not the gospel". To refuse to receive Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, is the one sin that can unlock the gates of hell to any man, preacher, professor, or whoever he may be; and when Jesus Christ comes, He will vindicate our faith, and take "vengeance on them that . . . obey not the gospel".

Paul said, "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment . . . Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come." I should like to be on His side when He comes. I should like to be able to say, "Lord, I stuck to the Book. I believed the revelation Thou didst give us in Jesus Christ. I knew nothing but Jesus Christ, and

Him crucified. I did the best I could to make men understand that." Do you not think that a worthy ambition? You had better get on the winning side. When Jesus Christ shall come down the skies; when like the lightning, He comes, the blaze of His glory will shine upon this old earth. Modernism of every degree, unbelief of every sort, will wither; it will be blasted by the brightness of His coming. Saul of Tarsus did not believe until he heard a Voice from heaven saying, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." When He comes with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, "all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him". There will be an end of all unbelief then. Men, like devils, will "believe and tremble"—not unto the salvation of their souls, but that Jesus Christ is Judge.

He will come "to be glorified in his saints". "Glorified in his saints"! "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." I cannot understand how you and I could contribute to His glory, but we shall shine, we are told, "as the stars for ever and ever". Yes, and when the stars have burned themselves out, and the moon and the sun are no longer necessary—for the Lamb shall be all the glory of Immanuel's land—we shall still be shining.

"When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." I have read of political leaders in the present campaign going from place to place to speak, as being always greeted by great crowds. People go to hear what they already believe: the Liberals go to Liberal meetings; Conservatives to Conservative meetings; C.C.F.'s to C.C.F. meetings, and so on. The difficulty always is to get at the man who needs instruction in political matters. When a leader appears, what a fuss they make of him! There is loud applause, great clapping of hands. But when He Who is the King of kings shall come, He will "be admired in all them that believe"!

You think you love the Lord Jesus? "Yes; I love Him." You believe in Him? "Yes; I believe in Him." You believe He saves you? "Yes; I believe He saves me." You are satisfied with Him? "Yes; I am satisfied." But what a glorious day that will be when we shall see Him! How we shall admire Him! We shall outdo the Queen of Sheba, and say, "The half was not told."

The thing against which we contend, the spirit of anti-christ, is doomed. When Jesus Christ shall come, anti-christ shall be finally destroyed. Jesus Christ shall reign, and have "dominion from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth." This old earth is going to be renovated. Did you ever see a house that has been occupied by slovenly people? When they move out, along comes an army of painters, and plasterers, and carpenters—the whole house is transformed. Why? Somebody else is going there to live. When the Lord Jesus shall come, He will renovate this old earth—and it needs it. We shall admire Him, and reign with Him.

Are you a Christian? Have you been washed in the blood? Can you read your title clear to mansions in the sky? Are you sure you are saved? If that be so, you are an heir to glory, and on Christ's side. If you are not a Christian, you are on the side of anti-christ, and what a fearful doom awaits you! Will you cross over to-night? Come from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Receive Him Who is your Saviour, that you may be ready to welcome Him by and by as your King.

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 10

No. 4

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 40

Fourth Quarter

October 6th, 1935

A FATHER'S INSTRUCTION TO A SON

Lesson Text: Proverbs 4 to 7.

Golden Text: "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding."—Proverb 4:7.

Bible School Reading: Proverb 4:1-27.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—Ex. 20:1-17; Tuesday—I. Sam. 2:1-10; Wednesday—Is. 1:16-20; Thursday—Dan. 12:1-4; Friday—Titus 2:1-8; Saturday—Phil. 2:12-16.

THE BLESSING OF WISDOM (4:1-13)

The young may learn much from the experience of those who are older in years, and so be guided in the path of life, and guarded from its dangers. Some are wise enough to take advantage of this, and benefit therefrom; others foolishly despise this source of knowledge, and suffer the consequences thereof. Solomon, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit—assuming the part of a parent—gives advice to younger people which he had himself received from his father. Such advice relates to the procuring of wisdom, and its manifestation in the daily life. The importance of such instruction cannot be overestimated.

After a call to listen to instruction, and get wisdom, certain things are stated in reference to wisdom commendatory of its nature and benefits. It preserves, and keeps from evil, those who love it, and forsake it not. Note the way in which it does this: by its information, guidance, and warning. Observe also the One Who is the personification of wisdom (I. Cor. 1:30), and in Whom we must depend for preservation from evil (Matt. 1:21; Jude 24). Our salvation is dependent on the wisdom of a divine Person, not on that of any human being; therefore it is a Person we trust, and not simply a mode of conduct. Further exhortations follow, respecting the securing, exalting, and embracing wisdom; each with its promised reward; and the section closes with an earnest entreaty to give heed to instruction (vs. 7-13). Wisdom preserves, keeps, promotes, and honours, those who give heed thereto; and therefore gives evidence of its necessary presence in each truly successful life. God, the source of wisdom, is needed in the midst of life's turmoil and dangers. How may we receive divine wisdom?

AVOIDANCE OF THE WICKED PATH (4:14-27)

Wisdom is manifest in both negative and positive aspects of life: in avoiding wickedness, as well as in doing righteousness. The negative aspect is brought to our attention in this section. Several phrases are used in emphasizing the need for the avoidance of the way of the wicked, such as, "Enter not"; "Go not"; "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away". These plainly teach complete separation from that which is displeasing unto God (2 Cor. 6:17). Note the dangers of non-compliance with such instruction; and the blessings of obedience thereto. The duty of the child of God is to bear witness against evil, and keep himself unspotted from the world (Eph. 5:11; James 1:27). The way of the wicked is then contrasted with that of the righteous (vs. 16-19). The former is one of mischief, violence, darkness, and stumbling; the latter of shining light. This may be observed in everyday life. A series of exhortations relating to the control of the person concludes the chapter. These deal with the heart, the lips, the eyes, and the feet; all of which require attention if the life is to be well-pleasing unto God. Note the necessity for a right condition of heart, a truly surrendered will, a determined, sanctified purpose, and divinely-controlled thoughts, words, and deeds; God desires works in addition to faith; a life with its actions, as well as mental assent to a form of teaching (Rom. 12:1, 2; James 2:14-26). How may we be controlled by God?

THE STRANGE WOMAN AND OTHER EXHORTATIONS (chapters 5 to 7)

In the previous section, warning has been given respecting wickedness in general: in this section specific sins are mentioned, beginning with that of incontinence (5:1-23). After a call to give heed to instruction, a description is given of the strange woman. Her subtle appearance and appeal are indicated, together with her dreadful end. These particulars are followed by a warning to keep away from such a wicked woman, reasons being given. Strong teaching should be given to scholars of all ages respecting moral and righteous living. Note the useless lament of the one who failed to give heed to instruction (vs. 11-13). Prevention is better than remedy. An exhortation in emphasis of chastity follows (vs. 15-21), after which the end of the wicked is stated. Observe the attitude of the Lord toward the ways of man. He "pondereth all his goings". There is a warning in this, as well as comfort and instruction. There is rich blessing in pleasing Him, and sorrow and eternal loss in going contrary to His will.

A series of exhortations and lessons is then given, before the subject of the strange woman is again dealt with. The first of these relates to suretyship, concerning which warning is given, and the one snared by it is urged to deliver himself therefrom (6:1-5). To become surety for another is esteemed foolish; and the experience of many a person will accord with this finding. The second exhortation relates to laziness (vs. 6-11). The lazy person is bidden to go to the ant, and learn from that lowly insect respecting insight and industry. The ant makes provision for its future needs, and works diligently toward the accomplishment of its object. The sluggard with his love of sleep, and lack of industry, comes to poverty. Note the New Testament teaching respecting those who refuse to work (2 Thess. 3:10), and its command concerning spiritual activities (I. Cor. 15:58). The third section concerns the wicked person whose actions and end are described (vs. 12-15). His end corresponds with his actions. Note its suddenness, and its irremediable nature. The fourth section records seven things hated by God (vs. 16-19). They are: a proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked imaginations, feet that are swift in running in mischief, a false witness that speaks lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren. Note the care with which even Christian people must guard against manifesting an attitude, and doing deeds, disapproved by God. They are enjoined to put off the works of the flesh, which pertain to the old nature, and put on the new man with his deeds which are energized by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:20-32). Observe the fact of God's hatred of all sin, and its significance respecting the attitude and life of men.

The second half of this chapter, and the whole of the following one, again deal with the strange woman, and give warning concerning her. There is first an admonition to keep the parental commandment, with the blessings which would follow (vs. 20-24). It is only the fool who declines to be warned of danger. Wisdom is manifest in the avoidance of evil. Note the benefits to be derived from obedience to the commands of God; among which are found, instruction, guidance, consolation, joy, encouragement, and satisfaction. Respecting the strange woman, warning is given concerning her means of attracting sinners, the consequences of sin are set forth, and an example is given of the arts of this wicked woman in relation to a foolish young man. Note the plainness of speech used in this warning, the heinous nature of sin, and the terrible consequences. God does not gloss over in any realm. He commands against it, punished His people for indulging in it; and from all sins of uncleanness the people of God are enjoined to flee. Purity is the ideal, and only as we remain pure can we have fellowship with God (I. Peter 1:16). How may we guard the inner life from impure thoughts and imaginations?

REMEMBER

Annual Convention Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec

JARVIS STREET CHURCH, TORONTO

on

OCTOBER 22nd to 24th, 1935

WILL PROFESSOR MARSHALL RETURN TO McMASTER?

In our issue of July 25th we published the following news item from the July 23rd issue of *The Evening Telegram*, of Toronto:

"Rev. L. H. Marshall, Leicester, Baptist minister, who formerly was professor of the New Testament history at McMaster University, Hamilton, was invited yesterday to return to the university to take over the professorship of New Testament interpretation. Professor Marshall is a native of Luth, Lincolnshire, and has held ministries at Liverpool and Coventry."

In our issue of August 22nd we printed an announcement appearing in *The Canadian Baptist* of August 8th as follows:

Professor of Theology Appointed

"The Senate and Board of Governors of McMaster University are pleased to announce the acceptance by Rev. L. H. Marshall, B.A., B.D., of Leicester, England, of the appointment to the chair of Christian Theology, recently tendered to him by the Senate, and which was made vacant in April last by the death of Prof. A. L. McCrimmon, M.A., LL.D. Mr. Marshall is admirably equipped for the task to which he comes. During his former connection with the Faculty of Theology (1925-1930), first in the Chair of Practical Theology and latterly as Professor of New Testament Interpretation, he gave ample proof of his rare gifts as a teacher and his effectiveness as a preacher. Coming as a pastor of long practical experience, a thorough scholar, a warm evangelical, he will maintain the high traditions associated with the chair of Christian Theology in McMaster University. The governing bodies of the University desire to express their satisfaction that such a distinguished Christian scholar and devout expositor of the Gospel returns to the Faculty of Theology.

"Prof. Marshall will assume his duties in January, 1936, at the opening of the second term of the coming session.

(Signed)

ALBERT MATTHEWS, Chairman.
HOWARD P. WHIDDEN, Chancellor.
JOHN MacNEILL, Principal."

In *The Baptist Times*, of London, described as the "official journal of the Baptist denomination", in its issue of September 5th, page 649, the following paragraph appears:

"We have received two letters from Leicester questioning the paragraph in our last issue in reference to the invitation given to the Rev. L. H. Marshall to return to McMaster. One of our correspondents says that presumably the information was gleaned from Canada. The paragraph stated clearly that it was a quotation from 'The Canadian Baptist'. Mr. Marshall writes that he has not yet reached a decision. We are very glad to have this information. Many well-wishers would be glad to know that Mr. Marshall had decided to remain in England. Some months ago, when the invitation was first given, we were asked not to publish any reference in 'The Baptist Times' until the matter was settled. Nothing would have appeared in these columns had there not been a definite announcement in 'The Canadian Baptist', which seemed to be authoritative."

Our readers must weigh these announcements for themselves. The definite official announcement by the McMaster authorities was published in *The Canadian Baptist* under date of August 8th, nearly a month earlier than the date of the paragraph in *The Baptist Times*. August is largely a holiday month in England, and it is just possible that the information communicated to *The Times* by its correspondents, as having been received from Professor Marshall, was of an earlier date than August 8th, and that it was late in reaching *The Times*

office. *The Baptist Times*, like ourselves, published a news item in good faith, on the basis of an official announcement in *The Canadian Baptist*. We must await an explanation of the discrepancy of these two reports.

Whether Professor Marshall comes to McMaster or not, the fact that he was invited reveals the present attitude of the governing bodies of McMaster.

McMaster-Marshall Issue Postponed One Week

Last week we announced that the McMaster-Marshall issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS would appear September 26th. In making that announcement we had, for the moment, forgotten we were under engagement to speak in Grand Rapids, Mich., September 24th and 25th. On making this discovery we had decided to postpone the McMaster-Marshall issue until October 3rd; and now the report that there seems to be some uncertainty as to whether Professor Marshall will return to McMaster or not provides a further reason for postponing the issue. We assume some definite official announcement will be made at an early date, following which the special issue will appear.

A MODERNIST'S BOOK ON PALESTINE

(From the September issue of *The Witness*, London, England, Rev. Henry Oakley, Editor)

For thirty years or more I have been reading books on Palestine. Dr. Fosdick, of New York, has recently visited the Holy Land and written a book. As he is the noisiest Modernist in America I was desperately anxious to see what he had to say. Palestine is the gathering ground of every order of cranks—"the hundred and forty-four thousandists", the Dowists, the Christadelphians, the Agapemonites, the Latter-day-Saints, and so on.

But of all the oddities of faith and non-faith the Modernist is at the greatest disadvantage in the Land. In the providence of God the Land and the Book go together. Without the Book the Land would be of no more interest to the peoples of the world than Bessarabia. The Book is the Land, but the Modernist has no use for the Bible. For him it is wrong almost every time—Moses is wrong—David is wrong, Christ is mistaken and Paul is hopelessly wrong. For a Modernist to be in Palestine, where the Bible is so important, is like a man trying to walk on one leg and I was greatly curious to see how he got on. I was loathe to spare five shillings, but I became reckless in my curiosity and the book was mine.

As a book on Palestine it is wholly negligible. There is simply nothing in it that was worth the time of writing. Its history is what Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes calls "encyclopaedian", that is the writer had made his pages dependent upon encyclopaedias and dictionaries. This is quite evident in his stories of Masada and Tyre.

The antipathies of the book are very amusing. Dr. Fosdick has a great venom against the Israelites. He never, of course, speaks of them as "God's people", but as "fugitives", "ex-slaves", "a slave-people", "tribesmen", and so on. He regards them as degraded, revengeful marauders and Moses their leader as a splendid adventurer. But it is for David that he keeps his greatest contempt. Poor David! He lashes him from Hebron to Jerusalem. Many of Dr. Fosdick's quotations of the Old Testament are taken from Dr. Moffatt's translation who uses words and phrases that tend to disparage the history and men of the Old Testament. Dr. Fosdick seizes on one of these ugly phrases concerning David—we will not soil our pages by quoting it—and flings it again and again at his pet aversion. It suits his temper exactly in respect to the psalmist and king. He raises the old doubt whether it was David who slew Goliath and there he quotes (II. Sam. 21:19) from the authorized translation, not from the Revised version because it has a note of explanation. Poor David! Did he ever, even from Shimei, receive such a lashing, but even yet his character and work may outlive the anger of this splendid American! In the

latter part of the book it is the post-apostolic Christians that get the whipping. The doubtful stories of treachery, atrocity and cruelty fill the angry pages. Constantine, whom he calls "an ungoverned barbarous Serbian", is like King David the target of his malicious wrath and against him he arrays the old stories of murder that have always been questionable as any careful reader of the Great Emperor's life knows very well.

These antipathies make the book little more than a wild, theological diatribe.

The old infidel *explanations* of much of the miraculous in the Old Testament are renewed—the manna was the gum from the tamarisk bushes, the water given at Rephidim was simply the eastern trick of a water-finder—the passage of the Jordan was possible simply by a land-slide further up the river, and so on. The old infidel cleverness is found in a new setting.

The *perversities* of the book are in perfect keeping with the Modernistic way of thinking. For the Israelites Dr. Fosdick has no place, but for the Philistines he has a remarkable admiration, from them comes the name Palestine! He calls them "the great Philistines" and speaks of the Hebrews as far below them in culture. For the Crusaders he has only contempt and anger but he is quite conciliatory and amiable when he comes to write of the Moslems and lifts them to a high place of moral excellence he denies to their adversaries. The Bible records are generally referred to as stories, traditions and legends, but the merest suggestion of the archaeologist or guess of the excavator are accepted without a shadow of distrust and regarded as finality. It is a strange perversity of mind and makes it very difficult for the thinking man to accept the general conclusions of such an order of intelligence.

Dr. Fosdick has a great *admiration* for the prophets. He gives a chapter of nearly thirty pages to honouring them and it is possibly the most useful chapter in the book. He sought out Tekoa, Maresha-Gath and Anathoth that he might visit the places where Amos, Micah and Jeremiah lived. He compares them with the earlier prophetic bands in Israel for whom he has great contempt and writes of them as "Hebrew dervishes dancing and shouting to the accompaniment of psalter, and timbrel and pipe." His appreciation of the prophets is largely due to what he thinks was their condemnation of sacrifices and the whole sacrificial system of the Hebrews. He thinks they were the initiators of a new order in Israel and again and again insists upon this. He surely overlooks the very obvious thing that these men never cried to Israel to begin something that was new, but always to return. Their chief charge against their people was that they had "forsaken", the gravest sin of Israel in the eyes of the prophets was that they were "backsliders", that they had departed from earlier heights, had left "living waters and hewn out to themselves cisterns that could hold no water." They were not initiators but men who called their nation back to God and to the moral implications of their sacrifices.

His admiration for Isaiah is unbounded, but he cannot go all the way even with him. When the Assyrians lay round Jerusalem, Isaiah believed that it was by an act of God that

Sennacherib's host was scattered, but Dr. Fosdick, who by the bye was not at the siege like Isaiah, writes, "The Assyrians wrecked all Judah except Jerusalem which emphasized the peculiar strength and sanctity of Zion."

Some of the *admissions* of the book are surprising, for when a Modernist begins, where will he make an end? Dr. Fosdick seems to cast no doubt upon Bethlehem being the birthplace both of David and of Christ! He is satisfied, with some degree of condescension, that Tel Hum may be the Capernaum of the Gospels. The traditional Bethany brings no opposition to his caustic pen. He does not resist with any insistence the miraculous in the ministry of the Lord Jesus, and even the death of Christ brings no antagonistic words. All this is very surprising to find that he can leave something unchallenged that the Church has accepted and rejoiced in through the ages. Dr. Fosdick is an iconoclast, pure and simple, but I suppose even an iconoclast gets tired of his destruction and by way of a change smiles past some things which he is sure ought to be broken and cast out.

For Christianity in Jerusalem he has no place—all is mummery there. But I personally should not like to have the disposition that if it cannot understand refuses all appreciation. It is true I cannot understand much of the devotion that is poured forth, for example, in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, but because I cannot understand it I would not call it "mummery". God may find under all the strange worship some very sincere love and consecration and who am I to turn away and say "mummery"? The only Christian side of Jerusalem that seems to have stirred his heart is the Y.M.C.A. which has a programme that makes no religious distinction at all.

The book closes with a sympathetic and understanding chapter on Zionism, one of the most moderate and enlightened chapters. The bibliography is poor and far too partial, which is covered by the word "selected".

The fact is that a Modernist should not go to Palestine. It is the home of revealed religion. He is assured there is no such thing. What can he do but find fault with everybody and everything. In the land he is like an astronomer who refuses to accept the sun. Dr. Fosdick's book is, therefore, to me a tragic disappointment and I turn with gratitude to Dr. Thompson, Dean Stanley, Dr. Robinson, and even to Sir George Adam Smith.

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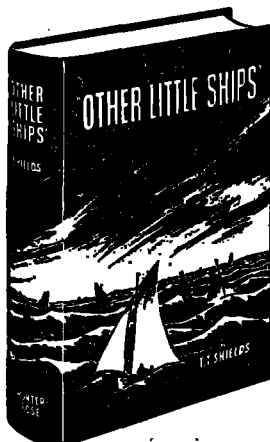
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