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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

HOW MILLIONAIRES "GO ON RELIEF"

A Sermon by Rev. E. E. Shields, of Chicago

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, November 10th, 1935

(Stenographically Reported)

"And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem."—Exodus 13:13.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Our text is a part of the "all scripture" that has been given for our learning.

"Every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck." These words were inspired by the Spirit of God. The ordinance was one divinely enjoined on the people through Moses, and is a foreshadowing of the gospel later to be revealed in its full-orbed glory in the Son of God.

The Holy Spirit gives us here a true but relatively favourable picture of man in his natural state. I use the word favourable advisedly; for in other passages of the Word of God man is pictured in a far less favourable light. It seems to me that those who are proud of their simian ancestry ought not to object to being compared to an ass! But I have an idea that that unproved hypothesis of evolution is comfortable to the natural man because it gives him a very ready excuse for his simian antics. The man who traces his ancestry up from the beast has a very ready excuse for his conscience, and entertains a hope—based upon nothing—that some time, somewhere, somehow, man, having evolved thus far, shall attain to something inestimably greater and more perfect in the future.

I disavow all relation to the gentlemen of such ancestry. I do not acknowledge them as cousins. I belong, not only to one of the "first families", but to the very first family. My ancestry goes back in one absolutely unbroken line, all through the millenniums, to Adam. That is my family. And it is because that is my family that I dare to speak about it.

Of course, as is common to the race, I may not be so ready to hear someone outside the family speak of my family as I do myself. It is possible even a husband may criticise his wife in the presence of some other man, but woe betide that unfortunate who, having heard the criticism, presumes to repeat it in the husband's hearing. But because I am in the family I claim the right to speak about the family's characteristics. I sometimes indulge in the pleasantries of taking a drive at the Scotch, but it is because I have some Scotch in me—I mean, Scotch blood!

I.

By implication THE NATURAL MAN IS HERE LIKENED TO AN UNCLEAN BEAST WHICH MUST BE REDEEMED OR DESTROYED.

We all belong to the same company. I spoke from this text on one occasion, and after the service was over a brother reported to me that he had met a man at the door who was furiously angry, who went out saying, "I will not come to church to be called an ass." I, of course, did not call him an ass: it was the Word of God. Dodge it if you will, it is there by the Holy Spirit's inspiration. There he is with ears flapping, with a very determined will, and a pair—perhaps two pairs—of very effective feet. "Every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem."

I say, that is scarcely a complimentary picture of man in his natural state—but you and I belong to that family. We all have to do with this company of lost men, men who are in rebellion against God, men who have not loved God, men who have hated God, men who

have done everything they possibly could against God—we are of that company. You unconverted man, you have never done one thing, or sought to do one thing, pleasing to God your Maker. I would not browbeat you, or offend you: I desire only as faithfully as I can, to present to you the gospel which other men presented to me unto my salvation. If they had not preached—and preached—and preached—I never would have believed that I belonged to such a family, never would have been converted, never have come to God my Saviour.

Come then, as the prophet said, and “let us reason together” for a few minutes this evening. You have some insurance. When you negotiated about that policy you found there were actuaries in connection with the company who knew approximately the number of men who will die out of every thousand each year. Your insurance has, as its very basis, the certainty that some day you will die. It is in recognition of the fact that we must all die, and be “as water spilt on the ground”, that you signed on the dotted line. It was for the protection of your wife and children after you are gone.

In Toronto are many cemeteries. You have seen people in past years go in a steady procession toward the grave. Hundreds of people who once worshipped here are gone. The men who were at work with you are not there now—they are gone. The ranks are thinning, and you are growing older. After a while you will become like some rugged old tree, the last of a forest; then you will die, and go somewhere.

The visible creation declares to us that there is a God. Your conscience tells you that somewhere, somehow, you must answer for the sins of life before Someone. Yet you go on day after day, insured as to your family, working hard for sustenance, when you do not know what shall be on the morrow. During these years while your eyes have been on the things of time and sense, you have never sought God. Why not? Why have you recognized that you must make provision for the things that belong to this life, and have yet ignored all provision for the future? You have not gone to ministers of the gospel to enquire whether this thing be true. You have not studied God's Word to find out for yourself.

I speak to the unsaved. Not only have you not found God: you have not sought Him. I ask—and I trust the Holy Spirit will answer it to your own conscience and heart—if that be so, that every day of your life you live in a consciousness that judgment is coming, why are you giving your time and thought to the mere providing of daily bread? “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not?” If you forget you have a soul, if you shut out of your mind all thought of God and the future, I ask you, Is not this picture of the natural man almost a flattering one?

Some of you know well the way of salvation. You have had the plan unfolded to you scores of times. You know that Christ died “the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God”. You have almost had a look into the glory, you have seen the land that is very far off, your mouth has watered for the fruits of the kingdom, you have had a real hunger and thirst after righteousness, you have really desired to know God—but there has been before your eyes the fear of man. You are afraid of what someone would say were you to avow

your faith in Jesus Christ. You are afraid of loss to your business were you to be wholeheartedly a Christian. Possibly you have feared it would make a difference in a contemplated marriage. O man, how terrible is your condition, as knowing these things, you ignore your lost estate! You know that a time of reckoning must come; you know that the blood of Christ “cleanseth from all sin”—yet you ignore God. Let me warn you that you do it to the jeopardy of your own soul.

Are you wise? Are you any wiser than this creature with long ears? Does he not shame you? Hear a cry from the heart of God: “Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.” The Lord says that the attitude of Israel toward Him was worse than the action of the ass or the ox toward its owner.

You unsaved people know Christians when you meet them. You know it is a good thing to be a Christian. You know perfectly well they have a peace to which you are a stranger. You know it by their faces. I would put this congregation before any company of unconverted people on earth, and let the unsaved man make a comparison between the two. When God speaks to the soul it makes a difference in the life, and it expresses itself through the countenance. Some of you people have long known that you should be Christians, that it is the right thing to do.

You may have a better appreciation of Christians than Christians have of themselves. Some of you Christians may not realize the influence that radiates from you at your daily work. As you pass someone on the street, he can feel that you belong to God. Sometimes the unbeliever can tell a little better than some Christians in closer association with them. I remember a cartoon in the incomparable *Punch*, of London, picturing the inside of a public house in London some years ago, with beer being brought out to mothers with baby-carriages out on the street. It was against the law for mothers to take their children in, or for minors to enter the “pubs”, so they had theirs brought to them on the street, and a boy was playing a violin at the door and getting pennies from inside. There were two women in one of these “pubs”, talking over their beer glasses, and one said to the other, “ow do you know 'e was a gentleman, Mrs. 'arris?” Said Mrs. Harris, “Thems as ain't sometimes knows thems that is better than thems that is.” Carry that into the spiritual realm—it is a long jump, I know—and the unbeliever knows whether a man's life rings true to the profession he makes. There is something about the man who is in touch with God that cannot be expressed in words.

But you are going on foolishly, unsaved one, going on wildly unless you know God—and you know it! That is the tragedy of it: “This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light.”

Did you ever hear of anyone's going “contrary to his better judgment”? How often have we said it respecting some matter: “I went contrary to my better judgment.” Why were we idiotic enough to go contrary to our better judgment? Because we belong to this “first” family. That is why we need the judgment of God. That is why we need to be meek: “The

meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way." Oh that we would daily enquire in the ways of the Lord, and walk therein, instead of going our own way. It is disastrous to go contrary to your better judgment in this matter of your soul's salvation. Your life will be wrecked, and your soul eternally lost, if you persist. There can be only one end to it all unless you repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

You have heard of the mule-driver who was taking his mule to water, and who foolishly tied the halter around his waist—contrary to his better judgment! When he woke up in the hospital he said, "I knowed I was trusting that mule too much"! But it was too late. Men and women, you are doing it every day if you do not know Christ. You are trusting all kinds of things that will fail you. You are going contrary to your better judgment every day you refuse to accept the offers of salvation. Your conscience, your self-interest, your heart, all tell you to repent and come to God—but you have not come. Why not? Why not?

It may be because, in a general way, you are thinking too much of this life and its pleasures, its money-getting, its power, rather than of the things that are unseen and eternal. Your perspective and appraisals are all wrong. You are going contrary to God, and to your own soul's interest.

It is not only a matter of your own self-interest, but think for a moment or two about *what this matter of human sin cost God our Maker*. Did you ever think of what it means for you to go your own way, in your own pleasure and for your own advantage, and never think of God, or of Christ Who died for you? Unsaved one, do you ever think that you are virtually driving the nails into His feet and hands, and piercing His side? It is as though you were to press your weight upon the thorn-crowned brow, and tell Him that you do not appreciate His love, that you despise Him, that you do not want Him. Listen to the heart-cry of God as He suffered under the stabbing of human sin: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me."

There is only one issue, and that is set forth in the text: "Every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck." That is only a type, a picture, but it is typical of that which is so clearly stated elsewhere in the Scripture: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die"; "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness"; "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God"; "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel"; "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ"; "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of Life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the

dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

What do you make of it? The judgment day is as inevitable as the sunrise. The inviolability, the inexorability, of God's law, is established eternally. It cannot be moved though men and devils should combine. The word of Almighty God cannot be changed: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." What an awful picture that is of the blackness and darkness of despair! The Christ of Whom men speak as though He would not bring men to judgment has said He will come. It is Christ who warns men: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Judgment is absolutely sure, and those of you who are out of Christ are going to an awful doom. There is no escape if you persist as you are going. The Holy Spirit at last will leave you eternally, ceasing His pleading. Your opportunity may be suddenly cut off by death. You have not an hour of your own. Or perhaps before the morning dawns, the heavens will blaze with the glory of the returning Christ. If that be so, where, oh where, will you spend eternity? Are you ready to meet God? Are you ready if to-night the Lord should "descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God"? Are you ready for that wonderful change which shall take place in the bodies of Christians who shall be alive at His coming? Are you ready to go with them into glory who shall be raised from the dead? Perhaps your father and mother, long since laid away, were Christians. What if perchance you should be somewhere near and should see them rise from the dead, made glorious in the likeness of the Son of God, and see them go up—and find yourself left behind? What then? Oh, what then? Where will you spend eternity? "What will you do with Jesus, which is called Christ?"

If you are sick, you call a physician. If there is a fire in your home, you raise an alarm, and seek to save your family. You do not care if your cry rouses the entire neighbourhood. You are unashamed of your fear: your only concern is for the safety of your loved ones. If someone threatens you on the street, you shout, "Murder". If someone should steal something from you, you would cry, "Stop, thief!" But the devil and hell can rob you of your soul's salvation—and you make no protest. You join with millions going down to eternity, "without hope, and without God in the world". Why not come to Him to-night?

II.

But here is ANOTHER PICTURE SHOWING HOW THE HEIR TO DESTRUCTION MAY BE REDEEMED. Here the Holy Spirit pictures the *sinner's Substitute*: "Every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem."

In a small tract entitled, "Safety, certainty, and enjoyment", the writer pictures the poor man who has the firstling of the ass which he owns, as being desirous of

keeping it. He comes to the priest and says, "I want to keep this firstling of the ass, how can I do so? How may I redeem it? Is there any way out? I have no lamb with which to redeem it. What shall I do?" Said the priest, "There is nothing you can do; there is no way out; the law must be abided by." Then he read this particular passage (they had it then, away out there near Sinai.) But said the man again, "I have no lamb, and no money with which to buy one." "There is no way except by the sacrifice of the lamb; otherwise, it must be sacrificed to the Lord as He commands."

Just at that moment a stranger standing by pitied the poor man and said, "I have up there on the hillside a little pet lamb. It has been the joy of the family; the children would miss it. But I see your case of poverty, and I long to help you. If you will agree, I will go and get the lamb and bring it to the priest. He will take its life, and you may have the firstling of the ass. You can take it home, and have your heart's desire."

Unsaved man, you see the picture of your Saviour leaping upon the hill, skipping upon the mountain: He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter: "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

The terrible condemnation is this, that sinners as we are, the Lamb having been provided, the blood having been spilled, given for the redemption of a guilty world, men are not willing to accept Him.

All the stores in this great city are competing with each other to put something on the market that will meet the pocket-book. You women know what bargain day is—one mad scramble to get something at a low price. That is on the natural plane. But Jesus Christ said, "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." Strangely enough, this un wisdom is manifest in those who are to be the children of light. The difficulty is to get people to be willing to come down to the terms of salvation, and accept something that is free. They want to pay something for it. Here is something provided "without money, and without price", and men would rather earn their way to heaven than accept the gift. Let me quote

it again: "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." "Come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

Millionaires of recent years have had to go on relief. Why and when? Never until all their funds were exhausted, and there was no other way; when they were tattered, when they had been battered down in the battle for an existence, when they came to the utmost extremity. In our natural state, we are inclined to think of ourselves as millionaires, and know not that we are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked". We think we are increased with goods, with eyesight clear, our hearing acute to spiritual things; whereas in reality we are dead in trespasses and sins.

Perhaps there is a backslider here this evening, then I have a word from the Lord for you: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." Are you willing to comply with God's terms?

There is not a saved man or woman here to-night who was not at last compelled to accept the salvation which is in Christ, "without money, and without price". The strange thing is that, although it seems so difficult—and is difficult to the natural man—when God really comes into the life in the power of His Spirit, when He convicts us of the absolute incurability of sin, when we are led to see the Saviour as the sinner's sacrifice, we marvel that we should have been so long in accepting His gracious overtures. We exult in the grace of God, and rejoice that there is a Saviour Who saves us "without money, and without price". We come to realize that there could not be a salvation that is part of works and part of grace; that it must be all of works, or all of grace. And God has seen to it that it is all of grace. We must come to Him in response to His wooing—without any works of righteousness which we may do.

I have read of an infidel judge in Chicago in the days of D. L. Moody. His wife was an earnest Christian, who was very anxious for her husband's salvation. She prayed constantly for him. One day she went to D. L. Moody and asked him to visit her husband. "But", said he, "I am an unlearned Christian, while your husband is a book infidel." However, in response to her earnest pleading, he promised to go. He called on the judge one day—judges are elected in the United States, but perhaps he had been left behind that year. The clerks in the outer office tittered as the young man walked into the judge's private room—but he went. All he could say was, "Judge, I cannot talk with you. You are a book infidel, and I simply an unlearned Christian seeking to serve Christ. But I want to ask you this one question: If you ever are converted, will you let me know?" The man promised, and Moody went out.

The thing stayed with the judge. He went home, but it kept him awake. He went down to his office the next morning, and gave all the clerks a holiday. He went into his private room, turned the key in the lock,

and cried for mercy to the God of heaven. He continued to pray that God would have mercy on him. I said he was an infidel; perhaps I ought to have called him an atheist: he doubted that God had revealed Himself in Christ. At last in desperation he cried out, "God, for Christ's sake, have mercy on me." That name has power on high. Anything pleaded in the name of Christ is heard of the Father. "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." This man asked forgiveness of sin in that name, and had the consciousness that he was forgiven. That minute God let him know that the slate was clean, that the blood of Jesus Christ had atoned—he was saved.

Will you not come to the Lord Jesus Christ to-night?

Charlotte Elliott was ready to step into her cab that was to take her to a ball when the minister came along. He was shocked at her dress, and rebuked her; whereupon she promptly rebuffed him. Slamming the door in his face, she told the coachman to drive on. She went to the ball, but had a miserable time, and could not sleep when she got home. She sought out the minister and apologized for her rudeness. There ensued a conversation about the things of God, and that minister, whoever he was, urged her to come to Christ just as she was. She came, and found an abundant salvation in Him; and later wrote the beautiful hymn we sing with such joy:

"Just as I am—without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come.

"Just as I am—poor, wretched, blind;
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in Thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come.

"Just as I am—though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt;
Fightings within and fear without,
O Lamb of God, I come.

"Just as I am—Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve:
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come.

"Just as I am—Thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come."

Will you come?

LITTLE IS MUCH

"Behold, how great a matter (*mg.* wood) a little fire kindleth!"—James 3:5.

James, our Lord's brother according to the flesh, but His slave according to the spirit, gives us in his epistle remarkably practical advice for daily living. Among other themes he discusses the use we make of our tongues. Hard things does he say about the tongue, the more so because it is very small but counts for very much. "The tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" Or, according to the margin, "Behold, how great a wood a little fire kindleth!"

Living in Ontario, we know something of the ravages of forest fires. Personally we have paddled miles along

shores of lakes which were, comparatively, a wilderness, supporting shrubs and stumps where giant timbers once stood. Walking over a portage one day we climbed a small rocky hill to look over miles of such desolation, filled with dead trees still standing where the fire destroyed their beauty and their usefulness. Such fires as that are often caused by a mere spark—hot coals thrown from a railway train, a burning match dropped in a trail, lightning striking a tree. Last summer we sighted a fire a few miles from the lake where we were having a twilight paddle. It looked like a large bonfire on a hill across country. We paddled to the ranger's, to report it, but he could do nothing that night. When we arrived home in the dark, through the cabin window its blaze sparkled. Fortunately, in this case when the fire-ranger came up in the morning to get exact bearings, the flames had gone out. The patrol plane circled round presently, but there was no fire. Perhaps the lightning had ignited an old stump in that hardwood bush, but it had burned itself out. But oftentimes millions of dollars worth of the resources God gave us are so destroyed. "What a great forest a spark will set on fire!"

True, this exclamation of Bishop James is an illustration, but it is that of a great principle, namely, the importance of little things.

I.

LITTLE THINGS COUNT IMMENSELY.

This is true *materially*. The forest fire shows this. So do other fires. I have often heard my mother tell of her grandfather's loss of a woollen mill in Ontario. Some waste rags generated heat and burst into flame, and the work of a lifetime went up in smoke to Great-grandfather's financial ruin. The rags were little things, they mattered little in themselves; but they destroyed a factory and thousands of dollars with it.

Little things count *physically*. My father told me of a college president he knew who died of a pin-prick! The death of the great African missionary, author of *Thinking Black*, Dan Crawford, was caused by something little more. How infinitesimal are the "bugs" that science calls germs! But what plagues they bring!

And little things count *politically*. Wars have started over incidents which were small in themselves. Treaty rights have been greatly changed by a comma.

So *nationally* may little be much. A school textbook in a lesson assigned for this morning remarks that "the nations which have contributed most to the civilization of the world have, during the period of their true greatness, been confined to very small territories. Rome was but a single city, and Greece a very small country." Palestine was a mere postage stamp of a country; dropped into the area of Canada it would scarcely be noticed. But from Zion has gone forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. The eternal city of this earth is not Rome, but Jerusalem.

Then in *theological* matters—and theology is a science, indeed, according to the old title "the queen of the sciences"—mere details count tremendously. We can hardly find a better illustration of this fact than in the ancient Church controversies about the Person of Christ: some said He was *homoiousios* ("of like substance") with the Father, but others affirmed that our Lord was *homoousios* ("of the same substance") (the two Greek words have but one letter dif-

ference) with the Father. The former makes Jesus Christ like God, the latter says He is God. There is all the difference in the world between the two positions, but here men "fought for a word and died for a letter".

So little things do count and count immensely more than they seem to do.

II.

THIS IS BECAUSE OF WHAT THEY MEAN. It is not so much the smallness of things that matters, as the greatness of what they stand for and what they do.

Little things are symbolic of the great. The figures on a cheque are themselves perhaps tiny but what they represent may be thousands or millions. Who of us has not wondered at this? Are we not all sometimes like the child who wants five coppers instead of a nickel because they seem more? A dollar bill weighs less than a quarter, but the man with the note would never trade it for the quarter. Men despise creeds in these modern days. The Apostles' Creed, as it is called, can be printed in a few lines, but it holds a world of meaning. "I believe in the Virgin Birth" is a statement in six words, but it involves the greatest miracle of history and the salvation of the race.

Not only are *little things* symbolical of the great, but often they determine the great. James himself illustrates this by reference to "bits in the horses' mouths" and "the ships . . . with a very small helm". If he had lived after the day when the Chinese gave the world the compass, he would, perhaps, have used it as another illustration. How minute it is, but how much its slightest divergence matters to the great ship with hundreds of passengers on a stormy sea!

Indeed, they are little things which make the great. We used to sing:

"Little drops of water,
Little grains of sand
Make the mighty ocean
And the glorious land."

(Or is that the "authorized version"?) But science has taught us of atoms, and then divided the atom into electrons in a way so infinitesimal that it passes our imagination. So do little things make life. We shall never forget the fellow-student at the University who said of a course we were taking in Physics that he was getting only the general principles—not the little details: he failed. Learning a language is grasping gradually a million and one details. It is a tedious process but it must be done if one is to succeed.

Now what is *the lesson for us all?* Watch the little things. Watch them in work, watch them in character. One Greek historian said that character was better shown in little details of daily life than in great battles in which are ten thousand men slain; and he pictured characters by relating anecdotes of the men. A straw may show which way the wind is blowing. We should be careful of the straws we give others.

A dear old saint used to sit regularly in the front pew of the church where I preached, and as he went out he always spoke to the pastor. One of his favourite quotations of Scripture should search us all, "Who hath despised the day of small things?"—W.G.B.

"TO TESTIFY THE GRACE OF GOD"

This volume, in memory of the late Rev. W. J. H. Brown, is the outcome of a desire to bring glory to God through the testimony to His grace as exhibited in the life and ministry of the one who so recently departed to be with the Lord. To that end there have been compiled records, letters, and sermons, to assist in extending and perpetuating his godly influence.

Acts 20:24 is used as the key passage, and around the truths of this text as an outline, the material is grouped in such a way as to form a unified message.

"Neither count I my life dear unto myself." The blessing of the life yielded to God is shown in the review of Pastor Brown's conversion, call to the ministry and years spent in active service with the Lord. What a wonderful testimony to the sustaining grace of God is given in the record of those last days, days of intense suffering, but of indescribable glory! The fragrance of myrrh breathes through these pages, for verily the course was finished with a holy joy such as the world could not give nor take away.

The character of the ministry "received of the Lord Jesus" is delineated in the letter to the Seminary students, giving them counsel and encouragement to fulfil that ministry. "To testify the gospel of the grace of God" was the key-note of the preaching of Pastor Brown, as is evidenced by the message on "The Heart of the Gospel", and the sermon based on John 3:16, both of which deal with the fundamental truths of salvation by the grace of God through the expiatory work of our Saviour, efficacious for all who believe. As one reads these messages, he sees the necessity of the shepherd heart if the preacher would be used of God in the salvation of souls.

We bespeak for this volume a hearty welcome, not only among those privileged to know Pastor Brown, but also among all who love and honour the Word of God. May the Lord use it as a means of blessing to His own children, and as a channel of salvation to those still outside the fold.

This book will shortly be ready for distribution, and may be obtained through THE GOSPEL WITNESS Office. Art covers, price twenty-five cents.—Dr. O. L. Clark.

INDISPOSITION OF THE EDITOR

Dr. Shields has been ill for a few weeks, the result of a fall in his home; but expects to be in his pulpit, to preach morning and evening, Sunday, November 24th. We are confident readers of THE GOSPEL WITNESS, while deeply regretting the Editor's illness, have greatly enjoyed the sermons of his brother, Rev. E. E. Shields, of Chicago, who has ably supplied the pulpit during the past month.

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

A Message from the President

As the Occupant of the Presidential office for the ensuing year, I take the opportunity of sending forth an expression of thanks for the co-operation of churches and friends in our united work during the past year; and of stating, if I may, some suggestions for the work of this year.

We have much for which to be thankful to God. Some advance has been made in our work despite the difficulties of the time. Souls have been won to Christ and added to our number; and increased giving has marked many of our churches, resulting in an augmented income for the Union of five thousand three hundred and thirty-one dollars and fifty-six cents (\$5,331.56) for the past year. It would have rejoiced our hearts exceedingly if greater progress had been witnessed, but with such encouragement as we have, may we not look forward to greater blessing this year. All things are possible to those who believe (Matt. 9:23); but with James, of course, we hold that works accompany belief (Jas. 2:14-26). Faith and works are inseparable in the accomplishment of progress.

Respecting the work of this year, may I invite your attention to our needs at home and abroad. It is felt, that while carrying on our work abroad, increased effort should be put forth on the home field, in the winning of souls to Christ, the stimulation of the growth of our churches, and the estab-

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Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 10

No. 4

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 48

Fourth Quarter

December 1st, 1935

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE GOVERNMENT

Lesson Text: Proverbs, chapters 28 and 29.

Golden Text: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whose confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."—Proverbs 28:13.

Bible School Reading: Proverbs 28:1-28.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—I. Kings 18:17-21; Tuesday—Lev. 5:1-13; Wednesday—Ps. 66:10-20; Thursday—Is. 2:16-25; Friday—Matt. 3:7-12; Saturday—John 7:14-24.

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

The proverbs of this chapter relate to the exercise of conscience; the effect of righteous government, and of obedience to law; evil seducers (vs. 1-10); the blessing of righteous men; confession of sin; the wicked ruler; the upright life; the industrious life (vs. 11-19); the faithful man; respect of persons; riches; rebuke; robbery; pride; self-trust; almsgiving (vs. 20-28).

Scripture teaches, and observation indicates, that "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap". This is true, not only of the eternal reward, but of life's consequences on this earth, even to the extent of affecting a person's attitude in the face of circumstances, adverse and otherwise. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion." An evil conscience engenders fear, while a good conscience in the sight of God gives boldness. David trusted in God, and was unafraid (Ps. 27:1), and the saint of God is in a similar position and has no reason to fear (Heb. 13:5, 6). After Pentecost there was great boldness among the disciples of the Lord (Acts 4:31). They were as bold as lions. Some interesting things are stated respecting the law. They that forsake it praise the wicked; "but such as keep the law contend with them". This may be observed in both private and public life. Evil-doers uphold those who are like themselves, while righteous people condemn them, and oppose them in their wickedness. Our Lord did this (Matt. 23:13). The Old Testament prophets acted similarly (Amos 7:16, 17). And the saints of God must, as soldiers of the cross, rebuke sin (Eph. 5:11), and contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered unto them (Jude 3); remembering that in this we are not merely contending with men, but with the powers of darkness (Eph. 6:12).

We are further informed that "evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the Lord understand all things". Sin confuses the judgment, while right living clarifies it. Wicked men therefore should not be placed in positions of responsibility. Note the nature of sin as transgression of the law of God; failure to reach the mark; and iniquity, or crookedness (Ps. 32: 1, 2). Also its deceitfulness (Heb. 3:13), and fearful consequences (Rom. 6:23). Observe also the blessedness of those who seek the Lord, affecting the life in every way for good. It is the part of wisdom to keep the law (v. 7), while turning away the ear from hearing it brings divine condemnation, and deprivation of the privilege of answered prayer (v. 9). Conditions are attached to the experience of this privilege (Jas. 1:5-7; I. John 3:20-22). "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whose confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." In this we have God's way of dealing with sin. Man is inclined to cover his sin, and to excuse himself for it; but God desires an acknowledgment of guilt, and a forsaking of that of which He disapproves. This implies true repentance, being sorry enough for sin to depart from it. Note God's provision for forgiveness (Eph. 1:7), and the way in which it is bestowed (Acts 2:38; 4:12; I. John 1:9). God is merciful, but He can only give evidence of it in relation to salvation when man meets the conditions. Happiness is the lot of those who fear the Lord, while those who harden the heart fall into mischief (v. 14). Joy is connected with salvation (Is. 12:3; I. Thes. 5:16). Our Lord had this in His life, and gave joy to His disciples (John 15:11). Observe further

condemnation of respect of persons (v. 21; Jas. 2:9); of hastening to be rich (v. 22; I. Tim. 6:9, 10); and of robbery and pride (vs. 24, 25). How may we keep God's law and please Him?

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

The proverbs of this chapter relate to the consequences of hardening the neck, righteous and wicked rule, wise conduct, graft, flattery (vs. 1-5); evil actions, the blood-thirsty, the fool, the faithful king (vs. 6-14); child-discipline, vision, hastiness of temper, the fear of man, and the unjust man (vs. 15-27).

Obstinacy brings its own sad consequences in all realms of life, but particularly in relation to the things of God. The Israelites hardened their necks and brought upon themselves divine judgment (II. Kings 17:14-18; Deut. 31:27; Heb. 3:7-11); and the same attitude in this day of grace will also mean a divine visitation, though of an eternal nature. "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn." This is evidenced in the history of Israel. When good kings, such as David and Hezekiah, ruled, the people rejoiced; but when wicked kings, as Ahab and Manasseh, were in authority, the people suffered. The same is true in the present day respecting rulers and nations. The depression through which the world has been passing for some years is due to the stupidity, lack of wisdom, and wickedness of man. God has continued to supply man's needs, but proper use has not been made of these supplies by the men in control of the situation. Hindrances of one kind or another have been placed in the way of the distribution of nature's provision, to the consequent suffering of millions of human beings. Thus again comparison may be made between countries ruled by democracies and those governed by dictators, to the praise and favour of the former.

Flattery is deceitful, and spreads a net for the feet of the one flattered (v. 5), and works ruin (26:28); and we are enjoined not to meddle with the flatterer (20:19), the promise being made that God will deal with such an one (Ps. 12:3). A flatterer is governed by a selfish purpose, and is a liar of a more or less polite type; therefore cannot be trusted, and should be avoided. "Scornful men", or those who deliberately and contemptuously despise law, "set a city on fire"—kindle strife; while wise men turn away wrath (v. 8). Men need God's law as their guide in all the relationships of life, and when they put this aside they are left entirely to their own resources. And man without God is a foolish person (I. Cor. 1:20, 25). Divine wisdom is needed daily, and is at the disposal of all who are willing to submit to God (I. Cor. 1:30). Going according to his own wisdom, man has made a fearful mess of things, with strife on every hand, and perplexity affecting the minds of multitudes. Note what is said in relation to anger, the outcome of man's unregenerate nature. Hastiness in this respect is condemned (v. 20), and the result of anger is indicated (v. 22). By the help of God, a man's spirit should be held in control. Many a Christian's usefulness is spoiled through lack of control, and inestimable harm has been wrought in church and state through the instrumentality of the uncontrolled temper.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he." Instruction in God's truth was by vision (I. Sam. 3:1; Dan. 8:1), and produced vision. God's truth gave, and still gives, understanding of things past, present, and future. It is a revelation of God, and makes known things respecting Him, His relationship with men, their duty toward Him, and the possibilities in time and eternity before those who serve Him. Obedience to God's law is necessary to the salvation of the people. Without such obedience there is loss of moral restraint and consequent inevitable destruction. This may be observed in the social life of the nations. If men would leave their sins, and do God's will, they would have more joy in life. Note the first step in repentance, and faith in Christ (Acts 26:20); followed by a consecrated life (Acts 2:41-47). Observe also the necessity for children of God to study the Bible for spiritual guidance, sustenance, and incentive. Through such study there will come obedience to God, and a loss of fear of man which "bringeth a snare". Such fear brings one into difficulties, and stultifies one's efforts for God. It means deprivation of liberty, hindered development, and loss of blessing. The only safe course is complete trust in God, regardless of consequences. How may we become strong enough for God, to become careless of the attitude of men?

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

(Continued from page 6)

ishment of new causes. I am sure that with this plan all are in hearty sympathy, and desire to be helpful. In relation to our foreign work, permanent buildings must be erected on the stations, and an increased income must be assured for the adequate care of the work. I am sure it is the general conviction that there should be no slackening in this effort, and I am equally positive that our God through us can take care not only of the work already undertaken, but can accomplish yet greater things by His omnipotent power.

In order to aid in this progress, may I take the liberty of making a few suggestions.

First: Shall we realize more than we have done hitherto our union and solidarity in the work in which we are engaged, and thus become more conscious of our privilege and responsibility in connection therewith. Our work is that of all the churches, and of all the members of the churches. We are workers together with one another and with God.

Second: Shall we bear our work before God in prayer more definitely, earnestly, and importunately, than we have done heretofore; praying for revival, and for the specific needs of our work at home and abroad; for the weaker churches; for guidance in the establishment of new causes; for an increased regular income; for the balance of the money amounting to two hundred dollars to cover the cost of the erection of the first permanent building at New Cess Station—for all good things from His hand.

Third: Shall we have such a new realization of our responsibility for the work locally, in the home mission field, and abroad, that we shall give of our income proportionately, regularly, systematically, to carry on the same. The Israelite under law gave a tenth of his income, and offerings in addition thereto. Should we under grace give any less? Should we permit the Israelite to excel us in practical devotion to our God? Remember the connection between giving and revival (Mal. 3:10).

And last: Shall we do everything possible to support the work of the church to which we belong. These are days when itching ears are in evidence, and many are restlessly roaming hither and thither after the sensational in religion. Shall we not seek in an increasingly zealous manner, to build up our local churches, using every effort to this end, and by the Spirit becoming so enthused that we shall do our utmost to spread the glorious gospel of Christ not only in our own neighbourhood, and throughout the length and breadth of the land, but unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

With thanks for the co-operation of all, and praying that God's blessing may abundantly attend us as we labour together to the advancement of His cause in our midst, and through us to the farthest stretch of earth's domain.

(Signed) ALEX. THOMSON.

Bobcaygeon

Much has been said about this field in recent issues of the *Union Baptist Witness*, and it is encouraging to know that blessing is still being experienced there. The pastor, Rev. M. B. Gillion, reports that ten followed the Lord in baptism on Sunday, November 3rd, and that he gave the right hand of fellowship to sixteen new members. To crown all this, last Lord's Day, November 10th, under the preaching of Captain Brown, and the singing of Mrs. Gordon Watt, and special music by Mrs. Michael Collins, six young people publicly confessed their acceptance of Christ as Saviour and Lord. This is good news. Continue to pray for the progress of this work.

Long Branch

Rev. W. N. Charlton, of Hespeler, will be speaking at the Long Branch Baptist Church on November 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st, at eight o'clock each evening. The Long Branch Church is at the corner of Lake Shore Road and 28th Street. Take Lake Shore cars at Sunnyside to Long Branch, and get off at 28th Street.

Mr. Charlton's subjects will be:

Monday: "The Second Coming of Christ"—illustrated by beautifully coloured lantern slides.

Tuesday: "Up a Tree".

Wednesday: "The Road to Nowhere".

Thursday: "Gospel Arithmetic, or Profit and Loss".

Also on Wednesday, the 20th, after the evangelistic meeting a discussion of Sunday school problems will take place, and Mr. Charlton will speak on "Building the Bible School". All Sunday school workers should hear this message.

Mr. Charlton will sing at each service. Miss Mary Jeffery will play the violin.

Mr. Charlton will conduct a Children's meeting each day at 4.15 p.m.

Liberian Parcels

All parcels or enclosures from Mission Bands, Mission Circles, Sunday schools, Dorcas societies, or individuals, should be forwarded to the Union office immediately to make up a shipment to Liberia. Christmas parcels may even now be late. Do the best you can, and let us have your enclosures not later than Saturday, November 16th, 1935.

Wanted!

The Maple Hill Baptist Church intends holding cottage meetings in outside communities, and is in need of a baby organ. If anyone has one not in use, the friends at Maple Hill would take good care of it, and would be very glad to borrow it for a few weeks. Please notify the Union Office if you have one not in use.

An Appropriate Christmas Gift!

"OTHER LITTLE SHIPS"

Perhaps you have four friends to whom you would like to give Dr. Shields' book as a Christmas gift. We are making a special offer of

FOUR COPIES FOR \$5.00

Send your order at once. If so desired, books will be held for Christmas mailing, and sent directly to the recipients, postpaid, enclosing greeting card from the sender.

Single copies at \$1.50 will be treated in the same way.

Or, "Other Little Ships" (\$1.50), and "The Gospel Witness" for one year (\$2.00), both for \$3.00.