

# The Gospel Witness

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

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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

### THE FATAL FOLLY OF "GOING ONWARD"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, February 16th, 1936

(Stenographically Reported)

"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.—II. John 9.

The Revised Version renders the first clause of this verse somewhat differently: "Whosoever goeth onward, and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the teaching of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."

It must ever be a matter of supreme concern to those who seek the welfare of the souls of men, to see those who profess to have been born again, to have been made new creatures in Christ, give proof of the reality of their profession by following on to know the Lord more perfectly. Perhaps there is nothing that so injuriously affects the progress of the gospel as the inconsistencies, the irregularities of life, of those who profess and call themselves Christians. The gospel of Jesus Christ is injured most frequently in the house of its friends, and by those who profess submission to it. How disappointing, how deeply distressing, it is to see professing Christians turn aside from the ways of the Lord, to run "greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perish in the gainsaying of Core"! And yet, alas, how common it is to observe people who were once zealous in the things of God, become cold, and sometimes utterly to cast away their confidence, and cease longer to profess allegiance to Christ!

What great numbers of people there are in the world to-day who were once evangelicals, but who now seem to live—not like Paul, to preach the faith they once sought to destroy—but rather to destroy the faith which once they professed. Many of the pulpits of this land, and of other lands, are occupied by men who spend their time seeking to destroy the confidence of their hearers in the divine inspiration and authority of the Bible. Indisputably, many of the pulpits of our day propagate doctrines which are definitely anti-christian.

The chapter which was read in your hearing this

evening teaches us to expect that such things will be. Our Lord Himself described six different kinds of hearers. There were those who were likened to way-side hearers, some whose hearts were like the stony ground, and some whose hearts were like ground infested with thorns. These three were utterly unfruitful. The others likened to differing qualities of good ground, but each of which actually received the seed, brought forth, some an hundred, some sixty, and some thirtyfold. It was the same seed, and the same sower, but different soil. The seed became permanently fruitful only in the soil which was prepared.

For our encouragement we do well to remember the experience of our Lord Himself, as a Teacher. Read the sixth chapter of John, and see how the multitudes thronged Him, came to make Him a king—because they had seen the miracles, and were filled. But when He expounded the spiritual character of His mission, saying, "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life", when He spoke of the necessity of their eating His flesh and drinking His blood, they said, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." He turned to the twelve and said, "Will ye also go away?" To which Peter replied, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

Observe also the apostolic record, and you will find that the great apostles, empowered by the Holy Ghost, were no more successful; for while many were saved, many who professed evidently did not possess. There was the notable instance of Ananias and Sapphira. Consider further the teaching and experience of the Apostle Paul. The Epistle to the Galatians was

written to those whom he called "foolish Galatians". He asked, "Who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? . . . Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?" Beginning in the Spirit, they endeavoured to be made perfect in the flesh. You will recall, too, his words to the elders of Ephesus who met him at Miletus, when he said, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them"—that, he predicted, would occur in the very church in which he had ministered day and night for three years! If three years of such a ministry as Paul's failed to make a church heresy-proof, all other pastors and teachers may well feel it necessary constantly to be on guard.

In his epistle to the Colossians Paul conveys the greetings of Demas whom he links with "Luke, the beloved physician"; and to Philemon he includes Demas with others whom he described as his "fellow labourers"; but writing to Timothy he said, "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." Some of Paul's associates fell by the wayside, but later recovered themselves, like John Mark. Others dropped out of the ranks, and apparently never returned. Peter also writes of some whom he describes in this horrible word: "It is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

These are painful observations, but, knowing the Scripture, we need not be wholly surprised that these things should be equally true in our day. It should, however, be our desire, our supreme concern, to see those who profess faith in Christ give evidence of being possessed by Him, and of being filled by His Spirit, that by continuing in His word, they should prove themselves to be His disciples indeed.

Nor is this too much to expect, for it is the privilege of the true believer to be "like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper". I read of some who are "planted in the house of the Lord", who "flourish in the courts of our God"; of some who grow "like a cedar in Lebanon"; of some of whom it is said, "They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing"—or, full of sap, and green; not like an old tree, decaying, but full of spiritual vitality, bearing fruit to the end of their earthly career.

This text will expose the root-cause of backsliding, and of apostasy. On the other hand, I think it will serve to show us how we may be "rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as (we) have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving".

I call your attention first to the rendering of this text in the Authorized Version, let me read it again: "Whosoever transgresseth"—to transgress is to step over the line. If you understand what it is that is stepped over, the word "transgresseth" would be perfectly accurate. But the Revised Version makes it somewhat clearer, "Whosoever goeth onward, and abideth not in the teaching of Christ." Thus, in this instance the *transgressor* does not step over the line, as is frequently intended when that word is used, but goes onward, or beyond "the doctrine of Christ".

We shall examine first of all *this phrase which is central to the whole Christian revelation*, twice employed in the text, "the doctrine of Christ"; then we shall observe *an attitude toward that truth which issues at last in utter godlessness*: "Whosoever goeth onward (or transgresseth), and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God": such an one ends in having no God at all. Then our text suggests *how we may be established in the truth so as to insure the soul's eternal union with the Father and the Son*: "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."

### I.

First, then, we shall examine THIS PREGNANT PHRASE. What are we to understand by "The doctrine of Christ"?

*Not what a certain school would have us believe, when they speak of "the teachings of Jesus"*. It is not what men conceive Jesus to be. The "doctrine of Christ" is not a body of human opinion about Christ, no matter how great the men who express that opinion. In our day almost every religious and economic quack seems ready to invoke the authority of the man Jesus for his vagaries. They talk about "the teachings of Jesus". That is not what our text means. It is certainly not what the genial agnostic, and enemy of Evangelical Christianity (and there is no other Christianity) Dr. Salem Bland, means. I make no apology for saying that. If ever a man wrote that which is subversive of all that constitutes evangelical faith, gave evidence of being an enemy of the faith once for all delivered unto the saints, it is that gentleman. He is a very genial man, but that does not affect the character of the poison he disseminates. He knows nothing about the teaching of Jesus. It is quite evident that he is entirely ignorant of the spiritual import of the Christian revelation.

Nor are we, by the "doctrine of Christ", to understand *Christ's personal teaching*. We need to be on our guard at that point. The personal teaching of the Lord Jesus—that is, the words which fell from His lips during the days of His flesh—has no greater authority than the words which came from the pen of the Apostle Paul. If you deny the postulate of inspiration, then you can not know what the teachings of Jesus were. The Gospels which contain the record of His life, were written long years after His death and departure from this earth. Unless we believe that the writers of those Gospels were inspired by the Holy Ghost, and that in the writing of the Gospels, the word which He had spoken was fulfilled, that the Holy Ghost "shall bring all things to your remembrance", who shall say what the teachings of Jesus were? For nobody could remember all those years the exact words of all His discourses.

But even if we had those words, we must remember that the word of God spoken by the scriptural writers was the word of God, the word of the Holy Ghost, just as truly as the words which fell from the lips of Jesus Christ. When the Scripture speaks of "the doctrine of Christ", it does not mean that which Jesus personally taught while He was upon earth; it means rather the whole body of truth which in the Bible is called "the gospel", "the mystery of Christ", the sacred secret, "which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit". That is what is here meant by "the doctrine of Christ",—the gospel of the grace of God. And do not tell me there are several gospels: there is but one. There never has been another; there never

can be another. All men are poor bankrupt sinners, and nothing but the gospel of grace can be a gospel to any one.

"The doctrine of Christ" is that which God has Himself revealed concerning Christ. You remember how He asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" They gave Him various human opinions. Then He said to them, "But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Whereupon He said, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." In effect Christ said to Peter, "You never could have known who I am if the Father had not told you. Nobody is able to identify Me apart from a divine revelation." On another occasion He said, "No man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." "The doctrine of Christ", therefore, is the testimony which God has given of His Son, the "record which God has given of His Son" in respect to His divine person, His pre-incarnate existence, the vicarious obedience of His life; the vicarious and expiatory character of His death, His mediatorial ministry, His intercession, His triumphant coming again—the whole round of gospel truth; including the teaching of Scripture respecting man's natural state, his sin and his sinfulness, the necessity and privilege of the new birth, and the salvation that is all of grace—that is what is meant by "the doctrine of Christ". It is what Paul had in view when he pronounced anathemas upon all who would preach any other gospel than that which he preached; for, he said: "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Everything depends upon our attitude to that body of revealed truth: Do you believe in this twofold principle, first, that God has been pleased to disclose Himself to men, to reveal Himself to men, to communicate truth of Himself Who is Himself the truth, by the Holy Spirit, because men could not find it out for themselves? Do you believe that God revealed Himself to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to Moses and the prophets, and at last in Him Who was "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person"? And do you believe, that in order that that revelation might be made known to men of all generations, holy men of God inspired of the Holy Ghost wrote that record, and that it is preserved to us in what we call the Bible? That is what is meant by "the doctrine of Christ", the doctrine herein contained as the record which God has given of His Son.

## II.

And now observe this carefully. Here is described AN ATTITUDE OF MIND TOWARD THAT REVELATION: "Whosoever goeth onward"—"transgresseth"? Yes. Steps beyond, not the law, but beyond the gospel—"and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God".

There are people who "go onward". They tell us they have "advanced". I asked a professor some years ago, in respect to a certain man, "What is your understanding of his general position theologically?" "Well", said the professor, "I have always thought he was rather advanced." What did he mean? That the man had "gone onward", beyond the gospel. He was not satisfied with the gospel: he desired something in advance of it.

That attitude is characteristic of many in our day. There are some who say, "Jarvis Street Church is an old-fashioned church; the people there are so old-fashioned they believe the Bible, that it is really the word of God." Then with a very superior air they tell us they have left all such superstitions behind. They have gone onward. They are people of "advanced" intelligence. It is a tragic thing for a man to "go onward", in this sense. It is indeed fatal for a man to turn his back upon the full-orbed revelation of God in Christ, and to set his opinion against the wisdom thus divinely revealed: "Whosoever goeth onward, and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God."

Is there a clever young man here to-night—too clever to believe the gospel? Is there a student present who has heard professors mock at it, and at all who believe it? So be it. Are you going onward, leaving the gospel behind? Let me tell you what must happen to the man who goes onward after that fashion. It is not real progress. It is possible to go onward without going upward. It is quite possible to go onward—and downward. It does not spell progress, it involves the reverse of real advancement.

Who are they who go beyond the gospel? *Men who do not believe in the finality of Jesus Christ.* John once sent his disciples to Jesus Christ in the days of His flesh, with this question: "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" Some of our evolutionary friends say it is quite possible that the human race may yet produce a greater than Jesus Christ. Do you believe that? Are you so "advanced" as to believe that you can turn your back upon Him, and still move onward toward heaven? There are those who do not regard the Bible as the final authority in matters of religion. If you come to me with a religious question this evening, and I answer you with a plain, unmistakable, declaration of the Word of God—would that settle it for you? Or are you disposed to say, "That is Scripture; I do not believe that." You have gone beyond. He takes a dangerous step who goes beyond that which is written. There is nothing beyond that which is written that is worth anything.

Men who so regard the gospel do not "abide" in it: "Whosoever goeth onward, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." They once professed it, but they do not know anything about it. Brother Jennings and I were in the Southland, and we passed through many cities. Of one I asked him, "Have you ever been here before?" To which he replied, "Yes; but I know nothing of it. I merely passed through." That is the extent of the experience of many professors in respect to the gospel: they have passed through. They do not know the gospel in reality. I was in a certain city, on the main street where the hotels and stores were. It was not particularly attractive, and I wrote home and said to my wife, "There is nothing attractive about this city but the climate." But after I had stayed long enough to see something of the city itself, I changed my mind. There was more there than I had thought.

The people who "go onward" from the gospel, who do not abide, have no experimental knowledge of it. They do not become oriented. They do not make it their dwelling place. They pass through. A man who used to be a member of this church more than twenty years ago comes to my mind at the moment. My wife and I were in London, England, some years ago; and this man and his wife were there also. He called me at my

hotel one Saturday afternoon and enquired what our plans were. I said we had nothing in particular in mind, and he invited my wife and me to meet him and his wife, and spend the afternoon sight-seeing together. We met, and he said, "Where shall we go?" It was finally decided to visit the British Museum. We went to the British Museum, entering by the great central hall, with its ancient statuary from long buried and forgotten empires, where millennia in stone looked down upon us. My friend looked about with unseeing eyes, until over in the corner he saw a sign, "Tea Room", and he said, "There is a tea-room; let us go in and have a cup of tea." We went in and had a cup of tea. He ordered it—and paid for it. And I have no objection to that procedure! When we came out he looked around but a moment or two, and said, "Well, when we get back home we shall be able to say we have seen the British Museum"! He did not "abide" in the British Museum, that greatest of all treasuries of human lore. Scholars go and virtually live in the British Museum for years together, to learn what may be learned: this man went to the British Museum—and got a cup of tea!

That incident was a source of great comfort to me afterward. If I preached more than fifteen minutes, that man—I can see him now sitting down here at my left—would become restless, and pull out his watch again and again. I used to remember for my comfort the British Museum experience and say to myself, "How can a man with a cup-of-tea appetite listen to a British Museum sermon?" He had no capacity!

Do not be afraid of Mr. Professor who mocks at the gospel. He knows as much about it as I about the cities I travelled through—as fast as the law would allow. No more than this acquaintance of mine knew of the British Museum, who did not pause to look at it, but immediately went onward. That is the attitude of hundreds of people—tens of thousands of people. They have been taught this city of truth is not worth living in—"Let us get through it." They go onward, and turn their backs upon the truth. They have seen the gospel as this man saw the British Museum.

*What follows?* "Whosoever goeth onward, and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God." Modernism is the devil's highway to godlessness. It leads to Unitarianism and ultimately to infidelity. Modernism logically has no God. Its God is a mere abstraction, an idea only commensurate with the dimensions of the individual mind.

There is no way of knowing God save through Christ. He Himself said so. "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him"; "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." When you "go onward", and pass the doctrine of Christ, leave it behind you, you forsake the only Repository of spiritual knowledge and direction; you pass the only highway that leads to God and eternal life: "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God."

That is the sin of to-day—not only that people will not receive Christ as Saviour: we are facing not only an anti-christian generation, but a generation which, in its whole attitude, is anti-God. It wants no God. "There is no fear of God before their eyes"; "Hath not God." To be without Christ is to be without God.

### III.

Let me ask you now to look at the other side of the picture, THE PRIVILEGE OF ABDING IN THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST. "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." Who is he that abideth?

First, *the man who regards the Christian revelation as God's last word to men.* I humbly confess my faith. I expect nothing beyond the gospel, I ask nothing beyond this Book: "Last of all he sent unto them his son." What folly inheres in the doctrine of a future probation! What more can even God do for a rebellious and ruined race than He has done? What more can He say than He has said? "The Word"—all that the prophets had spoken, all that God had or has to say—"the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." He was God's last word, His final revelation: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son."

If that be so, *it is well that we should abide therein.* It is one thing to travel from place to place: it is another thing to get to a place where you can be at home, and where you can stay. The true believer, whose heart has been opened to the truth in Christ, when he comes to see that salvation is in Christ, says, "This is all I want. I do not want to go any farther."

I have a picture in my mind that I often recall, for I like to see boys and girls happy. I travelled in Wales on one occasion, and went into the dining-car—restaurant-car as it is called there—and as we moved out of a station a gentleman, his wife, and two boys, came into the car. The father said to the boys, "You sit on that side, at the larger table and mother and I will sit here." I can see those boys now, as they looked at the bill-of-fare. They read it aloud—from soup to nuts. Taking his knife and fork in his hand in anticipation, one of the lads said, "Dad, this is what I call a little bit of all right." There was enough on that menu to satisfy that hungry boy—and they both did full justice to the meal. It was not "a little bit of all right", but a "big bit".

Suffer that simple and merely suggestive illustration. When the hungry soul comes at last to the place where Jesus Christ is, into His banqueting-house where His banner over us is love, he says, "This is a bit of all right. This is what I have been looking for. I propose to settle here. I will abide; I will never go onward from here."

What does it mean to abide? It means to become oriented, to make the doctrine of Christ your place of residence. In one sense you cease to be a traveller, in another sense you only then begin really to advance. Within the realm of divine revelation there is spread out to your wondering view all that any mortal soul could possibly desire. Do not pitch your tent: build your house. Be "planted in the house of the Lord", and "flourish in the courts of our God". That is what I desire, to be planted, rooted and built up in Him, established in Him as we have been taught. That is what it means to abide in the doctrine of Christ, to be well domiciled.

Where do you live? In "the doctrine of Christ"? Where is your home? Is it in "the doctrine of Christ"? To the Spirit-illuminated soul there is nothing outside of that. "The doctrine of Christ" is final for the redeemed of the Lord.

That means to explore the wealth of it. If suddenly you were to fall heir to some fine property, with plenty of money to keep it up, what would you do? What if by

another's gift you should become heir to a fine estate in the country, where you could live in the fullest luxury? What would you do? Would you go and sit in the garage? Would you go into the back kitchen, and say, "Let us have dinner here"? No! You would say, "I want to see this house. I must explore every room, every inch of land." You would put your foot on it with pride, and say, "This is mine." I can imagine that it would take you days and days, perhaps weeks and months, to explore your inheritance.

It is a great thing when a Christian discovers that he has become rich in "the doctrine of Christ", and sets himself to explore his inheritance. What do you know of it? Ah! Not much! We have the earnest of our inheritance now, but it will require the rest of life, and all of eternity, to explore the riches of His grace, and to revel in the luxuries of His provision. Abide in the doctrine of Christ. Send down your roots. Resolve to stay for ever.

Let me put it this way: unpack your grips, and say, "I have come to stay." Dr. Parker told a story of a preacher coming of a Saturday night to a certain place to preach on Sunday. He had two or three big portmanteaus with him that made it appear as though he had come to stay for two or three months. That night his host conducted family worship, and in his prayer he said something like this: "We thank Thee, Lord, for sending Thy servant. Give him a good night's rest; bless him at all services to-morrow; may he be the Lord's mouthpiece to all the people. Then when the day and the night are spent, the morning following, give him journeying mercies." He was evidently not expected to "abide", but to "go onward".

There are people who make a profession of religion, as though they were saying, "I will sample it." Do not do that. Say rather, "I have come to abide."

"He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ"—what has he? Heaven? Yes. Golden streets? Yes. Jasper Walls? Yes. Gates of pearl? Yes. A river of life? Yes. The city itself? Yes—fadeless, tearless, painless, deathless, the New Jerusalem. Is that what it means to be saved? That is included; but salvation is infinitely more than that. For the city without God would be like a vast estate without means to maintain it. "The Lamb is the light thereof." "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." What a salvation that is! Our salvation is not in circumstances; it is not in things; it is not in a particular state of mind: Our salvation is in God Himself. To abide in the doctrine of Christ is to have the Father and the Son—all the wisdom of God, the power of God, the righteousness of God, His truth, His justice, His mercy, His love, His grace.

I wish I could make it plain to you. I have often said it in one way or another, but it is necessary to say it again and again. In our unregenerate state we are afraid of God, afraid of His justice and holiness. They fill us with terror. But if we "abide in the doctrine of Christ", and learn that our debt has been paid, our transgressions atoned for, the very qualities in the Godhead—His justice, truth, and righteousness—which filled us with terror, then becomes the bulwark of our salvation. Yea, I will dare to say that the law which threatened to slay me, becomes at last my saviour, for "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth". Here is finality. Here we arrive at establishment for time and

for eternity—"Hath the Father and the Son"; Counsellor, Saviour, Friend, Mediator, King!

How we mourned—and the world mourned—the passing of His late Majesty, King George. We rejoice in his successor, his son. But here we have a King Who has no successor. This is—suffer the hyperbole—eternally final—"Hath the Father and the Son." If that be so, those of us who are saved can resolve to go on singing,

"E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream  
Thy flowing wounds supply,  
Redeeming love has been my theme,  
And shall be till I die."

D. L. Moody said something to this effect once: "Some day you will read in the papers that D. L. Moody is dead. Don't you believe it: it will not be true." He was going on. And we must all go hence by and by, if the Lord does not first come. Some day you will read in the papers that the Pastor of Jarvis Street is dead. Do not believe that either: it will not be true, for

"When this poor lisping, stammering tongue,  
Lies silent in the grave,  
Then in a nobler, sweeter song,  
I'll sing His power to save."

I know it. I am absolutely sure of it. You may call me old-fashioned if you will, but I boldly affirm that I have arrived at the truth. Respecting salvation, therefore, I abide in the doctrine of Christ, and I shall abide as long as life shall last—and through all eternity—shut in with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, forever. Hallelujah!

Let us pray:

O Lord, we thank Thee for the coming of Thy Son into the world. We thank Thee that it pleased Thee, of Thy grace, to communicate to us a truth that we could not possibly discover, and that Thou hast so wrought in the hearts of many of us that we know there is nothing beyond that which Thou hast revealed in Christ. Help us here to find rest unto our souls. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

## HOW TO GET THE UNCONVERTED TO CHURCH

Many churches complain that it is difficult to get the unconverted to attend religious services. We greatly fear, from the character of the preaching in many churches, that there must be large numbers of church members who are unconverted. But where that is true, it is generally because no gospel is preached from the pulpit. Moreover they are given such religious sedatives that they are disposed to resent the directness of faithful gospel preaching in other places.

There is a tendency to assume that the solution of such problems is seldom found in plain view; therefore men set about inventing all sorts of schemes to entice people to church. There is, after all, only one way, and that is to go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in. It is well when believers become sufficiently mature to expound the way of salvation to those who need to hear it. But after all, it is a very simple matter to direct people to Christ. The unlearned man who knows that a certain road leads to a certain town, has no difficulty in directing a stranger how to get to it. It is a simple matter to direct people to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Every believer ought to be able to do it. Every believer ought to resolve to do it.

But what if we make allowance for some very timid people who find it extremely difficult to speak personally to others about their spiritual state? We believe that such timidity can be overcome. But a beginning must be

made. And if we cannot do otherwise, we can at least invite people to go to a church where we know the gospel is preached. The very simplicity of the suggestion almost requires an apology. And yet in all walks of life it is the simple things which are most valuable.

What if believers generally were to resolve at least to make an earnest attempt to get somebody to accompany them to church every time they go? We should not always succeed, but what if we were faithfully to try for both services every Sunday? Suppose we succeeded only once in ten times,—if everybody were to do it, what thousands of people would be brought under the hearing of the gospel! We urge our readers to try that simple effort.

You may feel that you are unable to teach a class, or lead a meeting, or engage in any public service, but there is not one of us who could not find someone who does not go to church, who might be invited to come. What if, when you have given the invitation a dozen times, and it has not been accepted, you were to pin your friend down to a promise and say, "I am not asking very much of you, but I do ask, as a favour, that you will accompany me next Sunday." Get his or her promise that if you call he or she will go with you.

What could not be done with vacant seats in motor-cars? Or, indeed, if the seats are not vacant. Distances to be traversed in a city in a motor-car, even though they stretch for several miles, are not long. What a fine thing it would be to bring cars to church crowded with people! Try it—not a month hence, but next Sunday. What would happen in such case? No doubt every person accompanied by another would listen to the sermon with a view to its applicability to the person beside him or her. Almost certainly such an one would listen prayerfully. The presence in the congregation of a great company of people who have brought someone to church with the prayerful hope and expectation that the gospel will be preached in such a fashion that people shall believe, would be bound to charge the very atmosphere with spiritual power.

And how this would organize a congregation! If the unconverted people were scattered thus through the congregation, each one sitting beside an earnest Christian, who has brought them to church for a definite purpose, and if when the invitation to confess Christ is given, should there be evidence of spiritual interest, how easy it would be for such an one to say to his unconverted friend, "If you will respond to that, I will go with you!"

These are but simple suggestions, but we believe they are in accord with the teaching of the Word of God, and of great practical value. Let us put them to the test!

### THE EDITOR AT HOME

Dr. Shields returned to his pulpit last Sunday after an absence of about four months. Notwithstanding the severe weather, there were 1,104 in the Sunday School, and large congregations at both services. A large number responded to the invitation both morning and evening. During the Pastor's absence the pulpit has been occupied most ably and acceptably by his brother, Rev. E. E. Shields. Readers of THE WITNESS have had opportunity of sharing with Jarvis Street Church the pulpit messages.

During Mr. Shields' ministry of four months, many were converted. Baptism was administered almost every Sunday; others converted during this period are yet to be baptized. Jarvis Street Church is most grateful for

the ministry thus exercised, and is thankful to God for the blessing which accompanied the preaching of the Word. The Pastor's health is fully restored, and the whole church is looking forward to further seasons of refreshing.

During the Pastor's absence the work has gone steadily forward. The weather has been most difficult. Notwithstanding, the Bible School has maintained a splendid attendance. But for the extremely severe weather, we are inclined to think recent weeks would have shown a record attendance. Such experiences as that through which Jarvis Street has passed in the last four months are testing times, and these four months have served to demonstrate the solid character of the whole church.

### OUR HUNGRY CHILDREN

The Editor is most grateful for the splendid work done in the church and School and Seminary during his enforced absence. But he returns anxiously anticipating the 31st of March. Notwithstanding the fine co-operation of all parts of our organization, there is bound to be some little decline in any such enterprise during the leader's absence. For that reason we now appeal to all friends of the church, THE GOSPEL WITNESS, and the Seminary, to remember the importance of closing our books with a balance on the right side March 31st.

The Seminary and Witness funds are always in need. They have never yet overflowed. This year they are as needy as ever, and we therefore ask our friends to come to our help at the earliest convenient date.

We are not accustomed to make appeals for the church funds outside the church itself,—nor do we make such an appeal now. But we do urge all members of the church to do their utmost to fulfil their financial obligation to the church between now and the 31st of March. It may be that some have experienced a special blessing, and perhaps here and there a special recovery from the depression to a condition of prosperity. If that be so of any, we would venture to suggest such an experience provides ground for special thanksgiving; and therefore we remind any such of an opportunity for such expression through an offering to the Lord's treasury.

### THE GOSPEL IN FRENCH

Readers of THE GOSPEL WITNESS have already received an account of the splendid work being done among the cosmopolitan population of the large and prosperous mining-town of Noranda, in North-Western Quebec. Under the leadership of Pastor Stanley Wellington a substantial and attractive church building has been erected on a main thoroughfare, and the preaching of the Word has been blessed. The pastor has also carried the gospel to smaller towns and mining camps in remote sections of the country, and now, as a result of the work commenced last summer by Mr. F. M. Buhler, student in Theology and professor of French at the Seminary, the church at Noranda has enlarged its borders to take in the large surrounding French population. Mr. Wellington writes:

"I am devoting Wednesday evenings to the meetings on the Granada Road. The school-house is now in use again, and I am using a room there. Two weeks ago I had a meeting in a private home when fourteen French people were present. It was certainly a bit awkward for me at first to conduct the whole service in a language which I know so meagerly. We sang 'Si vous saviez', 'Jesus, par ton sang précieux', and 'Tel que je suis'. I read John 3:1-21 and spoke for fifteen minutes on Romans 6:23, 'Le don de la grâce de Dieu'. Afterwards they all said they understood everything I said, and when asked if they would come to

(Continued on page 8)

## Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 11

No. 1

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 10 First Quarter March 8th, 1936

### DIVINE JUDGMENT ON EGYPT, BABYLON, JUDAH AND TYRE

Lesson Text: Isaiah, chapters 19 to 23.

**Golden Text:** "And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them."—Isaiah 19:20.

Bible School Reading: Isaiah 19:1-22.

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS:** Monday—Ps. 48:1-14; Tuesday—Ezek. 26:1-6; Wednesday—Ezek. 26:7-14; Thursday—Ezek. 33:7-11; Friday—Luke 19:41-48; Saturday—Luke 17:26-37.

#### JUDGMENT ON EGYPT (chapters 19 and 20)

**Introduction**—In previous lessons we have observed God's interest in Gentile nations, as well as in Israel; and in this lesson we are again reminded of it. Citizens of all nations are His creatures (Acts 17:26). He loves them (John 3:16), disapproves of their sin, and takes action respecting it. Egypt is the nation before us in this section. At one time a great power, with authority extending to the Euphrates, it was brought to a position of impotence through its sin. Israel was brought into close touch with it from time to time. Abraham lived within its borders for a short season (Gen. 12:10). Joseph became second ruler of it (Gen. 41:40). Israel became a nation within it (Ex. 1:7), as slaves were delivered from its power (Ex. 12:51); and after entrance into the promised land came in contact with its people on several occasions either as friends or foes (I Kings 14:25; 2 Kings 17:4).

**Political upheaval (19:1-4)**—In the prophecy of our lesson judgment is intimated respecting this nation, in the course of which we note several things. The first of these is political upheaval, resulting in civil war. Upper and lower Egypt contend with each other, and district advances against district. And at such a time the people seek help in the spirit realm where it can never be found. Note the power of the evil one in deceiving men, and the foolishness of turning to idols, and to spiritism, instead of to God (Is. 8:19, 20). Observe also that many are making similar mistakes these days.

**Physical calamities (19:5-10)**—Due to the falling of the water in the Nile, a river upon which Egypt depended for its crops, it is indicated that vegetation and fishing would be most seriously affected. It is frequently the case that calamities in nature accompany or follow grave disturbances among men.

**Foolish wisdom (19:11-14)**—At the time of this visitation, the wisdom of the counsellors would be shown to be foolish. The wisdom of the world is foolishness in God's sight (I Cor. 1:20). In Christ alone true wisdom is found (I Cor. 1:30). The world runs its business, its politics, and its religion, in accordance with its own wisdom, with the result that it is always in trouble. It is on the way to a lost eternity, and foolishly refuses to turn to God, and be saved therefrom.

**Weakness and repentance (19:15-22)**—Egypt's weakness at the time of its distress is intimated in the fear of the men—who would become as timid as women. A brighter picture is given after that, however, in the repentance resulting from the chastisement. Five cities would speak the language of Israel. They would bind themselves to the Lord by a solemn covenant; and would raise a commemorative pillar at the border. And the promise is given respecting the sending of a saviour. This was possibly fulfilled in the person of some outstanding leader like Alexander. Spiritually, we are reminded of our Lord Who is the Saviour of all from the power of sin (Matt. 1:21). He was a Great One (John 1:1), sent by God the Father (John 3:10), to meet the need of the people respecting deliverance from

enemies (Luke 4:18). The closing verses of the chapter (vs. 23-25) relate to Israel as the source of blessing to Egypt and Assyria, reminding us of the time when from Jerusalem there went forth the gospel message to all mankind (Acts 1:8; 8:1). The following chapter (20) relates the overthrow of Egypt and Ethiopia by the Assyrians.

#### BABYLON, EDOM, AND ARABIA (21:1-17)

**Babylon (vs. 1-11)**—In the first part of the chapter the prophet, as a watchman, describes the fall of Babylon, which took place in the time of Belshazzar (Dan. 5:30, 31). He refers to the desert inundated by the waters of the Euphrates, to the Persians who effected the overthrow, to the condition of the city at that time, with its feasting and pleasures, and to the chariots of the enemy outside the walls.

**Edom and Arabia (vs. 11-17)**—In the second part Edom is represented as asking a question: "Watchman, what of the night?" The repetition denotes the earnestness of the questioner. Night indicates the time of trouble and distress. The answer is given, "The morning cometh, and also the night"—implying deliverance, followed by further trouble. In its present-day spiritual application, note the position of the child of God as a watchman, alert, understanding, and faithful; the condition of the world in darkness, helpless, and hopeless. Note the hope of the child of God respecting the morning of the Lord's return, and the eternal night of the lost. The closing verses relate to an invasion of Arabia, with the resultant suffering of its people.

#### INVASION OF JUDAH (22:1-25)

**Invasion (vs. 1-14)**—In descriptive language an invasion of Judah, culminating in an attack on Jerusalem, is referred to in this section. It was possibly carried out either by the Assyrians, under Sennachrib, or the Babylonians, under Nebuchadnezzar. Several things are intimated in the description. These are the fright, panic, flight, and slaughter, of the people (vs. 1-3), the mourning of Isaiah because of the affliction of the people (vs. 4, 5), the enemy outside the walls (vs. 6, 7), the preparations to meet the enemy, in the bringing of the water within the city (2 Chron. 32:30), and repairing of the walls (vs. 8-11), and the reckless merriment of the people when God had called for mourning (vs. 12-14). Note the condition of the world these days with its sinfulness, hopeless outlook, certain doom, reckless pleasures, and its need for repentance, and the proper heart-felt attitude of the child of God respecting it.

**Shebna and Eliakim (vs. 15-25)**—Shebna, the treasurer, the principal officer of the court, is here singled out for a prophetic message in relation to his deposition from office, and his captivity (vs. 15-19); and is informed of the call of Eliakim to assume his duties (vs. 20-25). Shebna was evidently an irreligious leader, and suffered the consequences of his evil attitude and counsel. Note the suggestive statement respecting the "nail in a sure place", indicating security, dependability, and purpose. May the Lord make us like such nails, that we may be a help unto others. There are too many like nails scattered around the floor. They are not fixed anywhere, and cannot be found when they are needed.

#### OVERTHROW OF TYRE (23:1-18)

The overthrow of Tyre, a prominent mercantile city of Phoenicia, is here announced. On several occasions this ancient city suffered at the hands of its enemies. Among others, the Babylonians, overthrowing the old city; and the Greeks, under Alexander, conquering the new city, located on an island, one half mile out from the mainland. The effect of the destruction of the city on the sailors on the ships of Tyre returning from Tarshish is indicated (v. 1). The people on the land are struck with awe at the sight of it (vs. 2-7). The divine cause of its distress is intimated (vs. 8, 9). The duration of this overthrow is stated (v. 10-16). And the restoration is promised (vs. 17, 18). Secular history records the fulfilment of this prophecy. God knows history in advance. Note the Lord's purpose to humble the spirit of this city (v. 9). "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." It is better voluntarily to submit unto God, than to be humbled by His judgments. Note the pride of the human heart, and its hindrance to the work of God in the life.

## THE GOSPEL IN FRENCH

(Continued from page 6)

other meetings of the same kind, all by uplifted hand warmly approved."

All those who realize that in French Canada we have at our door one of the largest and neediest mission fields in the world, will join with Pastor Wellington in prayer that the Lord will teach his lips to frame the sounds of "la belle langue française" as His Spirit bears the message to the hearts of men in demonstration and power. W. S. W.

## NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

### Calvary, Ottawa

The week-end of February 9th is one which will long be remembered in Calvary Baptist Church, Ottawa.

On Friday our three returned Missionaries, Rev. and Mrs. E. Hancox, and Miss F. Stacey, came to us for a few days. That evening our Women's Missionary Society held their Thank Offering meeting. Mrs. Hancox and Miss Stacey gave two splendid addresses which proved not only interesting but helpful. Mr. Hancox followed with a few words which filled our hearts with joy that we had had such a Spirit-filled Missionary in Liberia.

On Sunday Mr. Hancox brought the message both morning and evening to large congregations. Four responded in the evening to the invitation which was given to those who wished to consecrate their lives for any service to which the Lord might call them. At the Bible School in the afternoon Miss Stacey brought the message.

On Monday evening Mr. Hancox gave us a lantern lecture on Liberia, when again the church was filled with an interested congregation. This meeting was under the auspices of the Young People's Society. Altogether the week-end was a time of great blessing to our people of all ages, and we trust that this year we may renew our efforts on behalf of the work of our Union. Any time Mr. and Mrs. Hancox and Miss Stacey can come back to Ottawa they may be sure of a welcome from the members of Calvary Church and congregation.

### Westboro

The people of the Westboro Baptist Church have been greatly encouraged recently by the revival experienced in their midst. On January 26th they opened a special evangelistic campaign with Rev. Robt. Guthrie of London as the special preacher. The meetings which continued until February 9th increased in interest and power, and God again heard the prayers of His people by reviving the saints and claiming the lost for Christ. There was a good number of decisions, and they as a church are looking forward to greater times in the future.

### Word from Miss Lane, Liberia

In a letter dated January 6th, Miss Lane writes: "At present we are free from school, as it is holiday time, but somehow I seem just as busy as when Bible classes and school were on. There is the town visitation now, and I

have been going out early in the morning, about 7.30, and staying out till afternoon, visiting towns that are too far away to reach during school term, and giving the gospel message in each town on the way home. Last Thursday I came across a new town that is just being built. The people are still in temporary grass huts while they build their houses, and as they came from a direction that none of us ever go, I was happy to be able to give them God's Word and invite them to the Mission. They were happy over my visiting them, and thanked me over and over. Several new folks came to church on Sunday from one of the other towns too, and one woman said she believed the message and wanted to study it."

Pray for our Missionaries as they are on trek from town to town, walking under a tropical sun, taking God's Word to those who have never before heard it, that they may be kept in good health, and that the hearts of the people may be opened to the message of salvation.

### Hespeler

The Hespeler Baptist Church is enjoying times of real blessing. Four adults followed their Lord in baptism on Sunday evening, February 9th. Others are expected to take a similar step soon. In spite of adverse weather conditions and blocked roads the prayer meeting attendance has broken all records during recent weeks.

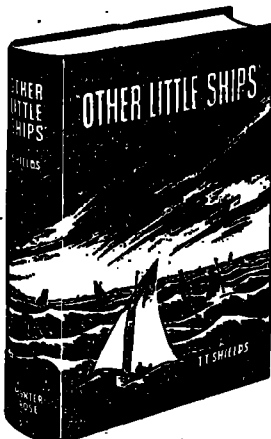
### Waverley Road, Toronto

The Lord is continuing to bless the work at Waverley Road. All the services are well attended, and there is a spirit of enthusiasm among the people. On Sunday evening, February 9th, five followed their Lord in baptism, and others have signified their desire to do likewise. The Pastor, Rev. W. E. Atkinson, and the members are greatly encouraged, and are looking forward to the future in anticipation of a real awakening in that district.

### Courtright and Wilkesport

On Sunday, February 9th, the Seminary Quartette visited the Courtright and Wilkesport Baptist Churches, assisting the pastor, Mr. J. H. Watt. Mr. George Hicks preached in the morning at Courtright, and Mr. Hal McBain preached at Wilkesport in the afternoon. After the service at Wilkesport the Quartette motored with Mr. Watt to Chatham, where they held a song service in the Chatham General Hospital. At seven o'clock they took charge of the service in the Chatham Regular Baptist Church, of which Rev. E. C. Wood is pastor. From 9 to 9.30 the Quartette again assisted in the Fireside Fellowship Broadcast sponsored by the Courtright and Wilkesport Churches.

On Monday, the 10th, Rev. C. J. Loney of Hamilton commenced a series of special meetings, with splendid results. It was a busy and fruitful week. The congregations were good in spite of the severe weather, and a good number professed conversion, while a number of backsliders were restored. Altogether it was a great week, and the people are looking forward to the Spring when they hope to branch out into the surrounding districts spreading the gospel in needy places.



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