

The Gospel Witness

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

Editor: T. T. SHIELDS

Associate Editor: ALEXANDER THOMSON

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

Address Correspondence: THE GOSPEL WITNESS, 130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto, 2, Canada.
Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada.

Vol. 14, No. 48

TORONTO, APRIL 9, 1936

Whole Number 725

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"ALL WE . . . OF US ALL"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, April 5th, 1936

(Stenographically Reported)

"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."—Isaiah 53:6.

The preacher has some advantage when announcing an unusual text: notwithstanding the well-worn paths of Scripture ought not to be neglected. If there are portions of Scripture which are more generally used than others, it is because they have been found to be peculiarly useful. There are few portions of the Old Testament with which people generally are more familiar than the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and probably of all the verses of the chapter few have been more generally used than the verse I have announced for our text.

We have all at times recognized the special value of the commonplace in life. I have often admired, and been grateful for, the regularity of our public services—the light by which we read, the water that is awaiting our use in our homes, the systems of transportation which run to and fro, always ready to serve the traveller's convenience. The commonplace things are sometimes undervalued simply because they are regular. It is only when interruptions in the service occur that we discover how indispensable these ordinary conveniences are to the comfort of life.

The fundamental laws of being are the same in all ages. We all breathe in exactly the same way as Adam did. I suppose we all live by the operation of the same laws. And these scriptures which have been so generally used of God in the salvation of men are to be looked upon—ought to be looked upon—as wells of water, places where the soul may find refreshment, and where we may find direction on the road that leads to heaven.

Mr. Brown referred in his prayer to the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of John as "a little Bible". So it is. It is a compendium of all revealed religion. Nothing is omitted from that one verse. It bears the stamp, the proof, of divine inspiration upon its face; for no one but God could speak after that fashion. The text I have announced to-night is another "little Bible".

Nothing is left out. It comprehends all truth contained within the covers of the Book, from Genesis to Revelation. So, although we have looked at it before, we have not exhausted its significance; nor have we enriched ourselves of its fulness as it is our privilege to do. So then to this very familiar text once more.

I.

We hear much to-day about "collective security". But this text presents us first with A PICTURE OF COLLECTIVE FOLLY, folly in the mass, folly as characteristic of the human race—"All we like sheep have gone astray."

The evolutionist to the contrary notwithstanding, *it is a fact that we have "gone astray"*, all of us. We are not *where* we ought to be; we are not where we were divinely placed. We cannot charge God with responsibility for what we are, or for where we are. If, in the summertime, you see the cows chewing their cud in the pasture, the sheep in the meadow, and the horse in the paddock, we know these animals are where their owner placed them; they are in their proper place. But when you see, let us say, the cows in the corn, the sheep in the mire, and the horse, unharnessed and unbridled, trotting along the highway without a master, you know at once that they are astray, out of their proper place.

That is true of every one of us by nature. We are not in our proper orbit, we are not in the place of divine appointment. Life is not rightly related to God. We are out of harmony with Him. We have "gone astray". We are off the track. We are away from the path of righteousness. Something has gone awry in life. How amazing it is that such a truth as that should ever be disputed; for surely there is nothing that is more self-evident than that human life is full of discord, full of dissonance, full of disharmony, out of order. There is not a man or woman here this evening of whom that is not true. And, I suppose, there is scarcely one here who,

in some measure, has not come to a recognition of that fact. Perhaps you have not formulated any accurate statement of where you are; perhaps you have not clearly defined your position even to your own mind; but you know, if you are out of Christ, that you are not where you ought to be. We have "gone astray".

Nor are we *what* we ought to be. This morning I spoke briefly of God's handiwork in nature, having "made every thing beautiful in his time". But surely no one in his senses would presume to hold God responsible for the confusion that obtains in the individual life, or in human life in general! Human society in the mass is but the aggregate of individual units; and sometimes, looking at a section of life, as at Europe, or the United States, or Canada, we see men at odds with each other in almost every relationship of life. You cannot believe that He Who is the Author of nature's harmonies, Who flung the myriad stars into space, and Whose worlds proceed in the execution of His will without deviation from their course—one cannot believe that these human creatures so exceptional, so at variance with every law that God has made, are what God intended them to be. No such purpose as is now being realized in any human life was in the mind of the Creator when He said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." The truth is, we have "gone astray".

The Bible is a mirror in which the experiences of the individual, and of humanity at large, are reflected; and were it not that men are subject to some strange hallucination, were it not that some great delusion has fastened itself upon the human mind, everybody would see that the Bible is true to fact everywhere, so accurately does it portray your life and mine. Our individual histories are pre-written in these pages. We have "gone astray", beyond all peradventure.

Here we are likened to sheep, a familiar figure, but not particularly complimentary. We have gone astray "like sheep". We have gone astray *stupidly*. Do not preen yourselves on your superior intelligence, for we have none to be proud of. Sin is a kind of insanity. No man is properly centred, or his life properly ordered, until he finds his centre in God. When he is out of right relation to God, he is eccentric, out of centre. We are all eccentric. Sin is a moral eccentricity; it is a stupid thing; it is an inversion; it is a dislocation; it is a monstrosity. Sin is nothing to be proud of. Instinctively we know that we were intended to walk forward, not backward. Even our eyelids, if the delicate eye-ball is approached by anything foreign, instantly close to protect it. There are laws of our physical being that we obey instinctively. We do not try to open our hands backward.

But that is what we do in the moral sense. When a man tries to live without God he is as stupid as a silly sheep. He may be a university graduate—he may be a university professor. He may have all the degrees that any university of learning could confer upon him, and yet no sense morally. We are like sheep, living stupidly, who try to live without God. Yet how many there are to-day who mock at religion, who sneer at everyone who pretends to attempt to follow Christ. Allow no one to laugh you out of your faith. Do not fear if men should look upon you as being rather below par mentally because you believe the Bible. The mental attitude of such mockers is thus explained: "All we like sheep have gone astray."

If there be a more stupid, unintelligent creature that God has made than a sheep, I do not know what it is. A

sheep has no sense at all. It has not sense enough to come home. The sheep that goes astray never comes home of itself. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." The Bible says that men naturally have not even the sense of a donkey! They do not know enough to come home to dinner. We are like silly sheep.

We have "gone astray" *imitatively*. That is a common figure, and I say nothing new. Sheep travel in flocks. We are all gangsters. We may not carry guns, but naturally we are disposed to go with the crowd. There is a road that is very broad, and the Scripture says, "Many there be which go in thereat." Sometimes the wisdom of majorities is urged upon us. But generally the majority are wrong because they are like sheep. Like sheep, they go astray.

I think I could at this point be entertaining were I to allow myself to be so; I could amuse you by showing you how foolish we all are in imitating each other. But we are only like sheep in that respect. If there is a gap in the fence, they all jump through, one after the other—every one of them. And men and women are like that. The men sometimes—and the women all the time! Some young fellow started out without his hat one day—perhaps he forgot it—and some other young fellow saw him go down the street, and thought he looked rather well. The next time he went out, he left his hat at home. Then there was a procession of them, even in the wintertime. I have seen them with their coat-collars turned up, and overshoes on their feet—and no hat. It may not have mattered, if they had nothing in their heads to protect. They looked almost as silly as the women wrapped about lavishly with fur—and their feet unshod. If some enterprising merchant were to invent a sandal, and suggest that they be worn without stockings in sub-zero weather, the young ladies would wear them. Even now they walk along the street on tiptoe. God never made woman to walk like that. Occasionally one sees a woman with a pair of walking shoes on. When I do I feel life saying, "Thank God, there is one woman in town who has a good understanding." Most women live in shoemaker's prison. In order to be in style they torture themselves as the Chinese used to do. They are all like sheep.

Years ago I bought a bicycle. I felt I ought to apologize for owning one, because it was rather a mark of wealth to own a bicycle in those days. I got a fairly good one, and I thought it would last a long time. But the manufacturers used to change the style every year. Last year's model was perfectly good, but it was out of style. I lived in a small town, and as I was riding my bicycle down the street one day—as good as the day I bought it, but now out of date—some little urchins got around the corner, and, putting their hands to their mouths, called after me, "Say, mister, take the ice around to the back door."

How shrewd the manufacturers of motor-cars are! They change the model every year, make them look a little different—then the poor man has to get a new one—although his present car is in perfect condition.

The devil has been getting out new models from the day that Adam sinned. He knows that men will follow after them. "All we like sheep have gone astray." There are ten or a dozen places within two blocks of this church that are traps for silly sheep. Not one man out of a hundred who drinks, does so because he wants it in the beginning. In the same way the poor silly girls smoke their cigarettes, and think they are superior, and sneer at

those who do not smoke. But they are only silly sheep. They smoke because it is "the thing" to do. They saw the sheep go through the gap, and away they went after them.

Many preachers are no better. Here in this city there are dozens of them denying the Book, making light of the gospel, and professing to be very wise. Professing themselves to be wise they have, indeed, become fools. The difference between some preachers and their feminine hearers is that the women follow the fashion in what they put on their heads, and the preachers in what they put in their heads. How utterly silly it is! Someone brought me a clipping from the paper of what a minister who preaches a couple of blocks from here had said about what Jesus would do if He were here, whether or not He would go to Toronto University. I read it and said, "What an imbecile that man is. Give him my compliments, and tell him I said so. Because other people say it, he must say it too. It is amazing to me that people listen to the pabulum that is dispensed from the pulpits of our day. "Intellectually superior"? Nonsense! It has nothing to recommend it. It is more vacuous than the bleating of a sheep: "All we like sheep have gone astray."

This sheep-like course is *unprofitable*. It does not pay. Sin never did pay: it never will—never can. But no matter what we say, the sheep will run in flocks just the same. I have seen drunken men and drunken women roundabout this corner by the score, and oh the pity of it, drunken girls. Yet I suppose, could one show them themselves, show them what they are, and whither they are going, it would make little difference. Like sheep they go. But there is no profit in it. A sheep will leave the luscious pasture of its owner's provision, and work its way through the hedge, others following, until by and by they have to grub around a hundred yards to find a single blade of grass. So do men leave the fulness and the felicities of the Father's house, for the famine of the far country. So do men leave the Fountain of living water, and hew out for themselves "cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water",—and while they do it, pride themselves on their superiority. *Dangerously* do men live. There is scarcely any creature more helpless than a sheep. It is ever at the mercy of the wolves, and needs a shepherd's care. But full often it leaves the fold, and goes out into dangerous places:

"Away on the mountains wild and bare,
Away from the tender Shepherd's care,"

exposed to the fury of its enemies, having no defence.

How helpless we are! What a dangerous world this is for young life—young men and young women—and older ones too. Yes, men go astray to *their own destruction*. I was in a country place some years ago, where there had been a heavy snow storm. The sheep had been in a small paddock, but a couple of them had got out, gone along the path, through an opening in a hedge, and then over a cliff—and lay mangled below. So do men wander to the precipice and fall to their own complete destruction.

But, reverting to the matter I spoke of just now, there are thousands, tens of thousands of young people, in our own Province being ruined body and soul; and during the period that will elapse while the appeal on the proposed plebiscite is being carried from the Supreme Court to the Privy Council—I suppose a year or two—the liquor interests will make millions of dollars, and tens of thousands of young men and women, who had no appetite for

liquor, will have acquired it, and, like a flock of sheep, thousands of them will go over the precipice to their destruction. God's judgment upon the politicians who set that damnable flood loose in this Province! Where is public conscience to-day? Any and every kind of evil is allowed to become rampant without protest. We are like a lot of silly sheep, all of us—"all we like sheep".

There is no difference of race. Wherever one goes, it is the same. There are diseases that are peculiar to tropical climates; other diseases that are indigenous to colder regions. But sin is common to all climates, and to all races. Wherever you go, Africa, Asia, China, India, any of the Asiatic, European, or American, peoples, sin is everywhere. It is written in the Bible; and on every page of human history, "All—*all*—ALL we like sheep have gone astray." There is no sequestration of class, no distinction of education, no superiority of sex, no difference of age—*young and old, black and white, red and yellow—everybody, everywhere, since the day that sin entered into the world, and death by sin, it is indisputably true that "all we like sheep have gone astray".*

II.

But here is another picture, one of *INDIVIDUAL WAYWARDNESS*: "We have turned every one to his own way." In the beginning, God made man, not to be a serf, but a sovereign; not a captive, but a king. He put a crown upon his brow, and a sceptre in his hand, and said to the creature He had made, "Have dominion."

"And man, as man, retaineth yet,
Howe'er debased, and soiled, and dim,
The crown upon his forehead set,
The immortal gift of God to him."

The gold has become dim, and the most fine gold changed. Like Rehoboam, man has made shields of brass for the golden shields his sin forfeited; but he is still a volitional creature. He is still personally responsible to God. He still has the power to say yes or no, to go north or south, to make his own choice in life: "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

I desire to bring that home to everyone of us this evening, that the teaching of the Word of God is to the effect that He never infringes upon the rights of man's own province. Having given him the power of will, He always respects that will. There is nothing in the Bible to suggest that God ever makes an automaton of a man. He does enlighten the understanding, He does energize the will; but He does it with the man's own consent: He works through the man rather than merely upon him. He always respects that power which He conferred upon him in the beginning when He said, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." He laid His command upon him because he had power to obey, or to disobey. And from then until now He always has respected human volition.

You say, "But just now you said 'all we like sheep'." Oh yes, but did you ever see a flock of sheep make an individual sheep turn out of the way? Never! "All we like sheep have gone astray"—we have followed the examples of others; but we have done so deliberately and of our own will. We have done so willingly, of our own choice. There was the gap in the fence, others took it, and we took it too—but we took it because we wanted to: "We have turned every one to his own way."

How many people you have heard say, "I like to have my own way." We all do—and we begin early. If you have any doubt about the doctrine of original sin, of

human depravity, study your child,—but study your own mood at the same time. I was once entertained in a home where there was a charming little miss of two or three years of age, and we soon became fast friends. As she sat on my knee one day, I said to her mother, "How much will you take for this child?" The mother replied, "You could not have her for a million dollars just now, but there are times you could have her for a cent." Of course she did not mean it, but meant that the little girl was not always as angelic as she appeared at that moment.

I recall being somewhere else where the little girl of the house had been taught to say something very interesting—all the more interesting because it was true. The mother called the child up for exhibition and said, "What sort of girl are you?" "Sometimes I's just awful; and sometimes I's bewitchingly exquisite." But even when she was "bewitchingly exquisite," the awfulness was there: "We have turned every one to his own way."

Theologians speak of the doctrine of original sin. You have it in Romans, chapter five: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned . . . by one man's disobedience many were made sinners." Adam transmitted to his posterity his inherent sinfulness. And we have abundant proof of that principle of original sin, yet we have each made his original contribution to the sum of original sin. About the only original thing about us is our sin: "Everyone to his own way."

Did I tell you of a boy I used to know in a house where I boarded, whose name was Clare? He was a little imp half the time—just like his father, only his father was grown up. There was not much to choose between the two. The mother was a very gentle and delicate woman, who sought to bring up Clare in the way he should go. One day as I passed through the dining-room she was reprimanding him for something, and I can see him now. I do not think he was more than four years of age, but just as full of the "old man" as though he had been grown up. As his mother reproved him, he clenched his fist, stamped his foot, and said fiercely, "Look here, ma, I don't have to do nothing only just what folks don't tell me I haven't got to do." Sift and sort out that aggregation of negatives, and you will know what original sin is. But he was no worse than you were—no worse than you are, apart from divine grace: "We have turned every one to his own way."

We came into this world as individuals, and we are held accountable by God as individuals. Each one must live his own life. I imagine some of you parents thought in the beginning that your children were going to be more tractable than other people's children, and for a little while it seemed as if they might be so. But do you remember as that boy grew, little by little it dawned upon you that he was another personality, not you; that he was endowed with all the qualities of personality, as were you; and that beyond a certain point you, as his father or mother, could not go. You did the best you could, but you discovered that he would have his own way in spite of everything.

It is a solemn reflection that we are, in the last analysis, what our wills have made us. Do not say you are what you are because of some hereditary taint, because of some circumstantial besetment, or temptation, or because of a collective example and pressure that you could not resist. That is not true. Fundamentally, the fact is, we are what we are because, before God, we

willed to be what we are. If you are out of Christ, it is because you would not yield to Him: "We have turned every one to his own way."

III.

But what a blessing it is that we have here a third picture, one of THE INTERPOSITION OF DIVINE GRACE. Like sheep, there they go by the thousand, by the hundreds of thousands, by the million—generation after generation—all going astray, every one of them having his own way! Is there any help! Listen. *The Lord does something*. There is no hope for any one of us unless He shall intervene. Men are being exhorted to lift themselves by their shoe-straps, and to make their own way to heaven. But it cannot be done. That sort of philosophy, even though preached in the Christian name, is nothing less than pagan. The Lord intervenes. The Lord! O hear me! I say THE LORD, the Lord Who made heaven and earth comes to the rescue!

In this chapter we have a picture of a suffering servant, wounded, bruised, chastised, bearing somebody's griefs, carrying somebody's sorrows. There are some who would say there is no vicarious element in it, no payment of a penalty, no principle of expiation. What is the explanation of the sufferings of Christ? Of the stripes that fell upon Him, of the nails that pierced Him, and the crown of thorns He wore? What is the explanation? This only: "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Like the scapegoat, He bore our sins away to a place "not inhabited". "The Lord hath made to meet upon him the iniquity of us all."

Not of a few, for this *all* is as comprehensive as the other "all." As surely as "all we" have gone astray, so surely hath the Lord laid upon Him the iniquity "of us all". There is no one omitted, no person forgotten, no single sin of any human life that has not been taken account of.

I read the story of a young man who was the son of a rich man, a prodigal who went away from home with a good sum of money in his pocket. But he soon spent it, and "began to be in want". He went from place to place trading on his father's good name. He had credentials to show whose son he was, and went from city to city, registering at the best hotels, and remaining as long as the management would trust him. When he could stay no longer in one place, he went on; and thus left a long trail of unpaid accounts behind him. After a while he began to be uneasy, fearing he would be overtaken by the law.

He was walking down the street of a large American city one day when a hand was laid firmly upon his shoulder. For a moment he did not look to see, but said to himself, "Caught at last." When he lifted his eyes, instead of seeing a constable in blue, he looked into the face of his own father. He was more troubled at his father's presence than he would have been at that of an officer of the law. "Well, my son", said the father, "I have found you at last. I have followed you now for many weeks. I went to a certain city, and found you had registered at a certain hotel and ran up a big bill in my name, and left without paying it." "Yes", said the boy, "I did." "And outside the hotel you incurred liabilities lavishly, and left your bills unpaid." "Yes; it is true." "I followed you from there to another city, and found you had repeated the programme of the first city." "Yes", said the boy shamefacedly, "I did." "I enquired, and found out how much you owed." The man told his son of

all the places he had visited, and the young man's spirits went down and down. He said to himself, "I hope he did not discover such a debt, and such a debt, and such a debt." He was afraid for his father to know how much he owed.

At last his father said, "Now, my boy, I must tell you that I have diligently enquired, and I have found out all you owe—and I have paid it all." Instantly the boy looked up and said, "All paid! I hope you did not miss anything." It was a very different story when it was paid. "I hope you did not miss anything." "No. I advertised for your creditors, searched them all out. I have paid all your debts; now I want you to come home and begin over again." "I will", said the young man.

How fearful we are lest God should discover what sinners we are! But he has discovered it. "From him no secrets are hid." But, blessed be His name, He "has made to meet upon him the iniquity of us all". He has paid it all. Who was He—oh, who was He—who could He have been to bear the iniquity of us all? What manner of man must He have been? He could not have been a man only. Your sins would have crushed Him, or mine. But it is He Who "upholds all things by the word of his power", none other than the Son of God Himself, of Whom the choir sang just now. "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

He was so rich that He paid all your debts, and all my debts, and everybody else's debts—and all that He paid has affected no appreciable diminution of His infinite wealth. Still the "unsearchable riches of Christ" are left for us to live on for the rest of time, and throughout all eternity.

D. L. Moody used to say that there are two doors to this text—I heard someone say it, I never read it myself—an entrance and an exit, and that one was as wide as the other. "All we like sheep have gone astray." The individual lost in the mass? Oh no! "We have turned every one to his own way." Go through that door, my unsaved friend. Admit it. "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." The atonement is as wide as human need, sufficient to wash all our sins away. Do you not think we should be very foolish to go away from this building to-night without having our debts paid?

"Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

Let us pray:

O Lord, once again we praise Thee for this great salvation. Those of us who know Thy name, and have put our trust in Thee, and have been made partakers of this grace, would fain praise Thee yet again for this great redemption:

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

We have nothing else to think about, to preach about, to sing about, but that central fact, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture.

It may be that in this service to-night there are some who have come to the parting of the ways, some with whom Thou hast dealt for many years, with whom Thou art dealing now. May this be an hour of decision, when by the grace of Thy Holy Spirit some may be enabled to see their need, and put their trust in Thee. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

THE SEPARATE SCHOOL ISSUE

It is to be regretted that the present vulgarian aggregation at Toronto's Billingsgate, commonly known as the Provincial Legislature, makes it useless to reason with them respecting any subject of debate either within or without the Legislature. The most that can be hoped for in the present situation is that if information is given the respectable majority among Ontario electors, they will so react from the vulgarities of Hepburnism as to effect a Provincial return to legislative sanity, and at least to the decencies, and perhaps ultimately to the amenities, of public life.

It has been assumed that the separatist special privilege principle involved in the institution of Roman Catholic Separate Schools was an immovable Constitutional fixture. Obviously, the present Provincial Administration does not so regard it, for Mr. Roebuck, in his speech in the Legislature, said:

"There can be no finality about anything, so long as the great world rolls around, year after year, day after day. No act can be drawn by one generation so that no 'i' can be dotted and no 't' crossed by another."

We believe Mr. Roebuck is on sound and safe ground at this point. In principle, his statement agrees with that of the Honourable George Brown, who warned the Roman Catholics that their perpetual agitation for greater privilege might "sweep away the last vestige of separate school law from the statute book".

In view of these considerations, the whole Separate School principle is manifestly open to review.

We are certain it is a *vicious principle from a national point of view*, because it separates various elements of a community, and makes national unity difficult, if not impossible. It is a *violation of the principle of separation of church and state*. It uses state money for the propagation of certain religious tenets. It is unfair to all citizens who are not Roman Catholics, in that it grants special privileges to a particular form of religion. If separate Roman Catholic Schools can be justified in principle, the Jews have the same right to separate schools, and, if Jews, the various religious colours of Jews also: Orthodox and Reform Jews are each entitled to their schools.

By the same principle, each of the so-called Protestant denominations is entitled to its school—the Anglican, the United Church, and the Presbyterian Church. The United Church has a right to its day schools, to teach the doctrines of Unionism; and the Presbyterian Church an equal right to its day schools, to defend its children against such doctrines. The same principle holds with respect to Baptists. There are many varieties in each of the denominations, and each has just as much right to receive exemption from the necessity of supporting public schools in order that they may use their money for the support of their own denominational schools as have the Roman Catholics.

But further, we notice Dr. Simpson, the Minister of Education, seriously proposes a course of religious instruction in our public schools. If he adopts it, he will make more trouble for himself and his Government than by the enlargement of the separate school privilege. Public school teachers are people of sound moral character, who have conformed to the state requirements educationally; and, when employed, become servants of the state. But it is no part of the state's function to teach religion; and no state can guarantee that its servants shall be qualified to teach religion.

Who should determine the course of religious instruction to be given? For example, a minister not far from Jarvis Street Church recently expressed the idea that if the Lord Jesus Christ were to return to Toronto, as in the days of His flesh, He would probably take a course in theology; He would adopt the evolutionary hypothesis. He expressed the view that Jesus of Nazareth knew less of the natural sciences than the boys and girls attending our schools. Thus the Lord Jesus Christ is reduced to the level of a man. The gentleman expressing these views has a perfect right to believe these things, and to teach them. The members of the church of which he is the minister have a perfect right to support the church for the propagation of such views. But suppose such a minister were a public or high school teacher, and were to teach such views in tax-supported schools? We, for one, would choose to go to jail rather than pay one dollar to the support of what, in our view, is religious poison.

In England twenty or more years ago there was a passive resistance movement, when thousands of people refused to pay the school taxes, because the schools were being used for the teaching of things which they did not believe. We are sure that if Dr. Simpson were to put his plan in operation, there would be a passive-resistance movement here, and thousands of people would refuse to pay taxes for the support of such schools.

The public school is a state institution, and any educational system under the control of the state should be an exclusively secular system of education. The moment the state meddles with religion, it goes beyond its province; and the moment the church, as an organization, invokes the aid of the state for the propagation of its views, it also steps beyond its proper sphere. We are convinced that the Roman Catholic Separate School is the prolific mother of most of the political corruption of this country, and its influence tends to make the Dominion an aggregation of groups rather than a national unit.

We are opposed to separate schools in any form; but were they left as they are, with no enlargement of privilege, we should be disposed to regard their continuance at the present time as the lesser of two evils, the greater being the stirring up of racial and religious animosities, that is bound to result from a re-opening of the separate school question. We may add, it will not do for Mr. Roebuck and others to charge the opponents of separate schools with stirring up strife. Such opponents may no more legitimately be charged with disturbing the peace than is the householder who resists the burglar who, in the quiet of the night hours, breaks into his house to rob him of his treasure.

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

Missionaries Praised

Praise for the kindness and charity of two Canadian Protestant Missionaries shown to an Irish priest, Father John Kennedy, who comes from Dublin, is given in a report to the Vatican from the Catholic authorities in Liberia.

Father Kennedy was dangerously ill at his mission at Bassa, Liberia, and was attended only by two native Catholics, who were unable to render any medical aid. Learning of his illness Rev. and Mrs. H. L. Davey, both members of the Canadian Baptist Mission, several miles from Bassa, went to the priest and nursed him until he was well enough to travel.

Bishop John Collins, Apostolic Vicar of Liberia, in reporting this action, says, "We owe a great debt of gratitude to

the Rev. and Mrs. Davey. May God reward them for their charity."

25th of May Rally

The Committee in charge of the Rally to be held on May 25th in the Stanley Avenue Baptist Church, Hamilton, has been fortunate in securing Dr. J. W. Hoyt, formerly of Hamilton, now of Warsaw, Indiana, to be the Special Speaker on this occasion. It is hoped that our readers will keep this in mind and make plans to attend these meetings.

Waverley Road, Toronto

On Sunday, April 5th, at the Waverley Road Baptist Church, six were given the right hand of fellowship, and six others came in response to the invitation. Two came for salvation, two for baptism, and the others for Church membership. The Church is enjoying good times, and the people are most hopeful of a very fruitful future under the leadership of their pastor, Rev. W. E. Atkinson.

Bethel, St. Catharines

The happy conclusion of two weeks of preaching services by Rev. W. E. Atkinson brought great joy to many hearts. Several confessed Christ as Saviour and Lord for the first time, others came for baptism, and not a few rededicated themselves to the task of soul-winning. The closing service lasted until almost eleven o'clock on Friday evening, April 3rd, before it was finally dismissed.

The Trinity Baptist Church, Niagara Falls, was well represented at this service also. They had motored over to join with their St. Catharine brethren. Rev. J. F. Dempster is to be congratulated on the splendid work he is doing in Niagara Falls, Ontario. Although they were deprived of their former place of meeting, the presence of the Lord has not left them. Souls are being saved, and the Bible School shows almost a one hundred per cent. increase.

The work in both St. Catharines and Niagara Falls is new, and should call forth much prayer on behalf of all the other Union Churches. Bethel, in St. Catharines received an unexpected and almost irreparable loss when it learned the Treasurer, Mrs. Morran, found it necessary to take up her residence in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She has carried on so well and faithfully; and it is with deep regret that the pastor, Rev. E. E. Hooper, and the members bid her adieu.

Four happy believers followed the Lord in baptism on Sunday, March 29th, and others are following soon. The pastor and officers are looking forward to enlarging or erecting a new building entirely, as the present one on Sunday evenings is taxed to its utmost capacity.

York Road, Guelph

"We have been having a real time of revival here in Guelph," writes the pastor, Rev. H. H. Chipchase. "Souls are being saved in a most glorious way. The secret of it is that we are now in our eighth consecutive week of prayer. Homes are opening up everywhere for our cottage prayer meetings. My, what a time we are having! I think that if every church in our Union would only enter into daily prayer meetings and keep it up—not for a week—but week after week, then our problems would be solved and the revival so much needed would come. We are merely experiencing the 'droppings' which are wonderful, but we are praying for the 'showers'. I have twelve services each week. The attendance at all services is on the increase. Last Sunday the total attendance for the day was fifty-five better than a year ago.

"One Sunday night a mother was under conviction but would not yield. The Lord did not leave her alone all week and she could hardly wait for Sunday to come. Her husband warned her that she was not to get 'converted', and even came to church to make sure. But before he could stop her she had her hand up. He was displeased, but has cooled down now and is under conviction. We are praying for his salvation.

"The same Sunday evening a husband and wife were noticeably under conviction. They went home, the husband to walk the floor all night. On Wednesday I called to see them and had the joy of leading them both to Christ.

"This is the way the Lord is blessing in Guelph. How we covet your prayers that it may continue!"

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

Vol. 11

No. 2

REV. ALEX. THOMSON, EDITOR

Lesson 16

Second Quarter

April 19th, 1936

HEZEKIAH'S RECOVERY FROM SICKNESS

HEZEKIAH'S RECOVERY (38:1-22)

Hezekiah's sickness (v. 1)—"In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death." The universal nature of sickness is quite apparent. It affects every child of Adam, and spares neither race, nor class. It entered the human family as a consequence of sin, and remains as a testimony to man's fallen, frail, finite condition. Some are more affected by it than others. This does not imply that they are the greater sinners. Sometimes godly people are great sufferers. Sickness is not always due to personal sin, as some mistakenly teach. It may arise from such a cause, or from several other causes of a personal nature (Phil. 2:25-30), or it may be Satanic in infliction (Luke 13:16), or divine in chastisement (Deut. 28:15-27). It may also appear in one of many forms, and it may be slight in its effect, or "unto death", as in Hezekiah's case.

Isaiah's warning (v. 1)—"Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live." The thought of death has always a solemnizing effect. Man is so helpless before this dread experience he can but stand by, after having done his best, and watch his nearest and dearest being taken from him. The power of death is irresistible, and its experience is also irrevocable, unless by the exercise of the divine will. It is not a respecter of persons, or races. It affects the king on the throne, as well as the pauper in the workhouse. It brings to an end the physical life of the individual, but we know from God's Word that it does not end existence. The dead in Christ are absent from the body, and present with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8), and the wicked are in Hades (Luke 16:23). We are also informed that after death there comes the judgment (Heb. 9:27). Death is inevitable for all; with the exception of those who will be alive when the Lord comes (1 Thess. 4:17), and it is the part of wisdom so to live each day that we shall be prepared to leave the things of earth, and be ready to enter the Lord's presence (Amos 4:12). Such preparedness can only be effected through Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12).

Hezekiah's prayer (vs. 2, 3)—Isaiah's message had a powerful effect on Hezekiah. He was sick, yet he wanted to live. In this he was but manifesting the general desire of men. No normal person wishes to die. The future of the saint of God is bright and blessed, yet he desires to remain on this earth until he feels that his work is done (2 Tim. 4:6). Three things are related of Hezekiah in this instance. First, "he turned his face toward the wall". In doing this, he turned away from the persons in the chamber. He wanted to be alone with God, without the presence of others distracting his attention, and perhaps interrupting him in his prayer. In engaging in prayer, we must first of all concentrate our attention on God, and draw nigh unto Him. Second, he "prayed unto the Lord"; and the petition of his prayer is given. He called upon God to remember the devoted life he had lived. Temporal blessings were promised to the Israelites for obedience to the will of God, and probably Hezekiah had this in mind when he reminded the Lord of the nature of his past life (Deut. 28:1-14). Note the wisdom of Hezekiah in praying, and the power of such an exercise in answers thereto (John 14:13, 14). Third, he "wept sore", or "with great weeping". This indicates the extent of his grief. He was dying without an heir to the throne, and this undoubtedly added to his grief, if indeed it did not constitute his chief sorrow. He was probably sorry also to depart before his work was done.

Hezekiah's recovery (vs. 4-8)—The answer to Hezekiah's prayer came very swiftly. It was before Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that "the word of the Lord came to him", instructing him to return to Hezekiah, and gave him a message respecting his recovery, and his national deliverance out of the hand of the Assyrians. There is first the assurance that God had heard his prayer, and had seen his

tears. The Lord is observant of the actions of men, and knows their motives. He does not answer as quickly in every case; sometimes faith is tested, but the answer is sure, if in accordance with the will of God (1 John 5:14, 15). The answer to the prayer is given in the second place. This related to the healing of the body, and to victory over enemies. "I will add unto thy days fifteen years." This is a very definite answer, and must have brought consolation to the heart of the king. Yet it must have created somewhat mixed feelings later. He knew he was going to live a certain time, and he was also aware of the time of his death. Such knowledge is not an unmixed blessing. There is something to be said in favour of withholding such information from us. We need not then think of death, but concentrate on the highest things of life, while prepared to depart at any time. The life of Hezekiah during these fifteen years was evidently not all that it might have been (2 Chron. 32:25, 26), and we are aware also that Manasseh who acted so wickedly on the throne was born during this period (2 Chron. 33:1). The question arises therefore as to whether it might not have been better if Hezekiah had died during his sickness. It is better to submit life and death to the will of God (Jas. 4:15). It is of further interest to note that while God healed Hezekiah, Isaiah was instructed to apply a plaster of figs to the boil (v. 21). God heals with means, and without means (2 Kings 5:14; Matt. 9:6, 7). Assurance is given of the safety of Jerusalem from the attacks of the Assyrians, and a sign is given of the certainty of answered prayer. The shadow of the sun on the sun-dial was brought back ten degrees. This was contrary to the ordinary course of nature, and constituted a miracle. Note other miracles of a like nature (Josh. 10:12-14; 1 Sam. 12:16-18).

The song of thanks (vs. 9-12)—Gratitude to God for His gracious exercise of power would be expected on the part of the one blessed thereby, and it was manifest in this song of Hezekiah's. In it he describes his expectancy of death, the frailty and temporary nature of life, his physical suffering, his recovery by divine power, his deliverance from the grave, the impossibility of the dead praising God in the land of the living, and His exuberant praise of God in which he desires others to join. Note the reference to his sins, cast behind God's back (v. 17). When God forgives, He forgets. He remembers our sins against us no more (Jer. 31:34). There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1). Observe also the place of praise "in the house of the Lord". We should be regular attendants in His house (Heb. 10:25).

THE BABYLONIAN AMBASSADORS (39:1-8)

The visit of the Babylonian ambassadors was a test of Hezekiah's attitude. "God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart." (2 Chron. 32:31). "The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9). And in it pride is prominent (Is. 9:9; Mark 7:21, 22). This is evident in Hezekiah's case as he shows the servants of Merodach-baladan his most precious possessions. Evidently this king was favourably disposed toward him, probably due to the fact that like the king of Judah he had rebelled against the king of Assyria. Two reasons are assigned for the visit: one, in relation to the recovery from sickness (v. 1), and the other connected with the wonder of the sun-dial (2 Chron. 32:31). It was right to treat in a courteous manner these men from a foreign land, but Isaiah finds fault with the too friendly attitude of the king, and the foolishness of showing them the most valuable treasures of the palace, and predicts the exile of Judah under the same power, which came to pass over one hundred years later. Note Hezekiah's submission to the will of God (v. 8).

OTHER BOOKS BY DR. T. T. SHIELDS

"CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT"

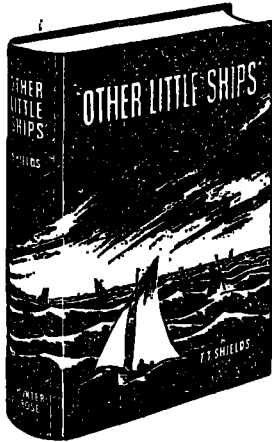
A Series of Week-Evening Bible Lectures from Genesis to II Samuel. 50c.

"THE MOST FAMOUS TRIAL OF HISTORY"

A series of sermons preached in Jarvis Street Church, on "The Trial of Jesus". 50c.

THE OXFORD GROUP MOVEMENT ANALYZED.

A booklet of 40 pages. Five cents per single copy, 25 for \$1.00, and 100 for \$3.75.



“OTHER LITTLE SHIPS”

4 Copies for Easter Presents for \$5.00

ORDER FORM FOR DR. SHIELDS' NEW BOOK

THE GOSPEL WITNESS
130 Gerrard Street East
Toronto, Ont.

Please find enclosed { \$5.00 } for which send me, postpaid, { 4 copies } of “Other Little Ships”. (If remitting by cheque, add 15 cents for exchange.)

Name

Address

Subscribe to The Gospel Witness Now

For only \$2.00 it will visit you every week of the year, carrying the atmosphere of the services of a great church, and a verbatim report of a sermon, and for eight months, a Bible lecture too. Subscribe for yourself and for a friend. The paper is now in its fourteenth year, and circulates in over fifty different countries.

The 52 Sermons and 30 Lectures on Biblical Theology appearing in one year's issues of “The Gospel Witness,” if published in book form would make about eight volumes of 150 pages each. Would not this be a good all-year-round gift for a preacher, teacher, or student? And all for \$2.00. A paper-covered book of sermons is sent with each year's subscription.

Send “The Gospel Witness” to five or ten or twenty. One layman in Australia sent us a cheque for \$200.00 with seventy-three names—the name of every Baptist minister in his state, requesting that we send them “The Gospel Witness” for a year, and put the balance in “The Gospel Witness” Fund. Go thou and do likewise. Write us at once. Send P.O. order or cheque—if you send cash please register it. If by cheque, add 15c for exchange.

SPECIAL OFFER

In order to introduce “The Gospel Witness” to new subscribers, for \$3.00 we will send the paper for one year and a copy of “Other Little Ships.”

Order Blank

“The Gospel Witness,”
130 Gerrard St. E., Toronto 2.

Please find enclosed \$3.00 for which send “The Gospel Witness” for one year, with a copy of “Other Little Ships”; or \$2.00 for one year's subscription to “The Gospel Witness”; to the undersigned.

Name

Address