

The Gospel Witness

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AND IN DEFENCE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.
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"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."—Romans 1:16.

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

HIDDEN WEALTH MADE MANIFEST

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, August 2nd, 1936
(Stenographically Reported)

"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."—Colossians 1:26, 27.

Prayer before the Sermon

We thank Thee that Thou hast not left us orphans, but hast sent Thy Holy Spirit into the world that we all may come to know Thee in Jesus Christ the Lord. We thank Thee that so many in this assembly this evening already know Him as their Saviour. Thou hast led them in paths of righteousness for Thy name's sake; Thou hast given them a vital faith, thereby setting their feet in the path of the just which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

We are strangers and pilgrims. We live in the midst of change. Change and decay in all around we see. But we thank Thee for this heavenly Guide, for the Pillar of fire that shines in the darkness, for the Pillar of cloud that often shades us from the burning of the sun. We bless Thee that many here have proved the guidance of God, and have learned that the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord, and He delighteth in his ways.

We would this evening learn something more of this path that leads to Heaven. Thou wilt show us the path of life. In Thy presence is fulness of joy, and at Thy right hand there are pleasures for ever more. Give, we pray Thee, to every one here before Thee that divine direction which will turn all hearts heavenward, and set their affections, not upon things on the earth, but on things in Heaven.

It may be some in Thy presence are spiritual vagrants, and know not whither they go; their lives are without plan or purpose so far as they are able to discern, they cannot see what a day or an hour may bring forth, for they have no consciousness of divine direction. O Lord, all such must be burdened, as we all have been. We pray Thee to take from heart and conscience the intolerable load of sin. May the blood of Jesus Christ Thy Son cleanse us all! May we be washed and made whiter than snow!—children of God, and heirs of eternal glory.

We would come to Thy holy Word this evening for further instruction. We thank Thee that Thou hast given us the Book. We thank Thee for Him of Whom it speaks, Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Help us that we may learn a little more about Him this evening; and that those who have never known Him may have their minds enlightened, and their eyes opened to behold the Chiefest among ten thousand, the altogether lovely One. So work in our

hearts by Thy Spirit that the love of God may be shed abroad therein, that so we may all fall in love with Thy Well-Beloved, and be shut up with Him for time and for eternity, made ready for the city of which He is the Light. Therefore let Thy Holy Spirit minister to us all, bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

Thus would we pray for all the household of faith, for Thy believing children of every name and race. So would we lift our hearts to Thee in humble petition in behalf of every missionary and minister of the cross; for all who are in special need; for the sick and the afflicted and the poor. O Thou Father of our spirits, overshadow us with Thy presence! Make us and all Thy people everywhere to know that Thy name verily is love, and that having spared not Thine own Son, Thou wilt with Him freely give us all things. So enrich us all by Thy grace, for time and for eternity, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

Those of you who have any familiarity with the epistles of this great apostle to the Gentiles, will recall that he is invariably careful to lay the foundation for an authoritative ministry by referring to his own divine commission and special authorization as a minister of the Word. He goes so far in the Epistle to the Ephesians to explain to those to whom he writes, how he came into possession of his unusual knowledge of the things of God, disclaiming all superiority on his own part, and gives the glory to God by declaring the subject of his discourse to be the subject of a divine revelation.

Writing to the Colossians, he speaks also of a dispensation of the grace of God which is given to him. He is a special commissioner; he has been authorized to proclaim the Word to them; and he speaks of its being his duty to fulfil the word of God. Then he enters upon rather a strange and somewhat involved definition of that message which he is charged to deliver: he describes it as a "mystery", something that has been "hid from ages and from generations, but now is made mani-

fest to his saints". He says it is the purpose of God to make this secret known, a secret involving vast wealth, "the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles". He then summarizes the whole matter by resolving it into a very clear definition, "Which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

It may help us fortify our minds against the assaults of the evil one, and assist in establishing us in what the Spirit here calls "the word of the truth of the gospel", if we examine these several definitions, and are led a little more clearly to apprehend our entire indebtedness to, and dependence upon, the revealing grace, the disclosing ministry, of the Holy Spirit.

I.

The message which Paul is sent to deliver, which he calls "the word of God", the gospel which he is charged to proclaim, he says IS NOT A MATTER OF HUMAN DISCOVERY, BUT A MYSTERY OF DIVINE MANIFESTATION. How it would arm us against the assaults of the enemy could we ever keep that great truth in mind!

The idea seems quite generally to prevail that Christianity is one of many religions. Indeed, in many of our theological seminaries, there is a Chair of what they are pleased to call "Comparative Religions". Students are trained in the art of developing or evolving a composite of the best elements of all religions, and the religion which the missionary is sometimes supposed nowadays to proclaim is a kind of crazy quilt made up of a little bit of silk from everybody's bonnet, the thoughts of men, a cleverly articulated human device, a fabric woven by human skill,—as though the religion of Christ were but a human system of precepts and principles, and therefore subject to all sorts of amendments and alterations, to revisions, and, if need be, to entire rejection, like all other human matters.

Those of us who believe in the finality of the Christian revelation are frequently voted to be rather out-of-date, to be wanting in the disposition to look forward, wanting in intellectual progress; our minds are "static" and "stagnant"; we are easily satisfied. That is not true. We recognize the value of human progress, and I trust endeavour to keep abreast of the times. I am not one who is disposed to dilate upon the glories of "the good old days". I am glad that some fashions have changed. I like occasionally to look at an old photograph, and enjoy a good laugh at the enormous hats like hanging baskets turned upsidedown, or a window-box! When I see the ladies' dresses of those days I wonder how they got into church. Certainly you could not put many of them in one pew! And the men were no better. It is rather amusing to see those old styles we have outgrown—but to which we may revert if we lose some of our wisdom.

We have abandoned many things, particularly in the material realm—and I think we have abandoned them with profit. I have no desire to go back to the crude and primitive conditions under which people lived in former days. But that does not necessarily imply that in the sphere of religion we must try also to keep up with the latest style; nor that in that realm there is nothing fixed, certain, and stable. I suppose the assumption of the universality of law, the general acceptance of the evolutionary absurdity, rather unconsciously to one's self, possesses the mind and gives it a bias in the direction of the assumption that the law which obtains in one realm of life must necessarily obtain in another, and therefore that as we outgrow our childish notions, and, later, our coats and our fashions, we shall, as we grow

up, outgrow our religion too. That is the result of a misapprehension of what Christianity really is. If we can get the apostolic view of things, it will help to establish us in the truth, so that no wind of doctrine will be able to carry us about, and we shall become immune to the sleight and cunning craftiness of men.

The gospel, whatever it is, *is here said to be not a modern thing*: it is something that has obtained for many ages and generations, although it has not been known. We dig the coal out of the bowels of the earth. We draw the oil out of the ground, to run our cars. But these elements are not new. They were there in Abraham's time. There is nothing new in electricity. It inheres in the physical constitution of the universe, and was there from the beginning. We have been slow in discovering it, and sometimes are disposed to congratulate ourselves on our superior penetration, having discerned things which eluded our forebears. But even in the physical realm, all these things of which we are so proud, and which are called modern, are not new: they are as old as creation; they are only new as to their discovery. And on that plane where we can work with power and speed, and use microscope, telescope, and test-tube, where we have to do with the physical order of things, it is possible for men to wrest secrets from the earth which others did not know, and so to slough off old habits, and to improve conditions of life.

Too much of that, we cannot have. Some may complain of the motor-car: but I fear I am lazy enough to enjoy riding occasionally. I have no word of condemnation for modern inventions. I become rather indignant in my own thought at the folly of some economists who persuade themselves, and seek to persuade others, that human inventions in the sphere of mechanics have impoverished the world. It is our use of them that has brought us disaster. People are becoming rich by digging the gold out of the earth. Gold cannot be made. No alchemist ever learned to produce the yellow metal by any combination of baser metals. It is still an original product of the Creator's hand. It was hidden, like the gospel, "for ages and generations," but men have discovered it, to their abiding profit.

So of other basic metals. They are original elements in the creation. What a stir was made when Professor and Madame Curie a few years ago discovered what was hailed as a new element, radium! It was not made, but was an unquenchable fire that came from the Creator's hand, and which can never be produced in any human laboratory.

How ready we are to advantage ourselves of human discoveries, and of man's ability to utilize the original elements of creation! We take them without thanking God for them. But do you not see that between all these things and the gospel, there is an analogy in this respect, that the gospel is not a human product, it is not something that has been evolved by the human mind: it is an original element, although hidden away for ages and generations, it is of heavenly origin, and its content is wholly divine. It is not an amalgam, not made up of the mental operations of Peter, and Paul, and the other apostles: for, saith Paul, "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."

How the critics love to speak of the gospel as "Paulinism"—as though it were the product of Paul's mind. On the contrary, Paul said in effect, "It is not mine. This gospel which I preach is a mystery. This sacred secret

was hidden for ages, and for generations." Oh that we might learn that great truth, that He Who stored the cellars of the world with wealth inestimable, leaving His human creatures to discover it for their physical advantage, anticipated all our moral and religious requirements, and provided us with wealth in that direction too—albeit He hid it away "for ages and generations".

It was hidden in such a way that it was not humanly discoverable. Even a professor of Chicago University could not discover it—though he should live to be as old as Methuselah. It was a mystery, the Lord's secret which He hid "for ages and generations"; and which no man in the past, the present, or the future, how great soever his ability, however unusual his powers of penetration, ever discovered or could discover. This matter is *not subject to the ordinary processes of human effort and research.* We are told on nearly every page of Scripture that spiritual truth can be known only as God reveals it. This secret, this way to God, this way home, cannot be found on any map drawn by human geographer. You can get a map of almost any place at your gas-station, but you cannot find out how to get to heaven by attending all the universities of the world. The gate that opens upon that pathway is hidden, and has been hidden for ages and generations. "The world by wisdom knew not God." It never has known God: it never will know God, for the reason that man, in his sinful folly, "did not like to retain God in his knowledge". Therefore God gave them up to vile affections. They lost their way, and can never find their way back until the Good Shepherd goes in search of them.

Can I make clear to you that what Paul really says is that the gospel, the way of life, Christianity, in a word, is not only a secret, but *it is an unique secret?* It is hidden, and can be known by one method only. "The mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints." That is the truth: the way to God "now is made manifest". You remember it is said of the veil of the temple which excluded the people, and permitted the entrance into the holiest of all even of the high priest only once a year, and that not without blood—"the Holy Ghost this signifying that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present". Mortal man did not know how to find the way to God.

When this is recognized, we shall not expect men, even the cleverest of them, to know anything about the gospel. When Mr. Professor writes his learned book, and follows it with a second, and a third, and tries to tear the Bible to pieces, and to substitute for God's way, some other way; and to preach, instead of the gospel, "another gospel which is not another", the truly enlightened believer will say, "Poor man! a blind man trying to grope his way to the gate of truth".

I met a man some time ago who had no sense of smell; and who told me that an onion and a rose were both the same to him. Happy man—sometimes, poor impoverished man at other times. How lovely to go into the garden when the air is laden with perfume, and the trees are full of birds, and there is colour, fragrance, music, everywhere! But there are men who cannot see the flowers, nor smell their fragrance, nor hear the music—who yet attempt to describe them, who try to tell us what a sunset is like, to describe the myriad voices of summer which make this physical world vocal with the

praise of God. How grotesque such an one's description of a rose would be! But it would probably be nearer in form and colour to reality than the unbelieving professor's guesses respecting the things of God. Poor blind man, he knows nothing about it. This sacred secret is within the keeping of God Himself "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." Until He comes to a man, and by His grace puts him among the saints, and makes manifest that which was hidden from ages and generations, he must abide in darkness indeed.

A recognition of the law underlying this declaration of the Holy Ghost through the Apostle will enable us to stand unmoved amid the storms of criticism that beat upon the Word of God. When they tell us they do not understand it, and that there is no wisdom in it, we can answer, "Thank you for the admission. We are aware you do not understand it. The wisdom of God is foolishness with men".

II.

Let me show you further that the divine purpose in making known this secret, is **TO MAKE KNOWN TO MEN A VAST MINE OF SPIRITUAL WEALTH.** When the prospector in an unknown territory discovers evidence of the presence of certain valuable minerals, silver or gold, how zealously and jealously he guards his secret lest any body else should learn where the wealth is hidden, and take advantage of him, and procure it before he is able to take it out for himself. Even a remedy for a disease is guarded. Men would fain turn it to their own profit rather than to the profit of those who need its healing ministry. How eagerly people listen to any promise of the rapid acquisition of wealth, any means of getting rich quickly! How many people have been deceived! How gullible people are! But the tables are turned when the deceiver is asked for the large dividends he has promised, and he cannot pay. Instead of sitting in his mahogany-lined office, he sometimes finds himself before the judge—or behind iron bars—for promising wealth he had no power to bestow.

But the fact that people are so ready to listen to such manifestly baseless promises indicates that they desire to be rich. It is no secret: I should like to be rich. If you know of anybody who has a million or so who does not know what to do with it, tell him about me! There are many things I should like to do that I cannot, many things I should like to have. But I fear you will say, "I would not tell him about you: I would whisper my own name". Of course you would.

Therefore, hear me—the gospel promises wealth. Not in any fantastic, impossible way, for Paul says, "God would make known the riches of the glory among the Gentiles". He has a secret that would make the whole world rich, and rich forever. But it is a secret. Nobody could ever have imagined it. The gospel is an inversion of all ordinary laws. Those men who said of the apostles, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also", spoke more wisely and accurately than they knew. Sin has inverted the laws of order, it is an inversion of life in general. Instead of life being centred in Him Who is the light and life of the universe, it makes life eccentric, therefore full of friction. God's plan is to restore the balance, to eliminate the eccentricity, and make life revolve smoothly on its divine Axis. He waits to make known "the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles". The

Creator and Preserver of all things says, "I have a secret in which are involved riches of glory which have long been hidden, but which now I desire to make known".

There are two things for which men live, named in the text, *riches and glory*, or honour. How concerned men are for their own reputation! Germany wanted to have her place in the sun. That was little Jack Horner's philosophy. You remember that famous person:

"Little Jack Horner sat in a corner,
Eating a Christmas pie;
He put in his thumb, and took out a plum,
And said, 'What a good boy am I!'"

Everyone likes to say that! How good, how important, how clever, how able, how superior, I am! Few actually say that, but some who do not verbally make such claim, without argument, calmly assume a superiority which they think must be self-evident to every person of intelligence. They believe profoundly in their own excellence. The difficulty, however, is to get other people to share their estimate of themselves. Yet men generally, even in the humblest spheres of life, are susceptible to a passion for that fame which Pope describes as "a fancy'd life in others' breath".

There are people who are not much in the public eye, who if ever their names happen to be printed in the newspaper, are extremely proud. They cut it out—not in the colloquial sense, but with scissors. Some friends are kind enough to send me newspaper clippings that have my name in them. I never preserve them: they do not interest me. To some people publicity is the breath of life. They are like the New York Jew who said, "I don't care what you say about me, so long as you mention my name". Such glory is evanescent. So is all glory which is dependent upon human estimates. Germany wanted a place in the sun—I would rather have a place in the shade when the thermometer stands at one hundred and six. A place in the sun may sometimes be very uncomfortable. I suppose Mussolini wanted a place in the sun! He wanted to add to the honour of Italy. If it is an honour to poison and mangle thousands of unarmed, inoffensive, half-civilized people, Mussolini has his glory—but he is welcome to it: "Verily I say unto you, they have their reward."

It is not of such glory the Lord here speaks. It is of the glory that is inherent, which consists, not in what people think we are, but in what we really are—which is wholly different. A man may have a reputation for being honest, yet be a thief at heart. Better by far that men should call him a thief while he is at heart an honest man, than that they should think him an honest man while being a thief. The glory of which this text speaks is not a glory that consists in the thought of men, the reputation we enjoy, not in the plaudits of the world, at best a flimsy thing.

During the war years the praises of Lloyd George were everywhere sung. Clemenceau, the French Premier, spoke of him as the great Prime Minister who won the war. But they do not so speak of Mr. Lloyd George to-day. One of our newspapers spoke of him recently as a man who had lingered on the stage too long. We had better wait a while: I am not so sure. He may be destined to play the leading role again. Be that as it may, it does not pay to try to create for yourself a glory which depends on others' breath. The glory of the sun is what it is: it is its own inherent, unquenchable, light. It is independent of human caprice,

The riches of the glory of this mystery does not consist in a reputation for importance, or greatness, these riches consist in what we are of ourselves—the glory of the lily that cannot be gilded, the glory of the diamond that shines because it is a diamond. "The riches of the glory" will be the wealth involved in being, in a state, or character.

Have you seen a boy who did not know what he would become? He went to school, and developed certain aptitudes, and his teacher recommended his parents to give him opportunity to develop his mind in a certain direction. He developed great natural powers until things that were beyond the ability of many, fell easily within the scope of his capacity. You looked at him when he had become a great man, a benefactor of his race, and said with others, "I remember when he was a little boy". He cannot help that! Someone else proudly says, "I went to school with him". Yes; but you did not get on as he did. Within him there was vast wealth, a veritable gold mine, a silver mine, a diamond mine—qualities of heart and mind which by and by were developed into real greatness. After he became a famous man you exulted in the riches of the glory of his position, you reflected that it all resided inherently in his character and ability. He was all that men said he was. No plating nor veneering, but pure gold all through. What men said of him was said because his intrinsic worth was, in his maturity, made manifest.

But there is not much gold in you, not much gold in any of us. "In me", said Paul, "that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." "How is the gold become dim! How is the most fine gold changed! The stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street. The precious sons of Zion comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter!" But this mystery, this sacred secret, this something that God does for a man, that He puts into a man, makes possible the development of inestimable riches. God says that He has a secret whereby He can make everybody in the world rich, and rich forever. In a discussion in the British House of Commons some years ago, Lord Balfour—when he was known as plain Mr. A. J. Balfour—answering a Labourite, perhaps a near-Communist, who was lauding things in Russia, said, in effect, "The British Government has never doubted the efficacy of Sovietism to make rich men poorer": There is nothing easier than to make rich men poor, to take from one and give to another. The gospel is a plan whereby the Lord proposes to make poor men rich: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." There are riches of glory in store for all the saints.

III.

To some here this may sound rather vague. Therefore, let us put the vagueness aside, and use language that everybody understands. What do you mean, Paul, by "the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles"? He answers, "I mean this, 'Christ in you the hope of glory'." Therefore, **ABIDING WEALTH FOR TIME AND FOR ETERNITY IS IN CHRIST**. "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made." The world's great need to-day—it is a truism, but verily a fact—in individual, social, and national life, is Christ. But not Christ as an ideal—though He is that. Not Christ as an historic char-

acter only—He is that: "He died for our sins according to the scripture." May I say, not only Christ on the cross, for blessed be God, Christ is no longer on the cross. The Roman Catholics have their crucifixes which represent Jesus as being on the cross, but He is not on the cross. His revilers said, "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross". He did at last come down from the cross; but He proved that He was the Son of God, not by coming down from the cross, but by coming up from the grave, for He was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead". It is not Christ viewed only objectively, as an ideal, not only as an historic character who died, but the living Christ in you, "The hope of glory" is "Christ in you": in such relationship to Him consists the only way to wealth.

There is no hope for this old world unless and until Christ is received into the hearts of men. What would it mean to the world if a man like Hitler, or Mussolini, could be converted? What would it mean to Ontario if a man like Hepburn were converted? That would change everything. And that is the divine method. Christ died for our sins; He was buried as we saw in symbol to-night; He rose again, and ascended into heaven—and He lives. But He comes to abide in us. Christ is to be formed in us. That is what occurs when we believe. He comes to dwell in us.

How would you like to have John D. Rockefeller as a paying guest in your house? How would you like somebody to pay all your bills? It would be a comfortable experience to have a man with plenty of money put his arm through yours and say, "Come with me, for a holiday: we will have a good time." A man's gift maketh room for him; and were we to accept favours of men we should put ourselves under a perpetual obligation. There is only One in all the universe Who knows how to give. It requires more wisdom to give than to get. Many a man has been wise in making money, but foolish in spending it. Our gracious God knows how to give without impoverishing the recipient.

It is verily true that the Son of God comes to dwell in our hearts, to share all the wealth of heaven with us; His grace makes many who are poor so far as this world's goods are concerned, rich in faith, and "heirs according to the promise". This is the only Remedy for the poverty and darkness and misery of men—individuals and nations. "Christ in you the hope of glory."

Is He in you? "He is in the Bible", someone says. Yes. "He was on the cross?" Yes. "He came out of the grave?" Yes. "And He went into the glory?" That is all true. But has He come into your heart? Is He in you? Until He is, you will never be safe. But if He be in you, there is in you "the hope of glory". There is no other hope of glory for anyone.

Perhaps some man here this evening has in his heart a sense of failure and loss. He says, "The best of life is gone. If there be anything in this gospel, I wish it had found me when I was young. I wish it could have mastered me before certain habits had bound my soul about like iron chains, until I am held in a bondage from which I cannot deliver myself. I wish I could have been a free man, and a good man. I wish I could—but it is too late." No, my friend, it is not too late. Christ will come and dwell in your heart by faith, and when He comes, He will bring all His power and glory with Him, and will deposit within you the potentialities of all the wealth of Heaven, where you will be able to afford to walk on streets of gold, and to feel that gold at last is in its proper place—under your feet.

He can make us over again, into new creatures, so that we shall bear at last His image and likeness. When we do, there will be in our hearts "the hope of glory". "The hope of glory"! I heard the former Prime Minister say, a man whom I have always greatly admired, whose character has always been above reproach, that so far as this world was concerned, it had little to offer him. Perhaps some might think it sounded egotistical: I do not think he meant it to be so. He said he was supremely concerned to be assured of eternal life.

What do all these bubbles and baubles mean? Let them go. What we need is "the hope of glory", so that instead of looking back and saying, "I have lived my day", we shall entertain "the hope of glory". A man said to me recently, "The future belongs to the young men." The future belongs to blood-bought saints. The glory awaiting us is a glory that is unfading, the glory of Jesus Christ.

I spoke to you a few weeks ago from the text, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." Then He said, "The glory which thou hast given me, I have given them."

I do not know whether King Edward will marry—neither do you. But if he should, when that day of coronation comes next year, should the one event precede the other, when the crown is placed upon his brow, it will be shared by someone else; but if alone he must wear his crown alone. But the Prince of Glory determined He would have a bride, and desired that on that great coronation day the glory which would be His, should be shared, by one for whom He gave His life. What a prospect! Is that prospect yours? Let us praise God for the earnest of our inheritance here, and for the hope of everlasting life and unfading glory in the land to which we are bound.

As for you who do not know Christ, I beg of you to hear His knock, and bid Him come in.

THE PASTOR'S ABSENCE

Dr. Shields will preach in Philadelphia in connection with Rev. George Palmer's "Morning Cheer" Evangelistic Tent Campaign, August 8th to 16th inclusive, each week day from Monday to Saturday. The noon service from 12.15 to 1.00 o'clock will be broadcast over WIP.

Following the 16th he will take two weeks' holidays, being away Sunday, the 23rd, returning to Toronto for Sunday the 30th. But the twenty addresses he will give in the nine days in Philadelphia will just about make up for his two weeks' holiday. The Pastor hopes, however, to take another Sunday rest a little later.

Rev. W. S. Whitcombe, M.A., will preach August 9th and 16th, and Rev. W. Gordon Brown, M.A., August 23rd and the later Sunday in September. The Monday and the Thursday evening lectures will also be taken by these brethren.

A MUCH-APPRECIATED VISITOR

Last Sunday Rev. Rolfe Barnard, who is conducting an evangelistic campaign at the Calvin Baptist Church, Toronto, of which Rev. Frank Roblin is Pastor, very kindly acceded to our request to preach at the open air service held every Sunday evening at the conclusion of the regular Jarvis Street service.

Mr. Barnard is a preacher to the manner born. His sermon, full of gospel truth, on, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" was a mighty appeal for surrender to Christ. Nothing tests a preacher's powers like preaching in the open air. No cathedral congregation ever listened more attentively and reverently than that open air throng listened to Mr. Barnard. He held every one right to the end.

We rejoice in the able, eloquent, mighty ministry of this handsome young Southerner. We predict Rev. Rolfe Barnard will some day be known as one of America's really great preachers.

THE VALUE OF POLEMICS

Many sincere and devout Christians are averse to every form of religious controversy. They prefer *irenics* to *polemics*. They would proclaim the doctrines upon which all Christians are agreed, and relegate all potentially disputatious matters to a subordinate place, and, in some instances, ignore them altogether. We have always believed that such an irenic attitude must ultimately result in the reduction of matters of general agreement almost to the vanishing point.

The greater part of the Bible was born in controversy; and much of the New Testament was written for the defence of Christianity against the errors of the day. Both THE GOSPEL WITNESS and the Jarvis Street Pulpit have often been criticized because they have not been content with mere statements of truth, but have endeavoured to combat such errors as are opposed to the Word of God.

Some of our friends have occasionally enquired, not unkindly, what we accomplish by our defence of the faith. THE GOSPEL WITNESS almost from its beginning made rapid headway among ministers, and we have been happy now, for many years, in the knowledge that hundreds of ministers of all denominations read the message of this paper and the Jarvis Street Pulpit every week. That it has exercised a steady influence on many we have been assured. The following letter "from Missouri" affords some indication of the value of combating the errors of the day.

"FROM MISSOURI"

—, Mo., July 25, 1936.

Dear Dr. Shields:

I want to tell you how helpful you have been to me in my work as an humble pastor of a small country church. I have been so discouraged with the attitude of the ministry in this section of the country in their failure to cry out the message of God. As a result of this the present very grave condition is being visited upon the people with the terrible suffering which God has permitted to come upon the country.

We have not had a good rain since the first of June, the grasshoppers have practically stripped all vegetation, our people are debauched with the repeal of the eighteenth amendment, our young women becoming slaves to the cigarette and liquor, with the dark clouds of war hovering over the nations of the earth, and no cry of protest from the ministry! We have not begun to see the awful misery that must presently come upon the world unless a change is made. Our people are looking to our great political leaders for deliverance—well why shouldn't they since nothing better is offered from press or pulpit? In view of all this permit me to express my appreciation for the very valuable service you have been rendering to the cause of our great Emancipator and Deliverer in whom is our only hope. Thank you.

I am in hopes that your fearless exposure of Romanism may be carried out still farther into an exposure of Pentecostalism. Many of our people are deserting the Baptist ranks and joining these "Wholly Sanctified" people, but again the blame for this must be placed with the ministry who are literally starving our people for spiritual food. Pentecostal people have perhaps gone to the extreme on emotion, and Baptists led of the brilliant, intellectual, self-sufficient ministry have said in effect "It is well to be possessed of the Holy Spirit, but be sure that you do not give any evidence of it"! What about our emotions, are they to be smothered and repressed in our worship? Our people are asking questions about such things as tongues, divine healing, baptism of the Holy Spirit and I feel that they have a right to know the plain teaching of God's Word, and that it should come from the Pulpit. The ministry however seem to be afraid to speak. Oh yes there is the plea of tolerance. Thus the voice is stilled against error, and against sin. No wonder we have trouble.

Well this is a pretty mixed up message, but I hope the Lord will lead you to preach on Pentecostalism, and sometime

on "Faith and Feeling". In my service I crave a goodly measure of both. Some of the brethren are like the farmer who poured the feed in the trough and said, "Eat Hog or Die, I don't care which". I know that we sometimes have to walk by faith, but so far I have been able to feel His blessed presence. Power, and more power to you my dear brother, is the prayer of yours in His service.

SEMINARY NEWS

Students of the Seminary have been at work on their several fields now for two months. We have received reports of their activities, and we share with our readers three letters which have come to hand.

In his letter from Sudbury, Mr. Boyd says he has made "hundreds of calls at doors in house-to-house visitation". To that sort of ministry there is scarcely any limit, and we are confident we have to get back to the apostolic method: "Daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ".

The letter from Mr. Grahame Reeve is an illustration of the kind of stuff of which many of our students are made. Among other things the Seminary, in season and out of season, emphasizes the necessity and value of hard work. Mr. Reeve's letter shows great industry for the two months of which it is a report. Mr. Kingsley Cutler, to whom he refers is one of our graduates, and is Pastor of Maple Grove Church. Mr. E. R. Faulkner is also a Seminary graduate. Mr. Elgin Mullin is a student of the Seminary at the present time.

We feel certain that the reading of such letters as those of Mr. Boyd and Mr. Reeve will be gratifying to supporters of the Seminary, and will multiply their number.

The letter from Strasbourg, Sask., is from Mr. Donald S. Dinnick. The Swedish brethren in the west had heard of our Seminary and its work through THE GOSPEL WITNESS, and asked for a student for the summer. Mr. Dinnick was sent. The letter headed, "Revival in Saskatchewan" tells the tale of his ministry.

We call attention also to the note sent by Mr. Whitcombe of his visit to Noranda and Rouyn.

A SUDBURY LETTER

There are times when figures can give accurate estimates of values, but I feel figures poorly represent the work which the Lord is doing here. He has enabled us to make hundreds of calls at doors in house-to-house visitation, and has given opportunity for us to give a great many simple testimonies by word and by tract. These we could scarcely call visits, but we believe the Lord will in some way use them all to the glory of His name.

During the month of June we rented the Orange Hall in Copper Cliff, but nearly all the English-speaking people leave the town in the summer evenings and on Sunday afternoons, so we continued our Friday night meeting in the Hall, and instead of having our Sunday School there we went into the Italian section, and held open air Sunday School, where large numbers have gathered with us, and many of them have learned the hymns and choruses, and some are memorizing verses of Scripture which we give them. It is very gratifying to see how many of them there, and a good many in Sudbury who did not know a word of Scripture nor a verse of a hymn or chorus, have picked them up, and hidden them away in their minds, as never-dying seeds of truth, which will some day bring forth fruit to the glory of God.

We have our Sudbury prayer meeting in the home where I stay, but are hoping to get other homes in different parts of the city, and in Copper Cliff, and perhaps some other outside places, to have some cottage meetings during the coming months.

The interest is not great, but it is increasing steadily, because we, by God's grace, try to show an undying interest in

the spiritual welfare of the lost. Our methods of regular visitation and personal work are unheard of among the other religious bodies, and people remember our visits and appreciate the interest.

We are sorely in need of teachers and workers, because Mrs. Grigg and I are the only ones who have been trying to fill these offices, but our Sunday School is getting too large for two teachers. Please pray the Lord of the harvest for labourers for this field.

When I started to write this I intended using only the space on one sheet, but have gone much farther than I intended, and could write a great deal more in testifying of the Lord's wonderful provision for our every need, and the joyous experiences we have had in His service here. But I am going to write Mr. Whitcombe, and will supplement this somewhat in his letter, so you will get an idea what the Lord has done, and is going to do in this needy place. We covet the earnest prayers of God's people, and send our best regards to you and Mrs. Brown, and the others of the faculty. Sincerely yours,

J. R. Boyd.

SEMINARY STUDENTS WORK TOGETHER

Feversham, Ont., August 3, 1936.

Dear Mr. Brown:

I have tried conscientiously to fill out your set forms, but, owing to the nature of my work, I seemingly am unable to do as required.

However, I will do my best to give you a faithful presentation of the work according as I have kept my records.

I began here on May 20th. The first Sunday I preached at Maple Grove and Providence. Then, when our new works were commenced, I took over the following three appointments regularly: Morning, Rob Roy School, averaging twenty. Afternoon, Rock Union, averaging twenty-five. Evening, Hatherton School, averaging forty.

Young Peoples' meetings are now going on in each appointment except Rob Roy, Rock Union and Mr. Cutler's evening appointment at Eugenia. The attendances are increasingly gratifying!

I began a Sunday School at Rob Roy three weeks ago with encouraging results.

This of course is not very illuminating, howbeit, the following statistics may be in order, and I trust that you may draw up your report from them: Sunday School lessons taught, 4; Sermons preached, 47; meetings conducted, but not addressed, 9; addressed, but not conducted, 16; solos, 8; duets, 1; quartettes, 1; choirs, 1; house visits, 132; tracts distributed, 76; personal talks, 9; Young Peoples', 25; song services led, every meeting I attended, 56; miles bicycled, 368; by car, equally as far, as well as some miles by foot; offerings to date, \$39.15.

The results are not capable of being tabulated on earth; heaven records those, and gives credit to whom due.

This, of course, is not in the report, but on the 2nd inst., Mr. Cutler and I exchanged our evening appointments and this will continue. Beginning August 9th, Mr. Ray Faulkner is coming to commence a week of special meetings at Eugenia. We are looking for real blessing.

I should like to record the active support of Mr. Elgin Mullin at our Maple Grove Young Peoples', and as a staunch helper at Rock Union.

I am looking forward to seven more weeks of increasing usefulness and then (D.V.), my last year at dear old T.B.S. I can scarcely credit the record of the calendar that we are now in August!

With good wishes and prayer for your Seminary preparations, I am, yours truly,

Grahame M. Reeve.

REVIVAL IN SASKATCHEWAN

Well, you can rejoice with me for what God has done in Strasbourg, "And again I say, rejoice". Our revival services were an amazing success. Twenty-two have accepted Christ in the last two weeks. That makes a total of twenty-four converts in the last three weeks. D.V. our baptismal service will be soon. Last Sunday was the closing night of our campaign. The crowd got so large that we could not get into the school, so we had to worship in a large hay loft. We

cleaned it up well and put green poplar trees around the walls, built a platform, benches, etc., and put in electric lights.

Last Sunday morning we had over two hundred present. We took some pictures. I will send you some. Last night (Sunday) we had two hundred and twenty-five present.

The devil has opposed strongly. One man came up in rags and tried to get his daughter out of the enquiry room. Her mother came up and tried to pull her out, but was stopped. But God has worked. Since then two other girls in the home have been saved. For a time the father temporarily disowned the girl who first was saved. But since then he has softened a little, and actually shed tears. The girls have been welcomed back into their home again.

Last night we had two very notable conversions, one a charming young lady who was very worldly. She was the centre of interest in the dances. The song leader, Mr. Bundy, has spoken to her for more than an hour at times, but she refused to yield. All her friends were praying for her. Last night she came to the service. A number of young men interested in her also came, and in front of them all she accepted Christ. The people in the church almost wept for joy.

The other conversion last night was a Lutheran mother, the mother of nine children. Think of the tremendous consequences of such a conversion! "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!" "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name!"

We have had a number of conversions from among the people at Goven, a town thirty miles away, where some of our members live. They have arranged to have the use of the United Church while their minister is away for special gospel services. They usually have at least one hundred and fifty in attendance. I am going to preach there for seven nights at least. Pray for this gospel project.

Thanks for ever "learnin" me Greek. I have great fun juggling with a pedo-baptist minister here on the doctrine of baptism.

Donald S. Dinnick.

NORANDA-ROUYN

During the hottest week of the hottest summer on record the Noranda church ventured to hold a series of special meetings. In spite of the fact that this flourishing city is some five hundred miles nearer the north pole than Toronto, the heat of the sun reflected from the rocks was blisteringly hot, and yet a surprisingly large number attended the meetings. On Saturday and Sunday we held our meetings near the bathing beach in a park between the "twin towns". At first only a few children came close enough to hear us, but after a while others came to listen. At the second meeting on Sunday night the crowds gathered as soon as the little organ began to sound the strains of old familiar hymns, and a crowd of two to three hundred people remained with us to the end of the meeting. Mr. Buhler spoke in French and I in English, together with a number who gave their testimony. Some twenty-five responded to the invitation in both languages to come forward and accept a copy of the Gospel of John. Most of those given away were in French.

This splendid work at Noranda is an inspiration to those of us engaged in the work of the Seminary, for, without any work to back them, save that of a godly woman who had caught the vision of the need in these rapidly-growing mining towns, Seminary students began this work "on a shoe-string", and have carried it on with little more until there is a good number of believers, and a good building erected in a strategic location.

Mr. Buhler, who has been carrying on work among the French-speaking people in these towns, accompanied me on a visit to a French Protestant community some miles distant. Through the faithful witnessing of a young French Canadian who was converted under that apostle of French Canada, the late Rev. George McFaul, a little group of believers meet for prayer and Bible study in a house in the backwoods, from which they are hewing their homes by dint of hard labour. It was good to have fellowship with these French fellow citizens who are also fellow-citizens of that heavenly country. Their interest was a proof that our French Roman Catholic neighbours are not beyond the reach of the Gospel of Grace.

—W. S. Whitcombe.

Whole Bible Course Lesson Leaf

REV. WM. JONES, EDITOR

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AN APPEAL TO THE BACKSLIDER

Lesson Text: Jeremiah, Chapter 3.

Golden Text: "Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever."—Jeremiah 3:12.

Bible School Reading: Jeremiah 3.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS: Monday—Is. 66:15-24; Tuesday—Rom. 8:12-16; Wednesday—Gal. 4:1-7; Thursday—Hos. 2:14-20; Friday—II. Cor. 5:11-19; Saturday—Heb. 10:11-18.

THE EXPOSITION

Vs. 1-5 is really a continuation of the theme of the preceding chapter—the faithlessness, infidelity of Israel. God remonstrates that He is finished with Israel as a nation, even as a man is his divorced wife (cf. Deut. 24:1-4), inasmuch as He has refused Assyria and Egypt as lawful lovers or husbands. Yet Israel is audacious enough to think that she can return, she who has many lovers (1). What telling words form the rebuke of the Lord, "Thinkest thou to return?" (R. V. mg.). The awfulness of her sin we have already seen (cf. note Is. 57:7) in 2:20. Israel was lying in wait like a wary Arab, seeking her lovers (2). For her sin, nature reacted; on account of it, God withheld natural blessings. Sin in its origins was not without natural effects; and in its ultimates, sin when vanquished will also affect nature (Rom. 8:21). While yet sinning, Israel had the temerity to utter the cry of vs. 4 with its tender figure of "Father", as touching in its way as that of the marital relationship of chapter 2. But though Israel plead an ostensible return to God it was only an apparent renewal of faith (4) based on the false conviction that there was mercy with God apart from repentance (5). The nation had fallen again, after a temporary respite or seeming respite, and had done so deliberately sinning.

From v. 6-v. 19 runs an offer to the ten tribes of Israel (Northern Kingdom tribes, now dispersed) to repent and return to Jehovah. Israel before her captivity was admittedly idolatrous, far more so than her sister Judah, hence her sorrows were fewer than those of Judah who had lived closer to Jehovah. Yet (7) Jehovah said, as it were, that she would return. But she did not, and Judah saw both sin and punishment, yet for all that, and for all of Jehovah's putting away of Israel (cf. note Is. 50:1) the Southern Kingdom was treacherous, had her way (5) and went on to religious polygamy (8). The lightness or frivolous attitude of Judah bespoke her thoughtlessness. Her return, her reformation under Josiah was not genuine, it was only feigned (9). Judah had only one dynasty, one family of kings; Israel many. Judah had the Temple, the priests, the Levites, the Holy City, and the terrible example of her captive sister. Therefore, God accounted Israel more righteous than Judah, for her opportunities had been the greater. Therefore, Jehovah upon the return of the ten tribes will not be so angry—He will be merciful, for that is His just nature (12). But one condition of return, of restoration is stipulated by the Lord, and is enjoined upon Israel—that she genuinely acknowledge or confess her sin. That restoration (14) is possible only because God is still bound by His own marriage covenant, as it were, for His troth had been irrevocably pledged by Himself (Ps. 89:3, 28; Jer. 32:28-40) and was an everlasting covenant (Hos. 2:19). Nevertheless, His sovereign choice was individual and was made with a few "one of a city, and two of a family". Jeremiah the prophet above all others intensely individual in his application of spiritual truth, may refer to the return of the captives from Assyria under Cyrus. The fact remains, however, that back of any earthly fulfilment of this prophecy there is the all-important spiritual

completion. In that day, Israel will have rulers (shepherds) of God's own choosing (15) and from the unbelievably few of vs. 14, a multitude (16) of redeemed ones will come (cf. note Is. 49:21). The chosen people had fancied, even in their better days that their safety, their enjoyment of blessing consisted in the presence of the oracles, of the ark, and not in the grace of God. In complacent delusions of safety which were totally unfounded they forgot that the ark was not inviolable in itself (I. Sam. 1:3; 3:3), that using it as a fetish availed nothing. In the everlasting kingdom there will be no such object as an ark—no more than there was in the days of the patriarchs Abraham and Isaac, for all in that day will be simple and spiritual. It will not be needed, remembered, missed, or revived as an instrument of worship, a worship which is essentially spiritual (cf. note on Is. 59:1). To Israel there will be no difficulty in going to Jerusalem whither the nations shall be gathered (17). Here is no prophecy confined to Israel after the flesh. As one has said, "To go to Jerusalem spiritually is the great thing." The Name of Jehovah, that is to say, all that God is in His nature and in His Being will be the centre of worship and of interest. Then will be gone the stubbornness of all Israel (17); then will there be an united Israel (18).

Vs. 19-25 contains a section appealing to the whole nation to return to Jehovah. Judah is now invited to avail herself of forgiveness, and restitution of sonship and heirship. Yet how can Jehovah consistently establish or found her after all her sin? How could He give her children, except by renewing, as it were, the covenant relationship of Father (19), Israel had broken the relationship—it must be God who binds it again (22). A typical or proper repentance is set forth in the form of a voice calling from the heights where Israel had sinned. It is the voice of Israel symbolizing her repentance in response to Jehovah's entreaty in vs. 22. Israel announces her return (22) and confesses that her turning to idols was vain, that her trust in the tumultuous bedlam of heathen worship was as nothing, for God is her salvation. The idol worship, she confessed, was wrong in itself, and brought with it evil results (24). She even acknowledges a consequent or subsequent shame and sorrow after her initial repentance (25).

THE APPLICATION

We learn several things concerning salvation from this chapter. From man's side the first step of salvation is repentance, downright, forthright repentance. There is a singular hardness in the force of the word "only". We are saved by faith "only", apart from works, Christ alone, and none other. How hard simply and only to repent. How hard it was for the Pharisee to call himself, acknowledge himself a sinner. Almost every other category he named for himself (Lk. 18:11). Jeremiah does not elaborate the doctrine of redemption, Isaiah is more explicit on the doctrine of the atonement. But it is certain from this passage (13) that God makes the first move in salvation, that it is He who is first reconciled, first expiated (Rom. 3:25; II. Cor. 5:18). He does not like to dwell on the sinister aspects of our lives, any more than did Jeremiah on those of Israel. Rather He longs to speak peace, healing to our souls (22), to heal our backslidings. But where we sinned, there we must confess, as did Israel from the high places of her sin. Then will forgiveness and restoration be sweet. Then, though the dark stains of sin obtrude their hideous way into our lives after our salvation, and though they edge their way engulfingly (25), yet their remembrance is gone, clean gone in the hope of our adoption as heirs of God (19; cf. Gal. 4:17; II. Cor. 8:17). The spirituality of our salvation is set forth in vs. 17 as is also the oneness of true religion. Possibly Jeremiah had in mind the one altar teaching of Deuteronomy (12:5; 26:2) a Book from which he frequently quoted.

In these days of apostasizing, when the Fatherhood of God in an unscriptural sense is taught, it is well for us to know that the heathen believed in the fatherhood of the gods (9; cf. 2:27). That is not a Christian doctrine as such. The Church must beware of compromise which would lead it to the expediences of a feigned repentance such as that displayed by Judah (10) possibly for the purposes of securing physical or material blessings or resources! And it is well to remember that in these days of "planned society" in governmental theory, God and nature still work hand in hand to visit physical calamity upon man, for spiritual defection (3).