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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

OF WHAT MAY BE SURE RESPECTING THE SECOND COMING?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, January 10th, 1937
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"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."—Matthew 24:42.

The subject of the second advent of our Lord, to the believer, is always one of thrilling interest. It is no wonder that it should be so. If once we are assured that this is promised in the Word of God, that the day must come when Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Who was crucified, Who died for our sins and was buried, and Who rose again and ascended into heaven, shall Himself return to this earth, with all the glory of the Father and the holy angels, surely there can be no subject of greater importance to the believer.

Nor is it surprising that it should have been made by many a subject of speculation, and that within the scope of those scriptures which speak of His coming, even devout souls should have allowed their imaginations rather to run away with them. Nor is it to be wondered at that a subject of so great importance, in its consideration should be attended often by many extravagances, and by much that is as unreasonable as it is unscriptural.

I would warn you against the danger of taking your own or anyone else's religious views for granted. If those things which we believe are firmly grounded in the teaching of God's Word, it must always be profitable for us to reconsider them; for if our positions are substantiated by Scripture, a re-examination will tend only to the confirmation of our faith. On the other hand, if we have been tempted to mix human opinion with the plain and unmistakable revelation of Scripture, a more careful analysis will enable us to separate the chaff from the wheat, and to feed our souls exclusively upon that which God Himself has revealed.

I ask you to study this subject with me this evening in a very simple way. And I would remind you, before coming to an exposition of the subject, that there is only one Book that has ever been written that can speak

authoritatively on this subject. Only last week I answered a letter from a minister—whether a young man or not, I do not know. He asked me to recommend to him the best book on the second coming of Christ. I suggested to him that I knew of nothing comparable to the Bible. If only men would study the Word of God, instead of reading the Word through the medium of human opinion, they would be saved from many errors. The sermon I preach to-night, like every evening sermon, will be printed, and you may have a copy of it. But I ask you not to believe anything I say because I say it. Some years ago an appreciative hearer who was accustomed to have a very comfortable morning every time he came to church—he nodded assent to everything I said, as Mr. Moody once said of a man in his congregation—met me at the door one Sunday morning, and said, "I say, Amen, to everything you say." To which I replied, "That is a dangerous practice for anyone, but particularly so in your case, for you do not hear what I say." He slept through the sermon, and, on awaking, said, Amen.

Furthermore, I would suggest that you try what you hear in this church, and what you hear everywhere, by the Word of God. Whoever speaks not according to the testimony of the Book, it is because there is no light in him.

I.

Let me remark first that the SECOND COMING OF CHRIST IS ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN. There is no question about it. Jesus Christ will come.

He said *He would come*. I need only remind you of two or three things, and those of you who know something of the Bible will readily recall to mind many scrip-

tures which verify these statements. "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself." Our Lord Jesus plainly declared in many passages that He would come.

The chapter from which our text is taken is one of the great passages setting forth the promise of the second advent of our Lord: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." Though we do not know when He will come, He assures us He will come.

The apostles believed He would come, and they so taught. They were present when the angels appeared, and as they looked up steadfastly into heaven, the angels said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

All through the Acts of the Apostles, and throughout the epistles, that great truth is declared. Peter, speaking of the coming of the Lord, as we read this evening, referred to the writings of Paul whom he described as his "beloved brother Paul", and said that "in all his epistles" he spoke of these things. The Scripture is full of predictions of the Lord's second coming.

His second coming, whatever it may mean, *is as certain as His first advent.* As an interesting study, I suggest that you read the Gospels through, and see how frequently the Spirit of God refers to the predictions of the Lord's first coming, and how literally, even to the last detail, the scriptures which promised His first advent were fulfilled. When He told Peter to sheathe his sword, He said, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" In those closing hours of His earthly life, prior to the cross, it seemed as though events crowded upon one another to fulfill the predictions relating to the days of His flesh. Christ Himself said, "The scripture cannot be broken"; hence the promises of His second coming will most certainly be fulfilled.

II.

What is His second coming? Sometimes it is necessary to deal with elementary principles, even when speaking to such as think they have outgrown the alphabet, and who think they are well instructed. **THE COMING OF CHRIST IS A PERSONAL COMING.** He will come Himself.

The promise of His second coming *was not fulfilled when He came at Pentecost in the person of the Holy Spirit.* Study the first and second chapters of Acts, and you will easily see that His "coming in like manner" as He was seen to go was not fulfilled in the descent of the Holy Ghost when He came in all the fulness of His power for He came "as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them". Subsequently to that, all the apostles spoke of the coming of Christ. They knew the Holy Spirit had come, and that the second coming of Christ was an entirely different matter.

Nor is the scriptural second coming of Christ realized *when the principles of His gospel become regnant in a human life.* There is a sense in which the Holy Spirit comes to every believer, for if a man hath not the Spirit of Christ "he is none of his". He comes to dwell with us, and in us; and to enable us, by His divine power, to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. There

ought to be a growing conformity to the likeness of Christ on the part of all believers. But that does not mean that the promise of the Lord's second advent has been fulfilled. It means vastly more than the supremacy of the principles of His teaching, or the establishment of any social condition of righteousness in the world. One feels like apologizing for refuting such an idea of the Second Coming. Notwithstanding it is an idea put forward by many. He Himself will come. As He came first in bodily form, and was seen of men, "shewing himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs", so He will come again.

That is a tremendous truth, that the historic Jesus will actually come, that His feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives, that Job was not mistaken when he said, "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." There is nothing in prospect comparable in importance, to the believing soul, to the second advent of our Lord. It is no wonder believers are described as those who "love his appearing".

Let me pause to say to you who profess and call yourselves Christians, *that you may very usefully employ this doctrine to test the reality of your own experience.* I have met many people who call themselves Christians, who will discuss at length the church to which they belong, and their minister, who will talk religion by the hour; but who, when you speak to them of their personal relationship to Jesus Christ, are dumb. They know nothing about it. They may be church members, but the idea of knowing Christ, of talking with Him, and walking with Him daily, is foreign to them. If you have but a formal, nominal religion, and do not know Christ experimentally, I should not expect that you would experience any ecstasy in contemplation of the prospect of His own personal return. I greatly fear His coming would be rather a shock, a staggering surprise, to many professing Christians. If you would know whether you really love Him or not, ask yourself whether you "love his appearing".

Would you like Him to come? Would you be thrilled could you hear the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, and be assured that now is the end of all darkness, that He Himself had come Who is the light of the world? May we all be numbered among those who "love his appearing", and who love to contemplate the truth of it!

His coming will not be secret. He will not come quietly, and in such a way that only a few may know He has come. I assert that the idea of the secret coming of our Lord for His saints and then with His saints, is without a vestige of scriptural support. It is purely a human theory, based upon human imagination. I defy anyone in the world to produce one solitary scripture that can support that vain idea. The coming of our Lord will be manifest and glorious.

His coming will be visible, not to a few, but to all: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him." Repeatedly our Lord said, "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." The idea that the Divine Bridegroom will effect some sort of elopement, and come secretly, and steal His bride away, is not only destitute of scriptural warrant, but is not

honouring to the Lord Jesus Christ. When He comes, He will come publicly and openly, visibly. We look for that "blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

In the chapter from which our text is taken we are specially warned against those who say, "Behold, he is in the desert . . . behold, he is in the secret chambers." The Word says, "Believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Do not accept my saying. Test it by the Word of God. Look for yourselves. You say, "It must be there." If it is, you can find it; and I shall be glad to hear from you when you find it. I have never been able to discover anything to approximate it.

The Lord's coming will be *not only visible, but audible*: "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." I have repeatedly reminded you that anyone who can make a secret coming of that has no appreciation of the value of language. If that is a secret coming, language ceases to have any significance. He shall come "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God."

The coming of Christ is elsewhere associated with the sounding of the trumpet: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." The coming of Christ will be both visible and audible.

Therefore *until you have seen and heard Him come, you may be absolutely certain He has not come.*

Paul said of his day there were some who said that "the resurrection is past already". And some say that Christ came in eighteen hundred and seventy, and that we have been in the dawn of the millennium since that time! You are welcome to the millennium if that is so. I have not experienced one. No! The Lord has not yet come! He is still to come. And the fact that you have neither seen nor heard His coming is proof positive that He has not returned, for all shall know Him when He comes.

III.

HIS COMING WILL BE A SURPRISE TO MANY. Nobody will be quite ready for Him. It *will be a surprise even to the believer*: "Ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." Nobody knows. And let me warn you against the folly of trying to set or identify the time of the Lord's coming. Surely nothing is plainer in Scripture than that the day and the hour no one can know. "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." Here also it is explicitly said: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." I heard of one in this city who had a book going through the press, and he learned of some new development which showed his position to be incorrect — and stopped the press until he could write another chapter. It would have been better not to publish the book at all. No chapter of the Bible has ever had to be rewritten. God has spoken once and for all, and if only people would take the Word at its face value we should be saved from much folly.

How many good and godly people, filled with a curiosity which they think is justifiable, have sought to wrest from God the secret which the Father has kept within His own authority: "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." If you hear a Bible-teacher who endeavours to set a date, or to identify the day of His coming, do not listen to him. He is not a safe guide for anyone; for the reason that that cannot be known. The Lord says so—then why try to tear the veil aside?

There *will be some who will mock at the promise of the Lord's coming*. It is possible that someone, turning the dial of his radio this evening, heard a man speaking about the coming of the Lord, and was inclined to turn it again—for he does not believe it. But the Bible says, "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

Others are not interested, and flatly deny His coming. The great mass of people to-day are indifferent to this great truth. Our Lord said: "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Men will not be ready for it, notwithstanding, He will come. So of Sodom and Gomorrah. The day that Lot went out of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Lord rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them. Our Lord will come when He is not expected, and He will come to a multitude of people who mock.

Our chapter says *His coming will be sudden*: "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west." Another passage speaks of it as being "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." There will be no time to get ready then. "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

IV.

ARE THERE SOME THINGS THAT BELIEVERS MAY CERTAINLY KNOW IN CONNECTION WITH HIS COMING? I think, while believers may not know the date, the specific time, they ought always to be waiting for God's Son from heaven. That is "the blessed hope." It is the consummation of our desire. There is nothing we long for more than to behold Him face to face. Oh that He would this night rend the heavens and come down! How many would welcome His coming, and rejoice in His immediate fellowship, could that be possible?

I must say something now with which perhaps some of you will disagree. I hope you will disagree with sufficient vigour to lead you to study the Bible again. I do not want you to believe anything I say that is not scripturally supported. I would have those who worship in this place to be so rooted and grounded in the faith, as to be able to give an answer always for the hope that is in them. Do not be angry if I cross your opinions. Be like the Christians of Berea who "searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so".

The Scripture is clear in its teaching that the great tribulation, whatever it is, will take place before the

Lord comes. I had a conversation a few years ago with a certain lady, who was a Bible-teacher, a godly woman who loved the Lord Jesus. She said to me, "I wish you would tell me your view of the relation of the Lord's coming to the great tribulation." I said, "I may not agree with you, and you may not be pleased with my view." "Never mind", she replied, "we shall study it in good spirit." "All right". I said, "get your Bible, and turn to the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew; I shall read two verses: 'For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, nor, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.'

"Does that", I asked, "refer to the *great tribulation*?" My friend replied, "It must, inasmuch as it says there has been nothing to compare with it, nor can there yet be." "All right. I will not try to explain what the great tribulation is, but whatever it may be, it is here identified. But what of the 'elect' for whose sake those days shall be shortened? According to your theory, Mrs. So-and-So, there will be no elect left on earth. They will all have gone. They will have been raptured, secretly caught away into the clouds; and the tribulation will break out afterward." "Oh", she said, in what I thought was a superior tone, "the elect people there does not mean Christians in general; it means the Jews." I replied, "I expected you to say that. But will you be good enough to show me one scripture in the Bible to support your theory that the 'elect' here are different from the 'elect' anywhere else in the Word?" "But Matthew was written for the Jews," she said. "So I have been told many times," I answered, "but who says so? Matthew does not say so; nor does the Bible anywhere say it was written for the Jews. There is not a shred of scripture upon which to base that assumption. Apart from what you read into that scripture, your whole theory of a pre-tribulation rapture falls to the ground, for 'except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved'."

When you come upon a passage of Scripture that upsets your preconceived notions, do not try to read into the Word your own imaginings to buttress your own ideas: accept the Scripture as it is. I affirm that the pre-tribulation rapture theory is wholly a man-made idea, that it has no scriptural warrant. Whatever the great tribulation is, the elect will pass through it; and Christ will not come before, but after the tribulation, for "immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn." That the Lord will not come prior to that tribulation is plainly stated in that passage.

Someone may say, "Then we must wait a long time for Him." I am not so sure. I do not believe the idea of a seven-year tribulation can be supported by Scripture. I am not at all sure that the tribulation did not begin long ago. I shall not be dogmatic about that; moreover, it is beyond the scope of this discourse: I content myself merely with showing you that when that great tribulation takes place, whatever it is, "the elect" will be here, and that there is no scriptural foundation for saying that "the elect" are the Jews.

They are believers, both Jews and Gentiles. As we saw last Sunday evening, the term applies to God's people everywhere.

When Paul wrote to the Romans saying, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect", did he mean the Jews? Of course, he did not. When Peter wrote to "the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia", and described them as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit", did he mean the Jews? Of course he did not. That is a general term applied to God's believing children—and one generation of the elect will be here and will pass through the great tribulation, and some of them have had a good deal of tribulation already, but "for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

There is another great prediction in the second epistle to the Thessalonians: "We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?"

Paul said, "Do not misinterpret my former letter, in which I spoke of the coming of Christ. Definitely I tell you that that day shall not come until a general apostasy shall take place, and that Wicked One is revealed." Doubtless we should all like to escape it. Very well: if by any possibility you should be right, and the saints should be raptured before the tribulation, I am ready to say, Hallelujah. I have had enough tribulation. But I fear that idea ministers to an attitude of mind that is not wholesome. I heard a man say, "What sort of Bridegroom would He be Who would allow His bride to pass through the tribulation?" How utterly unreasonable that is! What about the martyr fires? Were they not members of the bride of Christ? What about that great host of whom the writer to the Hebrews says, "of whom the world was not worthy"? They "had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented." But they were members of God's elect body, and of the church of Christ. Shall we charge God with inconsideration for permitting it?

Furthermore, some of the greatest saints who have ever lived were chosen in the furnace of affliction. I have seen more of heaven in a sickroom than I have seen elsewhere. Some people, in the midst of suffering, have revealed the presence of the Son of God walking with them. I think of many whose godly characters and careers were an inspiration to all who knew them, who uncomplainingly endured the terrible afflictions which God permitted to come to them. Nor did they complain that the Divine Bridegroom was unkind.

Why should the particular generation who shall be alive and remain at the coming of the Lord escape all

trouble by being carried away from it? In individual lives there has been as much tribulation as any mortal could suffer. The great tribulation may be on a larger scale, but it is impossible that men and women should suffer more than some individuals in all ages have suffered while trusting God through it all.

We are told further: "Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." The Wicked One, the lawless one, will be in full flower and flood, at the very acme of his power, when the Lord Jesus Christ shall come, and he shall be destroyed by "the brightness of his coming". That either means what it says, or there are three comings instead of two. But there are only two: "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

V.

Let me go farther, and point out to you that THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE WILL END WITH THE COMING OF CHRIST. There are those who tell us that the greatest revival of all time will take place after the Lord's return; after the church, the salt of the earth, has been removed; after the Spirit of God has been withdrawn—for these friends speak of the Spirit of God as the Hinderer,—then the Jews are to be the evangelists of the world, and countless millions are to be swept into the kingdom of God. Personally I do not believe it. I am positive that it is an unscriptural doctrine. There is no foundation in the Bible for that teaching.

"When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are. Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets—we are religious people; we went to church—But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity." The door will be shut at His rising up, and He will never rise again to open it. The dispensation of grace will continue until Christ shall come a second time, and then will end for ever.

There is no promise in the Word of God of any grace for mortal man beyond the coming of the Lord. The parable of the virgins—what does it mean? I do not think anyone can say authoritatively, but we must interpret the symbolic and parabolic Scriptures in the light of the plain and unmistakable teaching of Scripture, and not the reverse. We must not bend the plain teaching of the Word to fit our fancy of what the symbolical teaches. They are all equally inspired, but they must be brought into the light of the plain teaching of the Word.

When the foolish virgins tried to gain access to the marriage, they found it was too late, "the door was shut." And when they cried, "Lord, Lord, open to us," He answered and said, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not." And it was in that connection He said, "Watch therefore: for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

Furthermore, the Lord said that all tribes of the earth shall mourn at His coming—and well they may!

And in Revelation we read, "All kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him."

Once more: *the Lord instituted a comparison between the condition of the antediluvians and the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, and those who will be alive and remain at His coming.* How many were saved after God opened the heavens and the deluge came? None! "They knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." When God had shut Noah and his family in, nobody was able to open the door until the deluge was past, and the Lord brought them out into a renovated earth. We read also, "The same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." There will be no further probation, no extension of mercy, no further offer of salvation, but judgment only for the impenitent when our Lord Jesus Christ comes, for it is written, "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and admired in all them that believe"—in that day.

I remind you too of *the teaching in Peter's epistle from which we read this evening, which proves conclusively that His coming ends the day of grace:* "There shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." It is true that God's redeemed people have waited a long time for His coming. But not so long as the time during which people waited for the fulfilment of the promise respecting His first coming. But the Holy Ghost saith, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness." He is coming. Then why does He delay? Because, said Peter, He is "longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." And we are, therefore, bidden "account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation."

If it were in the divine plan that the coming of Christ should usher in the greatest period of grace the world has seen, why should He wait? But manifestly that is not in the divine plan. He waits that the divine patience may have its perfect work, that the period of grace may run to its conclusion. For when He shall come, it will be "in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ". Hence we are to be "Looking for and hastening unto the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat."

The second coming of Christ is "the blessed hope" for believers. If we are washed in the blood, if our sins are taken away, and we have been brought into fellowship with Him, His coming will mark the completion of our redemption, when we shall be given new bodies "fashioned like unto his glorious body"; and we shall be without fault before the throne of God. Marvellous prospect! Nothing to fear in the past, nothing

to fear in the present—and nothing but glory in the future! Blessed are they “who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb”.

As for those who have not believed in Him—if and when the trumpet of the Lord shall sound, there will be no longer opportunity: “Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.” The Judge of all the earth shall say, “I never knew you.”

My question is, Do you know Jesus Christ? Do you say? “I think so.” Do not let it rest there. “I hope so.” Do not be satisfied with that. Do not rest until you can say, “I know whom I have believed. I know I am numbered among His elect, that my name is written in the Lamb’s book of life; and I am waiting for God’s Son from heaven.”

If we should be mistaken as to some of the details, of the second Advent it will not be so very important: that we should be ready is the main thing. The prophetic scriptures show us the general direction of the course of future world-history: the details of the road we shall understand as the road is traversed. If our Lord should come sooner than we expect, blessed be God, He cannot come too soon. If He delays, we shall still be ready. And there is only one way to be ready: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” Ye must be washed in His blood; ye must be born again. “Watch therefore!” “Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.”

“I WAS ROBBED”

We reprint with entire approval the following article, which was given to us by a friend, in the form of a tract. Evidently it was published first some years ago while Dr. Scofield was still alive, but we publish it without change.

The notes in the Scofield Bible relating to evangelical faith are sound enough, but Dr. Scofield’s notes dealing with eschatological matters, or the doctrine of last things, are packed full of error; and we entirely agree with the writer of the above tract when he says, “We simply declare our deep conviction that the children of God are at this time exposed to no evil that is more serious or that has wrought more harm to them, than this new doctrine, which poisons the pure doctrine of the grace of God at its very source, and which is now found between the covers of a popular ‘Bible’.”—(Ed. G.W.)

A young brother, a preacher of the Gospel, writing to the publishers of this paper, says: “Please send me your valuable paper, THE LAST HOUR. I was robbed of the Book of Matthew in a certain Bible School, and thank God it was restored to me by reading Mr. Mauro’s book, ‘After This.’”

Testimonies like the above are reaching us from every part of the world. But, while we rejoice that not a few of God’s beloved children are now finding deliverance from the most mysterious and most ruinous error that ever found acceptance among men, we are nevertheless deeply concerned, because of the many thousands who, like the writer of the above letter, have been “robbed” (it is not too strong a word) of that most precious portion of the Word of God—the Sermon on the Mount—and who have as yet no suspicion of the wrong that has been done to them. The reason for this is that the agency for its accomplishment was “a certain Bible School,” where the fundamentals of the faith are maintained, or perhaps a thoroughly orthodox teacher or lecturer or writer.

Lately the writer of these lines was speaking in a large city. His subject was the Sermon on the Mount; and he called attention to the infinite value to every child of God of that matchless utterance, pointing out how the quality of

Divine Grace pervades every part of it. After the address a young man pushed to the front and wrung the speaker’s hand, exclaiming in a voice that quivered with emotion, “I thank you, sir. I am a preacher of the Gospel. They had taken from me the Sermon on the Mount. But to-night it has been restored to me. I have a bigger Bible than when I came into this hall.”

From another letter of recent date we quote the following: “Allow me to send you a very genuine word of thanks for the work you are doing in exposing that deadly error of the Scofield Bible—the postponement theory, and the implications thereof. That theory *practically killed the Gospels for me!* But—I AM DELIVERED! and hope to be used of God to save others from the same pitfall.”

Here is a striking example of what has been taking place among us in a wholesale way. For when matters have come to such a pass that acknowledged leaders and teachers are permitted to say, unrebuked, that the words of our blessed Lord’s mouth, are “law, and that raised to its highest, most DEATHFUL and DESTRUCTIVE potency” (Dr. Scofield in *Our Hope* magazine) what other result can follow than that, for many of the household of faith, the Gospels will be “practically killed”?

A Plain Duty

Our course, therefore, in regard to this serious matter is quite plain. Inasmuch as we see clearly what is going on at the present time in circles where there is much knowledge of the Truth and much love for it, we are bound to call upon all the members of the great “Household of God,” so far as we can reach them by voice or pen, to take notice of the following facts, which are of *vital concern to every one of us*:

First. The Sermon on the Mount is the *special message* of our “Father in heaven” to His own born-again children on earth. It was brought to them by God’s own Son; as it is written: “God hath in these last days spoken unto us BY HIS SON” (Heb. 1:1, 2, see also John 17:8). Because of the intrinsic importance of that message, and because also of the dignity of the One Who uttered it, it has the highest possible claim upon our submission. It has been given, moreover, as the *foundation* for our life-structure; and all who hear those “sayings” of His, will be judged by them in the coming day (Mat. 7: 24-28). Whoever, therefore, deprives a child of God of this, his heavenly Father’s message, does to that “little one” a cruel and irreparable injury. We cannot, in this short paper, do more than state the bare facts. Detailed information as to the supreme value, to the children of God, of the Sermon on the Mount, will be found in our recent publications.

Second, that a new doctrine—*never heard of in all the Christian centuries until our day*—has sprung up, and has spread with amazing rapidity among those who are most zealous for the truth of God, the main purpose and result of that doctrine being to *discredit the Sermon on the Mount* in the eyes of God’s people, and to persuade them that it is not for the children of God, but for a yet future dispensation.

Thus it is boldly declared, by the leaders of this new school of doctrine, that “the Sermon on the Mount is law and not grace” (Scofield Ref. Bible, p. 989). This takes “the doctrine of Christ” away from this present dispensation of “Grace” and assigns it to that of “Law,” thus making our Lord a teacher of Judaism, not of Christianity.

Particularly do we call upon every one who loves the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity to take notice of the following words, penned by Dr. Scofield and published by Mr. A. C. Gaebel in his magazine *Our Hope*, Dec., 1919: “*The Sermon on the Mount is law, and that raised to its highest, most deathful, and destructive potency.*”

We do not know how to express ourselves in regard to these fearful words, which do such deep dishonor to our heavenly Father’s message to His own begotten “children”, and such incalculable injury to them. But our purpose will be gained if we can but induce our fellow saints to *ponder the words we have quoted*, and to consider what must be their effect upon those who receive them. So we simply declare our deep conviction that the children of God are at this time exposed to no evil that is more serious or that has wrought more harm to them, than this new doctrine, which poisons the pure doctrine of the grace of God at its very source, and which is now found between the covers of a popular “Bible”.

Let no one suppose that the great enemy of truth has not other effective methods besides the “Higher Criticism”,

whereby the people of God may be "robbed" of portions of Scripture which are of priceless value to them.

Our Responsibility

Because of the facts briefly stated above, it becomes the solemn duty of this writer, and of all to whom the knowledge of those facts may come, to cry a loud warning against the error referred to, and against the agencies whereby it is being propagated. To keep silence under such circumstances would be culpable.

In discharging this responsibility we are not "attacking" any one. We have not consciously uttered a word that is wanting in respect for our brother, Dr. Scofield; and we think likely that we spend more time in praying for him than some of his injudicious friends, who seem to think that the reputation for "scholarship and spirituality" of a poor mortal man is of more consequence than the welfare of tens of thousands of God's children, or than the honor that is due to the words and commandments of Him Who "made Himself of no reputation."

It does no wrong to a teacher and writer to *quote his own teachings in his own words*, and to compare them with the Word of God. We are *commanded* to do this (I. Thess. 5:21); the present writer has done no more; and, the facts being as stated, he could do no less.

Some think it wrong to name those by whom the error in question is being spread among the saints. But Paul did not think so. He said plainly, "Of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have erred" (II. Tim. 2: 17, 18). Moreover, our warning would be without value if we failed to name the agencies by which the mischief is being done.

Yet we do not forget that those named herein are brethren in Christ; nor that, in a day of general apostasy, they have stood firmly for the fundamentals of the Gospel. Our prayer for Dr. Scofield is, and we hope that many will unite with us in it, that the Lord may graciously prolong his days and give him grace to *take the lead himself* in correcting the error he has been the main instrument in propagating. May our merciful God grant to him, and to those associated with him in spreading this error, "repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (II. Tim. 2:25).

A final word as to the origin of the error itself. We are not ignorant of the sources whence the materials used in Dr. Scofield's notes were gathered. He himself claims no originality for these, but (in the preface to his Bible), frankly says: "The Editor disclaims originality. Other men have labored, he has but entered into their labors." The sources referred to were the writings of godly and spiritual men, sound in the faith. But unhappily the germ of the "post-ponement theory," and of the idea that the Gospels are "Jewish" and "legal," was found in their writings. Coming from such sources it would naturally be accepted, as indeed it has been, without question. And from that tiny germ, the now wide-spreading Upas-tree of error has developed. We know this, for we got it ourselves from the same sources.

But the facts of the case have now been brought to light. The error has been fully exposed; and it would not be a kindness to those who have been conspicuously identified with it to permit its destructive work to go on simply because the process of arresting it may involve for them a little (perhaps salutary) humiliation. It would be a great triumph of grace if they would frankly acknowledge their error.

THE NEW YEAR IN JARVIS STREET

It is our constant wish that THE GOSPEL WITNESS could be twice as big—to afford us twice the space. Last week we had no room to report our great New Year's meetings.

First of all, we had an unusual watchnight service—a large attendance, and all but a very few minutes of the time from ten o'clock until past the midnight hour was spent in prayer. Of that meeting assuredly everyone could say:

"There, there, on eagle wings we soar,
And sense and sin molest no more;
And heaven comes down our souls to greet,
And glory crowns the mercy-seat."

The New Year's Morning Meeting

This has been an institution of Jarvis Street, so far as we can discover, ever since there was a Jarvis Street, but cer-

tainly for sixty or seventy years. The meeting began at ten o'clock, with Deacon George Greenway in the Chair, as is of course usual in all Jarvis Street prayer and fellowship meetings. Deacon Greenway begins, and often continues to the end. Sometimes the Pastor takes over the meeting, but it is like a change of engineers in a transcontinental journey: nobody knows anything about it.

The New Year's morning meeting is always one of peculiar quality. It was the Editor's twenty-seventh meeting, and it was from every point of view the greatest of such meetings we have ever attended.

In the first place, it was marked by the largest attendance. That of course, is something, but not everything. The next distinguishing feature was the spirit of prayer that was upon the people. Everybody prayed, and it really seemed as though everyone was ready to lead in prayer. But it was not the freedom of speech, nor the verbal quality of the prayers, which impressed one, but the fact that so manifestly the petitions and praises of the people, as expressed in prayer, were inspired of God. The very room—the large lecture hall—seemed to be filled, as on the day of Pentecost, with the presence of the Spirit.

That, of course, affected the quality of the singing. What praises were heard! With what heartiness and spiritual appreciation the songs of Zion ascended!

Then followed, after more than two hours of prayer, the fellowship meeting—and that was of the same character. Members of all ages participated. Many testified how the Lord had found them in Jarvis Street, or through some one of its varied ministries. Others spoke of their growth in grace, and their enlargement of biblical knowledge.

One of the outstanding features of this part of the meeting was the testimony of Reggie Snell. He is only thirteen years of age. In ringing tones he recited the thirty-third Psalm. He began the recitation without a word of introduction, reciting it beautifully, and thrilling the whole great company. Following which, he told us he was converted in Jarvis Street when he was six years of age, was baptized when he was nine, and was now thirteen. Reggie was one of a group of one hundred per cent. scholars in our Intermediate Department, not having missed one Sunday from School, nor failed in making a complete record in all other respects—and this, notwithstanding he lives at least nine miles away.

It has long been the practice of the Pastor to give a motto for the New Year. For more than twenty years, either by letter or telegram, New Year's Eve or New Year's Day, he has heard from one who was converted New Year's morning, 1912. This year our good friend sent the following letter:

December 29th, 1936

"My dear Pastor:

"When you read this letter on New Year's morning at the prayer meeting I shall be twenty-five years in Christ. It was exactly a quarter of a century ago that those timely words of gospel grace reached my soul, pointing me away from sin and self, to 'yon lovely Man' on Calvary's cross. Through the intervening years it has been grace from first to last.

"One would need to write a book even to begin to tell of all His matchless love, His abounding care, the delight of fellowship with Him and His people, the entrancing joy of meditation in His word day by day. What a highly privileged people we are, who can sit down in His presence at the Remembrance Feast, something which even Aaron the high priest did not dare to do!

"After quietly thinking of many precious texts for the coming year, the loveliness and beauty of two short words in Hebrews appealed to me: 'Consider Him.' What a delightful occupation for the coming year!—the One Who, in the past, created all things by the word of His power, Who is now the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, and the One Who will eventually receive us unto Himself, that where He is there we may be also. It may well be, that the more we consider Him, the more we shall also consider each other.

"May the Lord continue richly to bless you in your fearless ministry for Him, and also the ministry of the saints in Jarvis Street in their testimony through the year. In closing I think of those exquisite words of blessing in Numbers: "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee:

(Continued on page 12)

THE STORY OF THE PLOT THAT FAILED

The History of a Church's Struggle to Maintain an Evangelical Ministry in a Free Pulpit

By T. T. SHIELDS

CHAPTER X.

I have explained that my letter to Chancellor McCrimmon, while it was an expression of my own concern respecting the character of the University's teaching, and its effect upon the rising generation of preachers, and through them upon the Denomination, was also the result of appeals made to me by Miss Anna Murray, a foreign missionary on furlough, and Rev. Professor E. M. Keirstead, of McMaster University.

I have no means of knowing whether Miss Murray and Dr. Keirstead were known to each other, but I do know that they had had no communication with each other in relation to their respective appeals to me. Indeed, it seemed to me that, independently of each other, they had come as God's messengers. But they were not the only ones whose spirits had been divinely stirred respecting this matter. There was indeed a very general anxiety felt throughout the Denomination by all lovers of the Word of God.

My letter to Chancellor McCrimmon was dated May 3rd, 1919. In *The Canadian Baptist*, of June 26th, 1919, in a report of the Whitby-Lindsay Association, which had met at Whitby, June 10th and 11th, the following resolution, as having been passed at the Association, was included:

"That this gathering representative of the Whitby and Lindsay Association of Baptist Churches, reaffirm its adherence to the historic Baptist view with reference to the inspiration, inerrancy, and supremacy of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and express itself as being unalterably opposed to the ordaining of any man to the Baptist ministry who cannot unequivocally and unreservedly subscribe to that position; and that we request the Clerk of the Association to include this resolution in his report to *The Canadian Baptist*."

I do not recall having read the resolution at the time. It appeared when week by week the reports of the meetings of the Associations were being published, and most of them reported but routine business, and did not challenge special attention.

In the issue of *The Canadian Baptist* of July 10th, 1919, there appeared a letter over the signature of Rev. Edgar Watson, of Fenelon Falls, entitled, "Reactionary, Arbitrary, Superfluous". It was by reading this letter I learned of the resolution, and that it had been framed by my brother, Rev. E. E. Shields, of Oshawa, Ont. The gist of Mr. Watson's letter is summed up in the following excerpt:

"The resolution itself, however, is reactionary, arbitrary, and superfluous. It repeats the old, old error of assuming that you can control credal statements or beliefs by resolutions, canon law or other legislation, and fails to recognize that the strength of the Baptist position is in its untrammelled freedom of thought in such matters and not in any such repressive measures. The Baptist position is strong because of its proximity to the truth in such matters, achieved by freedom of research and never by arbitrary doctrinal statements. The 'historic Baptist view' referred to in this resolution is made up largely of negative virtues, repudiating any such resolution as this one and demanding perfect free-

dom of conscience, and I am satisfied that by far the larger majority of Baptists would demand this to-day."

The Canadian Baptist, in its issue of July 24th, contained two letters occupying together about a full page and a half of the paper, one from Rev. A. P. Wilson, of Stouffville, and the other from Rev. E. E. Shields, the framer of the resolution. Mr. Wilson's letter disagreed with Mr. Watson's summary of the resolution as being "reactionary, arbitrary and superfluous", and contained the following:

"It is not superfluous, because men are being passed into our ministry who deny the inspiration, inerrancy, and supremacy of the Scriptures, who deny specific and fundamental doctrines of our faith, who do not hesitate to say that the theology of the Apostle Paul has wrought 'incalculable harm', who deny the necessity of atonement by blood, and whose preaching lacks the truths vital to the souls of men. Others seek ordination who have no definite convictions about anything."

From Mr. Shields' letter in the same issue I learn that the resolution was submitted by the Resolutions Committee, of which he was a member; that it had been framed by him, and was seconded by Rev. A. P. Wilson, of Stouffville. From Mr. Shields' letter in *The Canadian Baptist* of July 24th, 1919, I print the following excerpt:

"First: The resolution neither contains nor proposes a definition of inspiration, as Mr. Watson supposes.

"Secondly: Mr. Watson's admonitions as to transferring the emphasis from theories of inspiration to the Scriptures themselves, and as to not getting nervous, are really superfluous. To transfer the emphasis from theories of inspiration to the Scriptures themselves is precisely what the resolution does.

"And nobody is getting nervous. No need to be. 'The scripture cannot be broken.'—John 10:35. 'Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled'.—Matt. 5:18. Not all the Higher Critics under heaven can break the Scripture—nor even alter the 'historic Baptist view'.

"Thirdly: Mr. Watson says, 'The question is not between inspiration and non-inspiration at all. It is simply a question of the nature of that inspiration.'

"Come now, and let us reason together. Consider just one or two of the things which Higher Critics have believed and taught. I have not seen the latest bulletins, so do not know exactly what they believe to-day. But there is the case of the first submarine voyage, for instance. Poor old Jonah! They used to say of Jonah that the fish did not swallow him, and that no fish could have swallowed him. (They must have thought Jonah was a Higher Critic.) The book of Jonah says the fish did swallow this disobedient prophet. Very well. Now this seems to call for strong language. Who is the liar? The Higher Critic? Certainly not! Then it must be the writer of the Book of Jonah. And he wrote a lie. And was he, then, inspired to write a lie by the 'God that cannot lie'? That could not be. Therefore the Book of Jonah is not inspired. Nothing more simple. And also the Lord Jesus was deceived, and is therefore not Divine; for He believed the Book of Jonah, fish story and all. Matt. 12:39, 40. But if the Lord Christ was Divine, and could not be deceived, then the Book of Jonah is true, and the fish really swallowed Jonah, and the man who denies it—I do not say Mr. Watson denies it; perhaps he believes it. But this certainly is a question of inspiration.

"The same is true of the denial of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. 'Had ye believed Moses, ye would have

believed me; for he wrote of me", John 5:46. 'And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself', Luke 24:27.

"If Moses did not write the Pentateuch, then the Lord Himself was deceived, and Luke and John certainly were not inspired.

"I would like to see a Higher Critic in the witness box. Sir Robert Anderson once said that in such an event the critic would lose, not only his case, but his reputation also."

I wish it were possible to print the whole discussion of this matter appearing in the columns of *The Canadian Baptist* throughout the summer of 1919, and continuing until just before the Convention in October. Certainly it must be admitted that the Editor of *The Canadian Baptist* of that time was eminently fair. Neither side was restricted in the use of space. One letter of Mr. Shields occupied nearly two whole pages.

I want plainly to state that I had no part whatever in the controversy. I read the letters with interest, but my opinions were neither sought nor offered. It was certainly a merry fight, and conducted, I should say, in good spirit. The discussion which was precipitated by the Whitby-Lindsay resolution, in which my brother played so prominent a part, was conducted, on his part, so far as I am able now to recall, with absolutely no knowledge of my letter to the Chancellor of the University, or of the appeals made to me by Miss Murray and Dr. Keirstead.

Events proved that the apprehension of Miss Murray and Dr. Keirstead was not without foundation. But what I am particularly emphasizing at the moment, is that the discussion in the columns of *The Canadian Baptist* during the summer of 1919 was carried on quite independently and without knowledge of the action I had taken in approaching the Board of Governors. In fact, I was out of the country following August 10th until the end of September.

As this story is intimately related to the whole Canadian Baptist "down grade" movement—to borrow Mr. Spurgeon's phrase in respect to the same drift in England—for its intrinsic value to a discussion of these matters, I here insert the letter by Rev. E. E. Shields appearing in *The Canadian Baptist* of August 14th, 1919, in its entirety:

DESTRUCTIVE CRITICISM

Editor "The Canadian Baptist":—

Dear Mr. Editor,—

It must be apparent to those who have read our correspondence of the past weeks, that Mr. Watson in his letter in your issue of July 10th, page five, and that which appeared in "The Baptist" of July 31st, page three, has given us his own theory of inspiration; and this in spite of the fact that he deprecates any "definition of inspiration," "crude theories of inspiration," "a priori notions about the Bible," and "dogmatic and threadbare theories of the nature of the Bible"; the assumption being, of course, that however men of the conservative school may have "paralyzed their minds by a crude literalism" and "stultified their reason" by holding to "crude" and "threadbare" theories, and whatever "human element with its errancy" there may be in the Scriptures themselves, Mr. Watson's views are the result of such wide research, such deep knowledge, they are built upon such broad and strong foundations and have been constructed with such cunning and such skill, that the completed edifice exhibits an "inerrancy" which suggests "inspiration" rather than the "human touch." (May the Editor forgive, both of us. The writer did not intend sarcasm, but only to be logical.)

Those who have followed this pleasant little fistic encounter between pygmies (with abject apologies to Mr. Watson) will have observed that which became apparent to both Mr. Watson and myself at Whitby: that the only difference between us is all the difference in the world, that our views are

diametrically opposed to each other and are as far apart as the poles.

There are two things in the letter in last week's issue of "The Baptist" with which I agree. One is the sentence: "The great need of the world is Christ, not theories about Him; its need is for the Bible, not a priori notions about the Bible." That is why I drafted the resolution under discussion. The other thing in the letter in which I concur is Mr. Watson's statement that the term "Higher Critic" is used in an unfair sense. We all know just what the term covers; but there are so many "Destructive Critics" amongst the "Higher Critics" that we have got into the way of using the term loosely to describe them. It is in reality a delicate compliment to "Destructive Critics" to designate them as "Higher Critics," but I admit that to class them all together in this way is really unfair to other "Higher Critics," who believe in the "inspiration, inerrancy and supremacy of the Scriptures." We will, therefore, change the term, without changing the tune, and it will be understood that the term "Destructive Critic" hereinafter" used "shall mean," one who carves up Genesis, slices Isaiah, kicks Daniel forward several centuries, accepts a theory of some German critic with regard to Jonah, rather than the plain teaching of Christ, and generally "plays German" with the whole Book of God.

Mr. Watson reiterates some of the things said in his first letter, and still insists the resolution means that I would "impose" certain things upon every man who enters the Baptist ministry, and that I mean that a man who applies for ordination and fellowship in the Baptist denomination "must" accept certain views. The resolution contains no suggestion of this sort. Mr. Watson himself says that "a Baptist candidate for the ministry should believe in inspiration" . . . "of some kind." Suppose, then, it is found in some case that a candidate does not believe in inspiration of any kind (of course this is not a probable case), and the council, of which Mr. Watson is a member, refuses, kindly of course, to ordain him? Would the Council be "imposing" some belief upon the candidate or saying that he "must" accept some particular view? So neither would a Council say "must," nor "impose" any view upon a man if it should decline to ordain him because he did not hold to "the inspiration, inerrancy and supremacy of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments." The Council could couple its refusal with some prayerful, kind and wise counsel, which might lead to some heart searching and some Bible searching, and might mean that the same man would be gladly ordained by the same Council, after he had thrown his erroneous views where the mariners threw Jonah. (I rather hesitate to make a statement like that when in danger of being read by Destructive Critics. I trust, however, that in view of their penchant for allegory there is no danger that they will "paralyze their minds by a crude literalism.") But suppose the candidate did not change his views? Then probably he would unite in some way with people who didn't believe just what he didn't believe, and he would doubtless find a ministry somewhere in leading yet others not to believe what he didn't believe; but he would forever remain outside the Baptist ministry, in which, if this should continue to be carried out, all would ultimately believe, as all did at one time believe, in "the inspiration, inerrancy and supremacy of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments." And the term "Baptist" would be rehabilitated and would come to mean what it once meant in this country and what it now means in the Southern States, and the denomination in these Provinces would be saved from the disintegration and destruction which threaten at the present time.

In the opinion of the writer there rests upon every member of an Ordaining Council a tremendous responsibility in the sight of God. And in this connection, Mr. Editor, I beg, in all humility, to commend to the consciences of all who may be called to such service, two quotations, especially, from the letter of Rev. A. P. Wilson, of Stouffville, which appeared in "The Baptist" of July 24th, pages three and four. They are as follows: "Cases have occurred in which the Council disagreed with the candidate's views as being utterly unscriptural. Yet out of consideration for the candidate, and with the expressed hope that he would mend, they ordained him." "An Ordaining Council professes to stamp with its approval and associate itself with the teaching of the ordained. Must Baptists be compelled to recognize by ordination the false teacher because, forsooth, they stand for freedom of thought? Must they force themselves to lie before God when they say they fellowship a man on his statement

of Christian doctrine when but a moment before they had deplored the candidate's views?"

In the letter last published Mr. Watson does not even attempt to show how any one who questions Christ and the evangelists by doubting the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, can at the same time believe that those evangelists were inspired; but he naively waives the question of inspiration by the remark that "as we both believe in inspiration of some kind and further, that a Baptist candidate for the ministry should believe in inspiration, that general question need not be further discussed." He then proceeds to discuss the "inerrancy" part of the resolution, and gives us, incidentally, the view of some of the Destructive Critics as to the alleged errancy of the Scriptures. But it is just because the writer knows that most Destructive Critics profess to believe in inspiration "of some kind," while at the same time giving the lie to the plainest statements of Holy Writ, and because he knows the logical and inevitable results of such views, that the resolution was made to read, "The inspiration, inerrancy and supremacy of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments." It will be observed that as the resolution had no special reference to Mr. Watson at the time it was written, so now I am not thinking of his peculiar views alone, but of those of Destructive Critics generally.

Mr. Watson has simply chosen certain theories which happened to suit him from the great mass of the speculations of others. Being a Destructive Critic he has doubtless hewn his way through a lot of good material, but he must not ask us to think he has hewn his way to the views which he holds to-day. Some of the stereotyped terms which he uses were made in molds which he has never seen, while others are of distinctly Canadian Baptist manufacture. We concede full right to Destructive Critics to manufacture anything they please; but the goods which Mr. Watson displays are not his: they may be bought upon the open market bearing the imprimatur of other firms. "You pays your money and you takes your choice."

In Mr. Watson's contention for the errancy of the Scriptures, unless I misunderstood him altogether, he reveals that it is his opinion:—

1. That human reason should be the touchstone by which the quality and value of all Scripture should be tested.
2. That the testing should be conducted by the light from the lamp of science and by the effulgence of Destructive Criticism.
3. That the testing so conducted has shown that the Old and New Testaments have "naive conceptions of scientific questions," and that "the abundantly proved facts of science" and "the ultimate truths of science" conflict with, and are contrary to, Genesis and other parts of the Old and New Testaments.
4. That where science conflicts with the Bible, the statements of the Bible are wrong and science always right.
5. That, therefore, those who hold the traditional view of the Bible are either utterly ignorant of all science and are also obscurantists who would, perhaps, "try to stop the dawning of the day by wringing the neck of the crowing cock," or they "carry on a life-long conflict, stultifying their reason wherever they come into touch with the religious side of life."

This seems to me to be a perfectly fair setting forth of what Mr. Watson has told us in "The Baptist" of July 31st.

Now let us look into these charges against "The Book" and those who hold the traditional view with regard to the Book.

First, then, as to Mr. Watson's enthronement of the human reason. I think he is not fair when he suggests that some of us "decry the function of the human reason" in the interpretation of the Bible. That is very far from being the case. My own opinion of Mr. Watson, for instance, is, not that he uses his reason too much, but too little. But he has also put reason in the wrong place and is using it in a wrong way. Does he believe in the Divinity of King Reason? Has it ever occurred to him that his reason has anything of "the human element with its errancy" which he attributes to the Scriptures? Reason is a fair servant, but a poor master, and this "servant when he reigneth is confusion to the end." Reason has its function in the interpretation of the Scriptures. But what of the function of the Holy Spirit? What of the function of faith? Does Mr. Watson intend to go all the way down the dark road of rationalism? Does he believe this Scripture?—"Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures." (Luke 24:25.) And has he studied these words?—"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teach-

eth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual." (1 Cor. 2:13.)

Just a few words about what Mr. Watson says as to the Bible's relation to science. He says the one who holds the traditional view of the Bible "must repudiate science because it conflicts with Genesis." Does he mean that he himself repudiates Genesis because it conflicts with science? He can mean nothing else. According to him the fact of the conflict between the two reveals the "human element with its errancy" in Genesis, but reveals no "human element with its errancy" in science! That, evidently, is Mr. Watson's view. Science and the critics are right and the Bible wrong. And this is a sample of Mr. Watson's reasoning! Did Mr. Watson ever hear of "science" being wrong? Did he ever entertain the suspicion that there may be in science any "human element with its errancy"? Science and the monuments are doing their best. They are confirming Genesis and the Bible generally just as rapidly as possible. But Mr. Watson must remember the "human element" in science and must expect it to be several thousand years behind the Bible. But in simple courtesy to the people of God, he ought not to make such statements about a book which they love, because of what it is, until at least he has shown that he is able:—

1. To take some "abundantly proved fact of science" and prove that this proved fact is an "ultimate truth" of science.
2. To show that this "ultimate truth" disproves some statement of Genesis or any other Book of the Bible.

When the critics can do that we shall begin to listen to them.

Our critic says, "Evolution to him (the one who holds the traditional view) must be rank heresy, but, as in a scientific age, the accepted and abundantly proved facts of science meet him at every turn, he must carry on a life-long conflict, stultifying his reason wherever he comes into touch with the religious side of life." And this is another sample of a Destructive Critic's reasoning! I do not think Mr. Watson claims a "divine element" for the teaching upon evolution. But even if he does make such a claim, are we stultifying our reasons if we apply to evolution the principle which he applies to the Bible, and say that in evolution there is a "human element with its errancy"; and if we decide that the "human element" in evolution shows wherever it conflicts with the Bible, and that in every such case evolution is wrong and the Bible right? I submit, Mr. Editor, that if Mr. Watson admits, or claims, inspiration "of some kind" for the Bible, and makes no such claim for evolution, freely admitting its "human errancy" and that we may have arrived at "ultimate truth" with regard to it, then, if he accepts evolution rather than the Bible, where the two seem to conflict, it must be he, rather than some of the rest of us, who is "stultifying his reason." It ought to be remembered, too, that it is the opinion of some eminent scientists that the only thing wrong with the science of evolution is that the wheels have been turning the wrong way and need to be reversed.

Mr. Watson's representation of the conservative theologian as one who "repudiates science" and "stultifies his reason" is, it seems to me, hardly borne out by the facts. Some of the most eminent of the Higher Critics (not "Destructive Critics") have held the traditional view of the Bible. The great preachers and evangelists of all time have held this view. The Baptists of the Southern States, more flourishing I suppose than any other body of Baptists in the world, stand foursquare against destructive criticism. I remember that Dr. H. C. Mabee, at the Convention in Walmer Road Church some years ago, even dared (I am not sure whether Mr. Watson was present) to preach from the whole book of Jonah and treat it as a record of fact. I remember the preacher very distinctly, and also the sermon. There was no doubt that he held the traditional view of the Bible. Now from my recollection of that massive head, I should say there was probably as much grey matter there as the average Destructive Critic possesses. He spoke like a man of ripe scholarship. And I really should not like to think with Mr. Watson, that the only way in which he could have continued to hold his views was by "stultifying his reason."

On the other hand, will Mr. Watson name us one Destructive Critic who, while holding such views, has been a successful missionary? Will he point out one Destructive Critic who as regular preacher or evangelist has been really largely used of God in reaching men for Christ? Can he tell us of one Destructive Critic who has gone down into the slums of any city, and has been used of God in reclaiming drunkards and open sinners generally?

I fear Mr. Watson will begin to surmise that I have not the veneration for Destructive Critics which he entertains. The fact is, I have not. My experience may have been unusual, but I have not yet met one who had not apparently concentrated his attention upon the covers of "The Book" to the great neglect of its text. It never seems to dawn on them that by all analogy it should be expected that the greater part of the evidence as to the Bible will be found within the Bible itself.

This question of "inerrancy" is one of inspiration. It matters nothing that some Destructive Critics declare that they believe in inspiration "of some kind"; nor does it affect the issue one iota that they even profess to possess a fuller light than those who hold the traditional view; upon the hypothesis, for instance, that the Book of Jonah is allegory and not a record of fact, the man of sound reason will inevitably argue to the conclusion that the Gospels are not inspired, that Christ is not Divine, that the apostles were deceived, that the Epistles and Revelation are valueless, that there has been no revelation from God and that the world has no Saviour. This conclusion has the merit at least of being logical, and this is the end to which many Destructive Critics have come. Mr. Watson speaks as though he believes in Christ as a Saviour and in regeneration. He will find that at a point farther down the rationalistic road, regeneration is not believed in, and that if he desires to keep the same company and continue the same journey, he will have to throw his belief in regeneration over the fence. Mr. Watson and others with him, their protests as to their belief in inspiration "of some kind" and as to their fidelity to Christ notwithstanding, are travelling down a road which leads to darkness and despair.

There is one paragraph in Mr. Watson's letter which I regard—as he regards the Book of Jonah—as "a gem"—and which I am compelled to quote in full, in order that I may share with others the charm of its brilliance. It is as follows:

"Crude theories of inspiration usually result, as in the case with Daniel, in concentration on the seals, the trumpets, the bowls, the beast, the false prophet, and the little horn, the construction of all sorts of grotesque and sometimes humiliating schemes of 'inverted history,' neglecting what is vital and substantial for the trivial and fanciful."

Shades of the mighty dead! Here is a Baptist preacher who thinks the seals, the trumpets, the bowls, the beast and the false prophet are to be found in Daniel! If Mr. Watson will read his Daniel he will find that none of these are mentioned, as such, in the book. The "little horn" is there, of course. It is a great thing to try to find things in the Bible—more interesting than prospecting and far more profitable. I would like to suggest a puzzle to Mr. Watson: As the seals, the trumpets, the bowls, the beast and the false prophet are not to be found in Daniel, then where, O where, have they gone? I will just give this hint; he will not find them in Genesis. I desire now to submit a proposition, and it is this: If Mr. Watson had known enough about the Book of Daniel to know whether these twenty-three "trivial and fanciful" articles were hidden therein, would he have accepted the teaching of certain Destructive Critics that the book was written "138 B.C., or thereabouts?"

See how Mr. Watson's theory contradicts the text of Daniel, and, therefore, denies its inspiration. (This will lead Mr. Watson to read the Book of Daniel. Hallelujah!) The book seems to have been written by Daniel. (Dan. 12:4.) It is written in the first person from the eighth chapter to the end. It is "I Daniel" who writes. Mr. Watson himself will hardly deny that "Daniel the prophet," of whom Jesus speaks (Matt. 24:15) really lived. (Though some Destructive Critics have done so.) Daniel was taken captive from Judah by Nebuchadnezzar, and his life and visions are woven into the history of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius and Cyrus. If, therefore, the book of Daniel, purporting to be written by "I Daniel," between say 607 B.C. and 534 B.C., was in reality written by some "pious Jew" in "138 B.C., or thereabouts," the book must be a forgery and cannot have been inspired. The conclusion is unescapable. The contention of Destructive Critics flatly denies the inspiration of the book.

And now, about Jonah. I know my readers have been waiting for the reappearance of that story. It has a way of coming up again, as had Jonah himself. If Mr. Watson will read my last letter with more care than he has bestowed

upon Daniel, he will see that the story of the big fish was submitted, not as proof of the "historicity" of the Book of Jonah in general, but only as showing a possibility which Destructive Critics have denied, i.e., that the prepared fish really swallowed Jonah. The story which I related is true, though not inspired. I did not expect, however, that one who denies the historicity of a book so clearly bearing the marks of inspiration as that of Jonah, would be likely to believe anything which tends to upset his "a priori notions."

Mr. Watson has made his choice amongst many different views of Destructive Critics, and calls the Book of Jonah "allegory." In another sentence he denies, by implication, its "historicity." Let me make this plain. Mr. Watson denies that the book of Jonah is a record of facts. Let the careful reader stop now, and read the Book of Jonah; it will take about five or ten minutes. Mr. Watson denies that the people of Nineveh were wicked; that the Lord spoke to Jonah, commanding him to warn the city of its impending overthrow; that Jonah fled from the presence of the Lord; that he took ship to go to Tarshish; that the Lord sent out a great wind upon the sea; that in the storm the mariners threw Jonah overboard; that a great fish swallowed him; that the Lord spoke to the fish; that the fish obeyed the Lord and vomited out Jonah upon the dry land; that Jonah repented; that he then went to Nineveh and preached; that as a result the people of Nineveh repented; and that the Lord then spared the city. Mr. Watson denies it all. According to him these things simply never happened. Yet he would profess to believe it to have inspiration "of some kind!" (Some Destructive Critics deny inspiration of any kind, and some go the length of denying that either Nineveh or Jonah ever existed.) The story contains "vital truths," Mr. Watson tells us, and the story is "a gem." Verily, it is a gem, if it is allegory and not fact! "Jesus," he tells us, "saw fit to refer to it incidentally as illustrating a great truth when the question of its historicity was not up for discussion." The "question" was not up for discussion, because at that time there was no such question. But, oh that Mr. Watson would read his Bible instead of paying attention to the vapourings of Destructive Criticism! Listen to the words of the Lord Jesus (Matt. 12:41): "The men of Nineveh shall rise in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it; because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold, a greater than Jonas is here." Says Jesus, "Jonah preached unto the men of Nineveh." Says Mr. Watson, "Not so: Jonah was not sent, nor did he preach." "The men of Nineveh repented," says Jesus. "Not so," says Mr. Watson, "the men of Nineveh did not repent." This is the issue: Christ, or the Critics; it is a question of the inspiration of the Scriptures and the divinity of the Lord.

Let it not be thought, however, that I have presumptuously undertaken to defend either one. The Bible remains because it is inspired. The doctrine of the Lord's Divinity remains because He is Divine.

The resolution aims to defend, not the Bible, but those who ought to have the privilege of hearing the voice of the Bible, without the discordant noise of the illogical denials and frantic asseverations and contradictory interpretations of Destructive Criticism.

I enjoyed our conversation in Whitby and was much drawn towards Mr. Watson. I have great regard for him personally. And the measure of my regard is the measure of my regret that he should have imbibed so many of the views of Destructive Criticism.

Mr. Watson has believed what he has been taught. That is the logic of my resolution, and that, Mr. Editor, is the logic of the general situation.

Bless God for a whole Book! Thank God that "The Scripture cannot be broken." "Thy word is very pure, therefore Thy servant loveth it."

Oshawa.

E. E. SHIELDS.

In the next issue of the paper, Mr. Watson, utterly routed as we believe, retired from the field with a short letter which he said was his final word. Other letters followed from Mr. Shields in *The Canadian Baptist* of September 11th and October 9th, that of September 11th concluding as follows:

"Whether the tide ebbs or flows, however, my resolution is taken. I desire to express myself in a way that cannot be mistaken: I am prepared to-day, if necessary, painful and

regrettable though it be, in no spirit of bitterness and with no desire but for the common weal, to vote to part company with those who lay destructive hands upon the Book of God. I suggest a 'line up' on the question, in the spirit of the Master, in the interests of the Kingdom of God and of the people who ought to have the Book entire. This thing is many years overdue. Who is on the Lord's side?

"The foregoing is only intended to be a reply to some things in Mr. Watson's final word.

"If justification of the resolution were needed, it has been abundantly supplied by Mr. Watson's letters.

"In closing, Mr. Editor, I beg to call attention to the fact that my letter of August 14th remains unanswered."

Oshawa.

E. E. SHIELDS.

There is no doubt that this controversial discussion throughout the summer of 1919 greatly stirred the whole Denomination, and prepared the way for all that followed. I returned from England at the end of September, reaching Toronto the 29th. In *The Canadian Baptist* of that week, October 2nd, there appeared the editorial which I discussed in the Jarvis Street pulpit the next Sunday morning, October 5th, and there threw down the gauntlet to the Modernists of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec.

Then followed the denominational war. I shall deal with that editorial, and the Sunday morning service at which I discussed it, in next week's instalment of this story.

THE NEW YEAR IN JARVIS STREET

(Continued from page 7)

the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

"Your genuine child in the faith,

(Signed) Vivian Harries."

We could think of no better motto for the year than that which Brother Vivian Harries selected; therefore we gave these words for Jarvis Street's motto for 1937: "Consider him."

The meeting continued until well past one o'clock, and then seemed to be only beginning. Had it not been that many had others to consider beside themselves, we believe the meeting could have continued hours longer without weariness to those who attended. Really, when the Lord draws nigh, as He did New Year's morning, one is enabled in a little measure to understand Christ's meaning when He said to His disciples, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of."

One perhaps might have feared that these two meetings coming so close together would interfere somewhat with the Saturday evening meeting, but they seemed only to augment both its numbers and its power. It would seem almost sacrilege to try to describe it. There seemed to have sprung up a holy intimacy between the people and the Saviour, so that they talked with God as Abraham did, as a man talketh with his friend.

The Sunday following was one of blessing, there were many responses to the invitation both morning and evening. The great Communion Service Sunday evening, January 3rd, and the meeting of Thursday last, were two more excursions into the heavenlies; and then came Saturday once again. The prayer-room was crowded, and overflowed into the adjoining room. Again the meeting passed the boundary line, continuing from eight to ten-thirty, with everyone feeling it had just begun. It was a service of earnest intercession for

the work of the School and Church—which are one. Then followed Sunday. It was not surprising that something like twenty responded to the invitation at the morning service, came to the front, and were later dealt with in the enquiry-room. The results of the evening service were not so apparent, although we believe were probably just as large. The sermon appears in this week's WITNESS.

We have written thus at length to testify to a special touch of revival blessing the last two week-ends.

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 1 1st Quarter Lesson 4 January 24th, 1937

DR. T. T. SHIELDS, EDITOR

THE DUTY OF CONFESSION

Lesson Text: Romans 10:6-13; Matthew 10:32-39.

Golden Text: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."—Matthew 10:32, 33.

The scriptures selected for this lesson plainly teach that it is the duty of everyone who believes in Christ, to make public confession of Him.

I. THE DANGERS OF SECRET DISCIPLESHIP.

Many, hearing the Word, privately believe, but refrain from making their faith known; and, when assaulted by the tempter, they are tripped up. They are then tempted to believe that they have made a mistake, and take refuge in the fact that no one knows of their having believed on Christ.

Nicodemus (John 3:1; John 7:50; John 19:39) is three times spoken of as the man "who came to Jesus by night", presumably that he might not be observed. All that is written to his credit is that he raised a question before the Pharisees and others, in Christ's behalf, and also that he helped to bury Him. Joseph of Arimathea (Matt. 27:57-61; Mark 15:42; John 19:38) was a disciple of Jesus, but we are told that he was so "secretly for fear of the Jews".

There were many other secret disciples in Christ's day, who feared to confess Him lest they should be put out of the synagogue.

Appeal to scholars to have the courage of their convictions.

II. THE LESSON TEXT IN MATTHEW.

(a) No one is excused from confession on the ground of the consequences thereof. In verses 26 to 28, we are admonished not to be afraid even of those who have power to kill us. What blessing would come to individuals, and through them to multitudes of unbelieving people, if all believers were delivered from the fear of man which "bringeth a snare". (b) In this passage it is implied that God will take care of His own; that, seeing He cares for the sparrows, and numbers the hairs of our head, there is no justification for our being afraid. (c) In the 32nd verse, it is promised that if we confess Christ here, He will confess us in heaven. This does not refer to some future time, but that even now—at the moment—if we acknowledge Christ below, He acknowledges us before the Father and the holy angels. (d) In the 33rd verse, we are told that whoever denies Him among men, will be denied by the Lord Jesus in heaven. If we are ashamed of Him, He will be ashamed of us. (e) The verses following this intimate that even though all our friends and relatives should become our enemies, we must acknowledge Christ; and it says that he that taketh not his cross and follow Him, is not worthy of Him.

III. LESSON TEXT IN ROMANS.

(a) In this text faith is defined as believing the word of God which is in our mouths and in our hearts. (b) We are told that it is with the heart—the seat of the affections—we believe unto righteousness. The way to believe the truth is to receive it "in the love of it". Hence the necessity for repentance. (c) Only God knows what we believe in our hearts, and the faith that is in us should be confessed with our mouths, that all the world may know that we are on Christ's side. Whoever thus confesses, shall never be ashamed.

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