

# 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

### SHALL IT BE PEACE OR WAR?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, January 17th, 1937

(Stenographically Reported)

Broadcast over Station CKOC—1120 Kilocycles

"Fury is not in me: who would set the briars and thorns against me in battle?  
I would go through them, I would burn them together.

"Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he  
shall make peace with me."—Isaiah 27:4, 5.

#### Prayer before the Sermon

To Thee, O Lord, we come, Who art the God of all grace, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. We thank Thee that Thou hast visited us, not in judgment, but in mercy. Thou hast been pleased to reveal Thyself to us as One Who delights to pardon iniquity, transgression, and sin. We bless Thee that ever Thou didst stoop to our low estate, taking upon Thee our nature, that Thou mightest be a faithful and merciful High Priest in things pertaining to God.

We rejoice in the knowledge that we have One at the right hand of the Father Who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities, Who knows well how to enter into sympathy with us, Who knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust. We come to Thee this evening as a company of men and women who greatly need Thy help, not only those who are within these walls, but those who bow the knee in Thy presence as they hear this service by radio. Command Thy blessing upon us all.

There are some who need Thy pardoning grace, some who have never yet prayed the publican's prayer, God, be merciful to me a sinner. There may be some whose eyes have never been opened, nor their understanding enlightened, who know not the plague of their own hearts. O Thou great Physician of the souls of men, make all such this evening to understand how malignant is the disease that afflicts them, and how dependent we all are upon Thy redeeming grace.

Some have wandered from Thee, have all but cast away their confidence. They are like Peter who denied Thee; they have turned aside from the paths of righteousness; they have been unwilling to be led therein by the Good Shepherd. Yet if indeed they have ever known Thee, and have ever been numbered among Thy sheep, Thou wilt reclaim them. Oh, that Thou wouldst find all such wandering children of Thine this evening, and turn their hearts back again. Make them to say, I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. I made haste, and delayed not to keep Thy commandments.

There are some in trouble—we all are. Our limitations are so pronounced that we soon get to the end of ourselves, in judgment as in strength. Thou art a very present help in time of trouble. We commend every troubled soul to Thee to-night, that he may learn how welcome he is to come to Him Who waits to be his Hiding-place.

Some are afflicted, and suffer in body, who cannot be with us or in any other place of worship. As the gospel reaches many such by radio this evening, make the sick-chamber and the hospital ward veritable Bethels to their souls. May the eyes of faith see the ladder set up upon earth whose top reaches to heaven! May the ministry of Thine angels be sweet to them!

Look in pity upon this troubled world, upon warring nations, upon perplexed rulers, upon some who have destroyed the world's peace, and who seem to delight in war. Again we pray, Scatter Thou the people that delight in war. Let Thine hand be upon those who rule over us, upon His Majesty the King, and all his advisers; that they may direct the affairs of this Empire in ways of righteousness which must issue ultimately in paths of peace.

Bless us in our meditation this evening. Instruct us out of Thy holy Book. Bring any who are unsaved, to Thyself, and build up Thine own people in their most holy faith; and in all these things get glory to Thy great name. For Jesus Christ's sake we ask it, Amen.

Man continually boasts of his progress and development. Each succeeding generation holds its predecessor up to ridicule, if not to contempt—as a full-grown man looks with amusement on the toys of his childhood. Thus the world of humanity rather sneers at earlier ages, and boasts of having "put away childish things".

In contrast therewith, divine immutability is axiomatic in every revelation God makes of Himself: "I am the

Lord: I change not." Upon that postulate, the whole scheme of redemption, and every promise of grace, are based. They have no value if God should change. His knowledge, His wisdom, His power, were absolute in the beginning and from everlasting. He sees the end from the beginning, and is never surprised by any development of human affairs.

That is why the Bible endures, why it never grows old, nor wears out, nor becomes obsolete. It is the word of the unchanging God.

In the immediate context a severe word is spoken, which we must not neglect, for we are enjoined to behold both "the goodness and severity of God." The first verse of this chapter properly belongs to the closing paragraph of the chapter preceding: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain. In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."

The wicked rulers of the earth are likened to leviathan whose heart is as firm as stone, and whose scales are so close together that "they cannot be sundered". He is described as one crossing like a bar; perhaps that puts a barrier across the way, a hindrance to the world's progress, and to all overtures of peace. He is likened to a crooked serpent, full of subtlety, and all manner of deceit. Yet we are told that the Ruler of all the earth is equal to these powers. Jehovah can never be victimized by any programme of disarmament. "His sore and great and strong sword" is ever available, to be unsheathed in the cause of justice, and in defense of righteousness.

Let us never forget, in our estimate of our own personal situation, or of world affairs, that above all human conflicts, and above all the evil designs of men and of nations, there is a just Ruler Who has not laid His sceptre by, nor yielded any of His weapons of war. Yet even in the midst of wrath He remembers mercy. He speaks of His own people as of "A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it: I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day."

The powers of Deity are reserved for defensive purposes, for, saith He, "Fury is not in me: who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together. Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me."

All the world seems to be divided in our day into two camps. On the one hand, there are nations that at least seem to be bent upon war. They are like bandits who have challenged the world's forces of law and order; like reckless drivers on the highway, who escape disaster only because of the almost infinite patience and courtesy of others who make way for them. Germany and Italy are but national Dillingers, national bandits, outlaws, entitled to the respect of no decent people, and no law-abiding nation. It is a thousand pities that any nation should be under the necessity of treating with them. They ought to be regarded as bandits. Had not the League of Nations failed through the withdrawal of

some of the great powers, leaving the world's police duties to only two first-class nations, the moral sentiment of the world might have been mobilized to compel these lawless ones to behave themselves.

On the other hand, are the world's democracies, not one of whom desires war: The Scandinavians, Holland, Belgium, France, and I rather think Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, Poland, and perhaps others. They have no desire for war. Certainly Britain has not, and with equal certainty the United States has no evil designs toward other nations. As a matter of fact, the greater part of the world's population has no desire for war. Even the democracies of the world could say, "Fury is not in me."

I know that these national conflicts are but imperfect illustrations; and yet, because they are ever present in our minds in these days, they may assist us to an understanding of the perpetual war that is ever being waged in the moral and spiritual world, the antagonisms and conflicts that are always going on behind the scenes, and of which these national affairs are after all but the symptoms and outward manifestation. The truth is, the world is at war with God—or would be—and in the text I have announced, God answers that attitude.

*Here is the Benevolence of the Divine Government.* He asks, "Why should you fight Me? Fury is not in me." He says further, "If you do, you will but set briers and thorns against me in battle:" *the absolute invincibility of righteousness is there affirmed.* Then He offers an alternative—"Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me." Thus *the omnipotence of grace* is proclaimed by Him Who had made peace through the blood of His cross that He might reconcile all things unto Himself, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven.

## I.

THE BENEVOLENCE OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT: "Fury is not in me: who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle?"

There are some nations of whom other nations need never be afraid. Britain, pacifically disposed, had disarmed herself almost to the point of defenselessness; and had shown a willingness to beat her swords into plowshares, and her spears into pruning-hooks. Certainly she has no fell designs upon other nations. As for the United States—I see that Japan is troubled because that great nation is spending so much on armaments. I am not, are you? Let her spend more. I rejoice in every new battleship she builds—under the circumstances. She cannot be too mighty to please me. I know very well her strength will never be used against us. It is inconceivable that these democracies should be disposed to embark upon a campaign of conquest and subjugation. Their strength is not being developed for any such purpose.

Said the Lord, "Why should you be afraid of me in the sense that I may become your enemy?" Why should anyone oppose God? I remember the head of a certain institution, speaking of one who was on the staff, said to me, "He is a most difficult man to get along with, a man of many excellent qualities, yet he puts everybody in this institution on the defensive. He seems to be always stirring up strife. People who would fain be at peace have always the guards up, defending themselves against his accusations." You have met people who

seem always to be spoiling for a fight, miniature Hitlers and Mussolinis.

Sometimes that is so in the domestic realm: it is true of both sides of the house. In other spheres of life, there are men who seem ever to be seeking a conflict. They not only contend, but they are themselves contentious, and are never happy unless they are making everybody else miserable.

That is the attitude of man toward God. God says to sinful men, "What have I done to you? Why should you set up your defense against Me? Fury is not in me. I have no evil designs upon you." The divine government and the divine Ruler were misrepresented in Eden, and the lie there told has been retold millions of times, until men have a false conception of God. If you are a Christian, and are sometimes misunderstood, and misrepresented, you need not be surprised: "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord." The most misunderstood person in the universe is God Himself. The majority of those you meet to-morrow will not like even to hear the name of God. They will resent your introducing His name into your conversation. They are opposed to any appeal made in His behalf. Men are enemies in their minds by wicked works; but I desire to show you that there is no cause of war in God: "Fury is not in me," saith He.

If only we could persuade men of the untruthfulness of the enemy's suggestion, and see God for what He is, and learn that there is no fury in Him, no anger, no hatred toward men! It is as though God said, "I would not hurt you. Do not be afraid of me. Do not fortify your hearts against me. Fury is not in me." To believe otherwise is a misconception. It would be worth a thousand fortunes to you if you could see God for what He is, and if all your false impressions could be corrected.

If someone could persuade these mad men of Europe that nobody wants to hurt them; if someone could persuade Hitler that nobody contemplates taking possession of Germany; if someone should say to him, "What are you making such an ado about? Nobody wants to fight you. There is no fury in any of the nations toward you",—could he believe it there might be peace.

Spiritually, men everywhere are as mad as Hitler, and as stupid as Mussolini. I know there are people who say Mussolini is a wise man. They said that of Napoleon. They have said it of all the tyrants in their day. But their reigns have been short-lived—and this Lucifer will fall some day, as all Lucifers have fallen. And so will you! But, more of that presently.

*The divine government does not plan to impose any irksome rule upon men.* If Italy wants Fascism, let her have it. If Germany is in love with Nazism, so let it be. If they want to stand on their heads, they are welcome. If they prefer guns to butter, let them sharpen their teeth on them. Nobody proposes to impose any new form of government on them that would rob them of what they conceive to be liberty. If they love their chains, they are at least their own choice.

Why should men suppose that the rule of God in the soul means bondage, a curtailment of liberty, the spoiling of life? It was God Who made the monsters of the deep to sport themselves in the mighty main. God never made cages for birds: He made trees and the infinite spaces in which to exercise their God-given powers of flight. God did not make the slums of the city, and

shut men up in tenements—much less did He build jails with iron bars. He set the race upon its career in a beautiful garden, giving it boundless liberty. Why should it be supposed that the recognition of divine authority, submission to divine rule, would rob the life of every element of liberty and of pleasure? "Fury is not in me," saith the Lord. He has no irksome yoke that He would forge upon men's shoulders. He would rob us of no legitimate good, nor strip us of any just possession. He wills that we should be happy. He is revealed in the Bible as the happy God.

I suppose Hitler and Mussolini can smile. I wish they would wear a good broad grin some day, and let someone take their photographs—for the world's relief. Most of the time they look sour—out-of-sorts with themselves and everybody else.

If you would see God, you must see Him as represented in the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only adequate picture of God. Jesus Christ is God. When did He ever hurt anybody in the days of His flesh? He was always touching people into health and happiness, speaking to them words of wisdom, taking even the little children in His arms and blessing them, comforting the mourner, even shedding tears of human sympathy as He stood by an open grave. When the disciples said, "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us", our Lord said, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." There is no fury in Him. He desires only the well-being of men; and I affirm that sovereign and despotic as the divine government is, this world is subject to a *benevolent* Despot Who willeth not the death of the sinner, but that all should come unto Him and live. That is the only true picture of God, One Who does not want to fight, to unsheath the sword. He would far rather hear us say, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Thus He comes to His vineyard to trim it, and to keep it.

## II.

Let us now look at another aspect of this text. Here is THE INVINCIBILITY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. Saith the Lord, "I have no fury awaiting you, but who will set briers and thorns against me in battle?"

I am not in the secret of the British Foreign Office. It is amusing to observe how many buttress their opinions by reference to the authoritative word of some anonymous gentleman who knows someone, who knows someone else, who said thus and so. By such wisdom all the problems of the world could be settled in the wash-room of a pullman car to-morrow morning. One could find enough wisdom in any one of them to equip all the governments on earth and bring peace. I pretend to no such wisdom. I lay no claim to it, and yet I can tell you the issue of the conflicts that now threaten the world on the authority of the implication of this divine inquiry: "Who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle?"

*The principles which govern the conduct of wicked men are as briers and thorns.* They are combustible, vulnerable, easily defeated. You ask me what is the future of Germany, of Hitler? I can tell you infallibly. I cannot tell you the date; but the principles of Hitlerism, and Fascism, and Communism, like plants which we call "annuals," and which bloom and perish in a single summer are by the exuberant blooms which mark their rapid development, only hastened to the end

of their single summer's prosperity. How do I know? Any house built upon the sand will fall before the assault of the storm. The principles of such governments as those of Germany and Italy are death-stricken. They cannot survive. Such tyrannies have always been short-lived.

The same is true of Hitler and Mussolini as individuals. Is it not amazing that young men, and older ones, who embark upon a career of crime, should never learn their lesson until it is too late? There may be some man listening to me to-night by radio, sitting in a restaurant or elsewhere, whom nobody about him knows. He may have a pistol in his pocket, and a plan in his mind which he expects to execute to-morrow, or some day thereafter. He has laid his plans very cleverly. He thinks he can avoid the law. I warn that man, if there should be such an one, that sooner or later, he will find that his principles are but briers and thorns, fit fuel for the flames. He is bound to go down. A man cannot set himself against organized society and hope ultimately to win. He may for a while, but sooner or later he will find the path to the penitentiary or to the gallows. So will Mussolini. So will Hitler. So will all lawlessness—yours and mine! Whoever sets the principles of an ungodly career against God in battle will discover that he is trying to fight fire with briers and thorns. They do but add fuel to the flames. They not only make his ultimate defeat an absolute certainty, but insure an accompanying torture of soul. It were insanity to entertain any hope of success: "Who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle?"

In this place we are rather old-fashioned, I admit. We are old-fashioned enough to believe that Righteousness is upon the throne of the universe; that clouds and darkness are roundabout Him, but that righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne. We live in an ordered universe, where sooner or later the transgressor inevitably learns that "the way of the transgressor is hard". I know there are many who mock at the idea of future retribution, and many who laugh at hell. From many a pulpit to-day the idea of future retribution is held up to contempt. The preachers who do so are as unphilosophical as they are unscriptural. What is the philosophy of hell? That men try to fight fire with briers and thorns, and but feed the flames of hell. Hell is a pit of suicide. The sinner carries his fagots with him. He invites eternal remorse by his folly. No man can sacrifice the kingdom of God to the enticements of some worldly Delilah, without digging for himself a pit of everlasting burnings. It is inevitable. The picture in the sixteenth chapter of Luke's Gospel is a revelation of fact, that in that future state, where men see clearly, and are summoned to "remember", they discover that their own conduct and the elements of their own character have provided fuel for the flames of hell. The briers and thorns which their sowing has produced will keep the fires of hell burning forever.

"Who," saith the Lord, "would set the briers and thorns against me in battle?" Now, sinner, hear this word to you in the name of the Lord. Dare you set your will, your wisdom, your little mind, against the power of God—what must follow? In modern warfare they use barbed wire entanglements, but if they were fighting an enemy equipped with flame, a man would be a fool to dig himself in behind briers and thorns. Our God is a consuming fire, and His qualities of righteousness

and truth must, in the nature of the case, consume all evil. The man who is determined upon his own way, and presumes to do battle with God, instead of being fitly armed for the conflict, is armed only with briers and thorns.

The Ethiopians made a poor showing against the mechanized armies of Italy. It was one of the greatest crimes of all history that was perpetrated by that monster whose name should be anathema to every decent soul in all the world. The unarmed Ethiopian fell before the superior powers of Italy. Yet they were well equipped, and thoroughly armed, in comparison with the sinner who does battle with God. He has nothing but briers and thorns with which to fight the King of glory. The result is a foregone conclusion. No one can contend with God and prosper: "Who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together."

### III.

But hear now what the Lord says and observe How OMNIPOTENT IS DIVINE GRACE: "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me." How mighty He is! I said just now that we are not afraid of the United States' arming. I am sure I am right in saying that the United States is not afraid of British arms. So far as these two nations are concerned, neither will fear the strength of the other. It is inconceivable that Britain or the United States will ever behave as bandits in the world. But, rightly so, *they are both arming that they may be as well-armed policemen to keep the world's peace.* The Lord says, "I am mighty, I can unsheath my sword against leviathan. I can slay the dragon of the mighty deep. But you need not be afraid of my strength—indeed I would enlist it in your favour." All the qualities of Deity are engaged to save men, to deliver them. When I know that all there is of God is engaged to save me, the mightier I see Him to be, the greater will be my sense of security.

"Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me." What a blessing is here!—that all the powers of God, the powers that spake a myriad worlds from naught, are enlisted to secure your everlasting felicity. Why not be on God's side instead of against Him? Why should any of us be His enemy? "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me."

The peace-loving nations of the world are looking everywhere for allies to-day. France does not want war. Britain does not want war. The United States does not want war. The Scandinavian countries do not want war, nor Holland, nor Belgium. They are saying, "Whose strength can we unite with ours for the preservation of peace?" Britain, and France, in poor troubled Europe, say, "We must stand together, and lay hold of each other's strength; and so secure peace."

The King of kings and Lord of lords stoops to us, amid all our conflicts, saying, "Lay hold of my strength, and make peace. Let Me be your Ally rather than your Enemy." That is the gospel.

How shall we lay hold of His strength? *He has put His strength within our reach in the person of Jesus Christ.* The scientists hope to get power from the sun. They may succeed, I do not know. Behind this microphone there is a power that conveys the human voice beyond its

natural reach, so that people may hear in their own homes, hundreds of miles away. We "lay hold" of that strength. Power may yet be drawn from the sun, as now we draw it from the water, and from the air, and from the fire—even harnessing the lightning. In the physical world we have learned to "lay hold" of a strength greater than our own. The factories of this city will hum at the morning hour, and thousands of work-people will be energized by a power not their own, a super-human power. In the moral and spiritual realm, we are enjoined to lay hold of God's strength. But how can we?

He has come to us in the person of His Son, and in His Son all powers are united and revealed; at the place called Calvary it is made manifest that the government of Heaven is on the side of the sinner who will repent. The very powers that we have most feared, may be enlisted in our defense. You are afraid of the justice of God? I was. The bare, naked justice of God would consign us all to perdition, for we have merited it. But when joined with His mercy, His love, His truth, and His righteousness, satisfying the law of God at Calvary, the very justice of God becomes our bulwark, as when a man is given the judgment of the court, "Not Guilty". The verdict becomes his defense against any one who would again charge him with the same offence.

We may "lay hold" of the strength of Jehovah at the place called Calvary, and so make peace, and learn that the God we had so grievously offended has been placated; His justice has been satisfied; His law has been honoured and vindicated. Mercy and truth have met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other. "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me: *and he shall make peace with me.*"

No one shall disturb our peace. We hear to-day of the world's arming—what for? What is Britain arming for? Not to make war, but to preserve peace. Thus our Lord discloses the purposes of Deity at Calvary. We come to you preaching peace by Jesus Christ. What a mighty Saviour He is! The Creator of all worlds, "by Whom also he made the worlds." The Preserver and Governor of all worlds, the one and only absolute Dictator in the universe, is your Friend and mine. He would give us peace, and keep us in peace, even to everlasting. May the Lord help us that we may choose, not war—for that means utter destruction; but peace—which means everlasting life.

"I hear the words of love,  
I gaze upon the blood,  
I see the mighty sacrifice  
And I have peace with God.

" 'Tis everlasting peace!  
Sure as Jehovah's name;  
'Tis stable as His steadfast throne  
For evermore the same.

"The clouds may go and come,  
And storms may sweep my sky—  
This blood-sealed friendship changes not:  
The cross is ever nigh.

"My love is oft-times low,  
My joy still ebbs and flows:  
But peace with Him remains the same,  
No change Jehovah knows.

"I change, He changes not,  
The Christ can never die:  
His love, not mine, the resting place,  
His truth, not mine, the tie."

## THE LATE W. C. BOADWAY

The Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec has suffered a great loss in the sudden death of Mr. W. C. Boadway, a member of the Runnymede Road Baptist Church, though for a year or so a resident of Barrie. Mr. Boadway has continuously been a member of the Executive Board of the Union from its inception, and also of the Executive Committee of the Board. He has served also as Vice-President of the Union, and on many important committees of the Union.

Brother Boadway was devoted to the Union cause, and never spared himself in the discharge of his official duties in its interests. He was beloved by all his colleagues, and his sudden death is a great loss to the Union as a whole.

Brother Boadway attended the Foreign Mission Committee at the Seminary building, January 12th, when the Committee adjourned to meet again at ten o'clock Monday morning, the 18th. Mr. Boadway was on his way from Barrie to Toronto to attend that meeting, and was accompanied by Mrs. Boadway. Driving south on Number Eleyen Highway, having crossed the Holland River bridge, they came upon a stretch of country where there is often fog even when there is none anywhere else; and in the fog a car coming north and Brother Boadway's going south, collided, and our dear friend was instantly killed.

How Mrs. Boadway escaped a similar fate is a mystery. She suffered what would seem at the present to be a number of superficial injuries, which, at this writing we have reason to hope are not very serious. She was taken immediately to Barrie Hospital, but has since been transferred to a Toronto hospital.

The funeral service will be held from Runnymede Road Church at 2.30 this afternoon (Thursday), January 21st, and will be conducted by Mr. Boadway's Pastor, Rev. P. B. Loney, assisted by other ministers of the Union.

Brother Boadway was ever a friend of THE GOSPEL WITNESS. This paper—and in this matter we feel sure could we hear from them, we could speak for all the churches of the Union—expresses profound sympathy for Mrs. Boadway, and all the members of the family. We commend them to God, and to the word of His grace.

## THE LATE DR. MACHEN

The evangelical Presbyterians of the United States in particular, and the evangelical world in general, have suffered an inestimable loss in the death of Dr. J. Gresham Machen, of Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia.

Dr. Machen was recognized as a scholar of the first rank by friend and foe alike. He was a stalwart defender of the Bible, and of the doctrines of Evangelical Christianity. Uncompromising loyalty to "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" led him, with the late Dr. Dick Wilson and others, to withdraw from Princeton Theological Seminary, and to establish the Westminster Theological Seminary of Philadelphia.

(Continued on page 11)

# 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 XI.

Last week we brought our story up to October, 1919, especially relating the discussion in the columns of *The Canadian Baptist* arising from a resolution passed at the Whitby-Lindsay Association of Baptist Churches in June of that year. The chief participants in the controversy were Rev. E. E. Shields, then of Oshawa, who framed the resolution; Rev. A. P. Wilson, then of Stouffville, who seconded its adoption; and Rev. Edgar Watson, then of Fenelon Falls, who had dissented from it in Committee, and who precipitated the controversy in the columns of *The Canadian Baptist* by a letter criticizing the resolution as being "reactionary, arbitrary, and superfluous". We believe that any candid reader, studying the concluding letter published in our issue of last week, will admit that Mr. Watson was utterly routed.

It ought to be said that two others participated in the discussion of this subject in *The Canadian Baptist*. One was "Valiant for Truth", the late Dr. C. J. Holman, K.C., whose letter strongly upheld the inspiration and authority of Scripture. The other communication to the paper was from the late Dr. D. E. Thomson, K.C., Chairman of the Board of Governors of McMaster University. His contribution was not cast in the form of a letter in reply to anyone, but was a brief article discussing the "inerrancy" of the Scriptures, in which he took middle ground, while defended the liberal position.

That the opponents of the historic Baptist position had been aroused and somewhat alarmed by the controversy, was shown by subsequent events.

I ought here to add that Rev. Edgar Watson, whom I never had the pleasure of meeting, who was then Pastor of Fenelon Falls Baptist Church, soon after retired from the ministry. While doubtless a very excellent man, it was agreed by those who had sat under his ministry that he had no message to communicate. What became of him, I do not know, for I have never since heard of him.

I have already stated that my own part in the public controversy was based upon an editorial appearing in *The Canadian Baptist* of October 2nd, 1919. I distinctly recall the feeling of relief with which I turned toward home from England, when I knew that Rev. H. S. Kerr had been appointed as Professor of Hebrew. It seemed that the cause of dissension in the Denomination had been removed, and that there would now remain no hindrance to whole-hearted co-operation with the University—as I had always co-operated in all other departments of the Denomination's enterprises. Reaching home on Monday, September 29th, I was made still happier on learning that the new Professor had preached in Jarvis Street the day before, and had magnified the Bible as the word of God.

*The Canadian Baptist* came to hand on Thursday, and I saw by the editorial that Napoleon had returned from Elba. Modernism had been defeated in the controversy

in *The Canadian Baptist*, and by the appointment of a sound professor to the Theological Faculty of McMaster. (I am now persuaded that such an appointment was dictated by the very discreet and diplomatic Dr. Thomson.) Evidently the Board of Governors of that day thought discretion was the better part of valour.

But the appointment of an orthodox professor, forced upon the Board as a measure of expediency, had not changed the attitude of the anti-evangelical elements working behind the scenes. When I read the editorial in *The Canadian Baptist*, I knew instantly that it had not been written by the Editor, Dr. W. J. MacKay. He had, however, yielded his editorial pulpit to another, and would have to be held responsible for its utterances as much as if he had written it himself.

I believed at the time—and I still believe—that the editorial was written by a member of the Board of Governors of McMaster. THE GOSPEL WITNESS will publish at any time the denial of the gentleman referred to as the author of that editorial if he cares to make such denial. In fairness to him, I would publish it—for whatever it might be worth.

But I repeat here what I have said before—the gentleman is still living and will recognize himself as here described and may speak for himself—that beyond all possibility of doubt he is the enemy of Evangelical Christianity. He is the man who for years wrought behind the scenes, and poisoned all the springs of our denominational life. It is a free country, and it involves no reflection upon a man's personal character when one's convictions force him to express utter repudiation of another's religious views. In my view, JULIAN THE APOSTATE finds his modern counterpart in the gentleman I have named, whom I shall "hereinafter" call DR. JULIAN. The editorial was not written, I repeat, by the Editor, and no one has ever yet confessed his identity as the author.

I did not wait until the next issue of *The Canadian Baptist* should appear. October 5th was my first Sunday at home, following my visit to England in 1919. Fired with indignation by *The Canadian Baptist* editorial, I selected for my Sunday morning text: "And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."\*

I need not detain my readers with extensive quotations from the sermon. It is enough to say that I said that Elijah was right in recognizing that he lived in a day of religious declension, that it was literally true that the children of Israel had forsaken God's covenant, thrown down His altars, and slain His prophets. From

\*1. Kings 19:13, 14.

that I proceeded to show that there was a close analogy between Elijah's day and ours. In proof of it, I read the editorial from *The Canadian Baptist*. I am not quite sure that I read the entire editorial, but I at least quoted its salient points; and, in the same connection, I quoted from an article in *The British Weekly* by Sir William Robertson Nicoll, in which he lamented the decline of gospel preaching in Great Britain. I pointed out that the editorial recommended for our adoption the course pursued by the Free Churches of Great Britain, and cited the article in *The British Weekly* to show to what a low ebb that course had brought British Non-Conformity. Having said that, I dealt with Elijah's complaint that he, even he only, was left; and suggested that Elijah's assumption was not without some justification, in the fact that others believing as he believed had made no protest against Israel's apostasy, but that in reality he was utterly mistaken in supposing he was the only one left. I explained that the exponents of Evangelical Christianity might reasonably sometimes assume that they were few in number, for the reason that so many seemed to lack the courage of their conviction. I then announced that at the forthcoming Convention, which was to be held in Ottawa about three weeks later, I would submit a resolution which would afford opportunity for the Convention to declare itself for or against the principles of the editorial I had discussed, that we might learn how many were "left".

That service was on the occasion of my first Sunday at home following a six or eight weeks' absence in England. It was later in the season than was usual for me to return from a holiday, and all the people were at home. There was a large congregation. Just in front of me, slightly to the left, sat Dr. D. E. Thomson, K.C., Chairman of the Board of Governors of McMaster University; behind him, Mr. F. L. Ratcliff, ex-Chairman of the Publication Board; on the right, Mr. James Ryrie, Chairman of the Home Mission Board; the Secretary of the Foreign Mission Board; Secretary of the Sunday School Board; and many others who were members of other Boards, including several who were members of the Board of Governors of McMaster University, were there.

The effect of the sermon upon that congregation can perhaps be more easily imagined than described. So far as I knew, all these men were solidly evangelical, with the exception of Dr. D. E. Thomson. I believed that he was soundly evangelical theologically, but that his attitude on critical questions, as evidenced in his article in *The Canadian Baptist* of a few weeks before, on "Inerrancy", was rather a dangerous one. This, in the friendliest way, in personal conversation, I had told him. Greatly as I admired Dr. Thomson, and thoroughly as I believed in the genuineness of his own religious experience, I had pointed out to him that his experiences as an eminent lawyer, who had spent his life keeping people out of court by methods of compromise—such compromises being doubtless perfectly legitimate where human opinions and desires were concerned—had developed in him an attitude of compromise even in respect to fixed and axiomatic principles of revealed religion. I had told Dr. Thomson that he had trained himself in the art of logical inconsistency in the interests of peace as between his clients, and was quite unconscious of the fact that he brought that mental habit of compromise to bear upon religious questions, and that while he was able to stop half-way, most of those who attempted to follow him would arrive at Unitarianism, and ultimately in agnosticism.

I had not then learned the profound philosophy of our Lord's saying: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."\*

I have since learned that men who are seemingly true to evangelical principles are as houses built upon the sand. It may indeed be that some have "inherited" their religious beliefs, and have developed them in circumstantial hothouses, and given an appearance of tropical luxuriance, both in their outer characters and in their evangelical speech. But their evangelicalism is based upon the sands of heredity, education, and expediency. They are as those hearers who have no root in themselves, and when "tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by (they are) offended."

It were folly for anyone to join the army in wartime on condition he be not required to leave his wife and family, business associates, and the country he loves! Hence our Lord insisted that no one could truly be His disciple who would not put allegiance to Him before all other considerations of life.

I can see that Sunday morning congregation as I write. Had I measured the personal conviction of each one by his or her profession, I should have estimated there were few opposed to the position I had taken. It had not then occurred to me that a man's opinions, and the probability of his course of action in given circumstances, could never be clearly appraised until the man had talked it over with his wife, and she had made up his mind for him. Nor did I suppose that a business man would subordinate his religious convictions to considerations of business expediency. I thought of men who occupied influential positions as directors in various large corporations, as men of individual strength; and that such boards would probably be made up of strong characters, each of whom would be a pronounced individualist. I never dreamed that a man would refuse to take a course in respect to religious matters, which, should it become known, would be disapproved by his business associates. Still less had it entered my mind that men who held membership in certain secret societies that were supposed to exist for legitimate mutual service, would use their fraternalism to further their religious ends. I have yet to learn, by many painful experiences, that a large congregation of religious individualists is likely to include a great company of people who, by domestic, social, business, or fraternal ties, are held in bondage not less real than the shackles about the prisoner's ankles, or the handcuffs upon his wrists.

The passage in Matthew anticipates all these considerations, and provides against them; and indicates that only as a man is enabled by divine grace to take up a cross that is a potential instrument of self-crucifixion, can he pursue a course worthy his profession as a follower of Christ.

There were no hostile expressions at the close of that service known to me at the time. I heard later of one

\*Matthew 10:34-39.

whom I would have trusted with my life, who that morning stood in the vestibule of the church, and greeted many, and who remarked that by such action the Pastor would drive hundreds of people away from the church. His prophecy proved to be correct.

I must acknowledge that I had never once considered the consequences one way or another. The only question of importance, as it then seemed to me, was, What is right? As soon as that was determined, there appeared but one course to pursue. At this date I have no recollection of having been approached by anyone on the matter the week following.

In *The Canadian Baptist* of October 16th, there appeared a letter of protest which I had addressed to the Editor. In the same issue there was a communication from Dr. C. J. Holman, entitled, "Those 'Settled Questions' in the Old Land", in which is discussed the effect upon the Non-conformist churches in England of what had been recommended to Canadian Baptists in the editorial under review. Dr. Holman said:

"The decrease of membership in evangelical churches of the United Kingdom in the ten years from 1906 to 1916 is as follows: Baptists, 26,712; Congregationalists, 9,300; Wesleyan Methodists, 49,053. And in the same period the scholars in the Sunday Schools have decreased as follows: Baptists, 59,026; Congregationalists, 104,554; Wesleyan Methodists, 103,409.

"From the foregoing figures it is apparent that, apart from the effect on the adults, the Bible teaching in the Sunday Schools in the light of 'Modern Scholarship' has 'ceased to interest' a large number of the rising generation."

In the same issue, October 16th, 1919, there appeared a letter from Mr. F. L. Ratcliff, a former Chairman of the Publication Board, in which he naively suggested that the letter by Dr. D. E. Thomson, on inerrancy, printed a few weeks before, "should have been accepted by all parties, and ended the whole controversy".

There was also another letter from Dr. D. E. Thomson, in which, referring to the letters of Rev. E. E. Shields, he said:

"I have as little sympathy with destructive criticism as he has. The important question as it seems to me is whether those who love God's work shall trust each other and present a united front to the destructive critics or expend their strength in fighting each other over theories of inspiration."

It was a fair example of Dr. Thomson's invariable endeavour to steer a middle course. For years these questions, in one form or another, had emerged in our denominational life, in Boards and Committees; and I think I may say without egotism, that I had always taken a position of uncompromising loyalty to the old faith. Fearing the effect of any open rupture, the compromisers among the University's governing authorities—who would have called themselves moderates—elected Rev. H. S. Kerr to succeed Professor Matthews as being the more expedient course.

But the uncompromising Modernists, disappointed in being unable to secure the election of an ultra-Modernist to the Faculty, like pestilential rodents endeavoured to gnaw their way into the denominational house by commandeering the editorial columns of *The Canadian Baptist*. The correspondence in the columns of *The Canadian Baptist* had served to awaken the unofficial rank and file of the Denomination to a realization of the danger; and the sinners in Zion had become afraid.

For the information of my readers I here set out the editorial in *The Canadian Baptist* of October 2nd, 1919,

upon which my criticism was based; and my letter appearing in *The Canadian Baptist* of October 16th, protesting against the editorial. Here follow Editorial and Letter:

#### INSPIRATION AND AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE

(Editorial in *The Canadian Baptist*, Oct. 2, 1919)

Some fifteen or twenty years ago the question of the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures agitated the evangelical churches of Great Britain a great deal more than it does to-day.

This agitation has now largely ceased in the old land because the leading men in whom these churches have large confidence have brought themselves and their people into clearer light. Occasional echoes of the old acrimonious disputations are still heard there, but in the main they have ceased to interest or influence intelligent Christian people.

It is a singular circumstance that on this continent a considerable number of Christian people, including a fair proportion of ministers, are still threshing away at many of those questions touching the Scriptures, which are regarded as settled questions in Great Britain. To some extent this is true among churches in Canada, and it is especially true in the United States where some crude theological views still prevail in many quarters in which some partially educated but very dogmatic preachers are still making loud proclamations of views and theories as to the Scriptures, which were laid aside years ago in England and Scotland.

Any of our readers who are still perplexed as to the disputations that occasionally prevail in our midst, touching the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures will be greatly helped by the recital of the story of how light and relief came to Christian people in the old land. Incidentally, reliable light is also thrown on the way in which the methods of modern scholarship affect our views of the Scriptures, when these methods are used by trusted, reverent and scholarly Christian men who abound in England and Scotland.

The story and explanation of how conservative Christian men in Great Britain have made the transition from many untenable theories and inherited beliefs about the Bible to a position in which their religious beliefs can be maintained without creating a breach with other spheres of knowledge, was told some dozen years ago in one of a series of books published by the National Council of Evangelical Free Churches of Great Britain. The well-known Baptist minister, Rev. F. B. Meyer, was selected as general editor of the series, while so distinguished a scholar and stout defender of conservative theology, as Principal Forsyth, M.A., D.D., of Hackney College, London, wrote the introduction to the pronouncement which was entitled, "The inspiration and authority of Holy Scripture", and one of London's oldest, most venerated and accomplished pastors, Rev. J. Munro Gibson, M.A., LL.D., was selected to write the text, and who, while naturally assuming authority for the exposition of views set forth, speaks with the unqualified approval of such men as Principal Forsyth and other trusted leaders of British nonconformity. That this pronouncement was sent forth throughout the old land by the National Council of Evangelical Free Churches of Great Britain, gives it a standing that challenges attention and respect.

This week we have space only to quote a few of the striking sentences from the introduction by Principal Forsyth.

"There is no more difficult position to-day", writes Principal Forsyth, "than that of the minister who has to stand between the world of modern knowledge on the one hand and the world of traditional religion on the other, and mediate between them. It is not a case of adjusting the new knowledge to the untaught faith of others, and doing it in the way of reverence for truth, love for men, and regard for the growth of living faith. Any vulgarian can destroy and offend. But the task of the veracious, alert, and paternal-minded man who has to rear faith amid a world of commotion, to establish the soul in a public war of elements and to secure the Eternal in a tempest, is very delicate and very severe. The difficulty does not readily come home to most people. The plain man, whose demand for a plain yes and no Christ was always baffling, has no idea what it costs to make a traditional creed a moral reality, and to turn as our Lord Jesus had to do, a conventional Messiah to a spiritual Christ."

Principal Forsyth holds that what the church now needs is not so much an army of scholars as a supply of capable middlemen or adjusters who know the new truth, the old faith and the believing people, and who can mediate the



inevitable transition without fatal accident. With the vision of a seer gazing into the new religious day for the church, he says, "The premises are being rebuilt, but the business must be carried on; and the builders must be competent to manage both without loss in the process, and with great gain in the end. The education of our ministers must keep this increasingly in view."

How then is the growingly complex situation to be faced, according to Principal Forsyth?

First of all, he intimates, we must have the right sort of ministers to handle the questions at issue. Mere pious talk will not do. "The worst heresy", he says, "is incompetency, degenerating into quackery. It cannot be too clearly understood that no amount of well-doing, and no amount of zeal, and no amount of ethereal mysticism will save the situation. We need men of experimental historic faith, who are also exercised in the knowledge which is creating the present situation. Knowledge will not do it, but it cannot be done without knowledge."

Having thus described the kind of men needed for the work—religious men with solid attainments in modern scholarship—Principal Forsyth then asks what is the best course for such leaders to pursue.

"Only two courses", he says, "are possible, (1) either to stand on every statement of an infallible book, or (2) to treat extreme rationalism with a higher reasonableness, meet the critics on their own ground, accept results tested by their own methods in sounder hands—and proceed amidst all in the experienced liberty with which Christ-crucified has set our conscience free to be sure and bold in Him."

This latter plan seems to accord with Paul's method and advice: "Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good."

The task is a high one and must be met, if true religion is to survive. One of the depressing features, however, of the task, according to Principal Forsyth, "is the persistence and recurrence to lower social strata of old fallacies that had long been disposed of in the region of the higher knowledge." For we still have, he says, "mental strata where views and habits of mind still flourish which have long gone to limbo in quarters where wisdom is spoken among the full grown."

In commending Dr. Gibson's work to perplexed Christians, Principal Forsyth shows not only great insight, but great sympathy for those "to whom it is a pain to feel their feet slipping from them, or their ground undermined; who have a real though bewildered faith, and who desire above all things to believe, if they could see their way."

In deprecating the fact that so many of the rank and file of church members just pick up stray notions on the subject from casual sermons, or from the cheap press, Dr. Forsyth describes Dr. Gibson as a man "who knows where the land lies, and who has the secret of reaching the public with his own settled faith", while the book is described as "an admirable example of arduous work."

In turning next to Dr. Gibson's personal foreword, the reader will be greatly interested in the auto-biographical sketch he gives of his own mental and religious progress in relation to the Scriptures.

The personal story which Dr. Gibson tells of his own enfranchisement in dealing with the Scriptures is worthy of re-telling in a separate article and we therefore hold it for fresh and separate recital in a future issue, as well as some condensation of the more extended review of the whole subject of the inspiration and authority of Holy Scripture, as viewed by the National Council of Evangelical Free Churches of Great Britain.

(From *The Canadian Baptist*, Oct. 2, 1919)

## "INSPIRATION AND AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE"

### A PROTEST

To the Editor of *The Canadian Baptist*:—

Your leading article under the above heading in your issue of October 2nd, is bound to provoke much questioning in the minds of many of your readers. Appearing, as it does, with full editorial authority it may be regarded by many as indicating the present position with respect to the vital question with which it deals, of the churches of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, for which *The Canadian Baptist* may be presumed to speak. Had the article appeared as an expression of individual opinion it might have been

allowed to pass, but as the editorial voice of *The Canadian Baptist*, it constitutes a challenge to at least one of your readers, and I am greatly mistaken if it be not a challenge to a great host.

And at the outset I must express my regret that the spirit of the article under review forbids a careful selection of refined weapons when taking up arms against it. Britons were reluctant to meet gas with gas in opposing "the methods of modern scholarship" as exemplified by the cultured Germans. I am equally reluctant to resort to such weapons as your editorial employs when it launches its attack upon the historically established Baptist position; but I trust I shall not be accounted unchivalrous if I take the field with my gas-mask properly adjusted.

In such controversies neither side has monopolized the practice of setting up straw men. I shall, however, on this occasion, endeavour to avoid this alleged common error,—the more especially as a bag of chaff or thistle-down would more accurately represent my own estimate of the weight of "scholarship" and religious effectiveness represented in the reasoning of the article in question.

As I understand it, your article tells us that in Great Britain the ever-recurring question of the inspiration and authority of Scripture has been finally settled, and that while "occasional echoes of the old acrimonious disputations are still heard there, in the main they have ceased to interest or influence intelligent Christian people."

I have seldom read anything more "acrimonious" than the article under discussion. It is, indeed, an insult to every Canadian Baptist who is not ready to follow the apostles of compromise. In a recent issue you exhorted us to "trust one another". But how are men of conviction to trust such leadership as your editorial offers—especially when it is so insultingly proposed? Frankly, I do not, and cannot.

With "the story and explanation of how conservative Christian men in Great Britain have made the transition from many untenable theories and inherited beliefs about the Bible, to a position in which their religious beliefs can be maintained without creating a breach with other spheres of knowledge", and which was "told some dozen years ago", I am not for the moment concerned. Very likely "the story" will be an interesting one, especially for those whose original "beliefs about the Bible" were "inherited". At all events when it is told each must judge its value for himself. But in advance of the story you inform us that the "disputations" whose peaceful ending your story is to record, "have ceased to interest or influence intelligent Christian people in Great Britain", because there they are "regarded as settled questions". The inference is inescapable: Either those of your readers by whom these questions are not "regarded as settled" are not "intelligent Christian people", or else we are "some fifteen or twenty years" behind Great Britain in our religious thinking, and therefore all such are to be editorially castigated as being either dullards or laggards.

For the purpose of this protest I must quote one paragraph of your article in full:

"It is a singular circumstance that on this continent a considerable number of Christian people, including a fair proportion of ministers, are still threshing away at many of those questions touching the Scriptures, which are regarded as settled questions in Great Britain. To some extent this is true among churches in Canada, and it is especially true in the United States where some crude theological views still prevail in many quarters in which some partially educated but very dogmatic preachers are still making loud proclamations of views and theories as to the Scriptures, which were laid aside years ago in England and Scotland."

From this it would appear that in order to rank as "intelligent Christian people" Canadian holders of "crude theological views" must hasten to catch up with the Joneses, since these "views and theories of the Scriptures were laid aside years ago in England and Scotland". And is this the voice of "scholarship" which thus admonishes us? Is this an illustration of "the way the methods of modern scholarship affect our views of the Scripture"? Must we change our views in order to keep abreast of "the reverent and scholarly Christian men who abound in England and Scotland"? I shall be the last to underestimate such men. No one who knows me will charge me with being unappreciative of men and

things in the country whose unselfish heroism has so recently saved the world; but some of us recognize a still higher allegiance than that which we cheerfully pay to the Throne of Britain.

And we are familiar with the specious plea of this commonplace editorial. In a discussion on the changing fashions of womankind I heard an English lady say in England about four weeks ago, "We in England are rather amused at the effort of Canadians to keep up with the latest fashions. Women's dresses in Canada are always several years behind the fashions in England." I suggested that English ladies emigrate to Canada, as they would then be able to wear out their old clothes in a land where such clothes would make them leaders of fashion.

And this is precisely the method by which the new "scholarship" has made its greatest gains among some "partially educated but very dogmatic preachers" who apparently care for nothing so much as to be reckoned sufficiently "advanced" and in the fashion to be included among the intellectual "smart set". I make no apology for my irony. In my attitude toward the presumptuous arrogance of this faith-destroying thing that plumes itself in peacock feathers and struts around under the ridiculously assumed name of "scholarship", I have progressed from enquiry to amazement, from discovery to disgust, and from indignation to contempt.

I have had some opportunity of judging of the value of the fashionable religious views which, you say, are so generally held in Great Britain, and which we are recommended to adopt. And what are the facts? Everywhere the churches are losing ground. All sorts of conferences are being held, and innumerable schemes devised to regain the influence the churches once exercised. It has been my privilege to pay five visits to Great Britain in six years. I have travelled the country from end to end, and have talked with many hundreds of people. I have met ministers of all denominations, and while for the most part engaged myself on Sundays, I have had some opportunity of observing the church life of the Old Land. And it is far from encouraging. Everywhere "union" is being advocated. It is not, however, a union of exuberantly healthy churches that is proposed, but a union of the wasted remnants which the popular views you recommend have brought to the verge of ruin. The Secretary of the Baptist Union has even expressed his willingness to accept episcopal ordination in order to effect union!

It may be that the course you champion is popular with certain ministers and theological professors, but it is absolutely certain it is not popular with the great unchurched masses who turn away with disappointment and disgust from the pulpits which no longer have a positive message. If a tree may still be known by its fruits, it is sober truth to say, that the fruits of the new view of the Scripture which your editorial recommends are the most damning evidence of its pernicious character that could possibly be adduced.

In *The British Weekly* of July 10th, Sir William Robertson Nicoll has a leading article entitled, "The Preaching of the Cross." In this article he says:

"Preachers do not, as they used to do, beseech men with much entreaty to receive the gift. They may state the truth of salvation, but they do so without pressing it on their hearers. They assume the take-it-or-leave-it attitude. The consequence is that the church does not grow, but rather decreases and the confession of Christ is rarer and rarer among men."

Replying to this article in the issue of August 28th, Professor G. A. Johnston Ross, of Union Theological Seminary, New York, among other things, says:

"The author of that article fails, I think, to do justice to one of the greatest difficulties which educated young preachers have in preaching the Cross; it is the difficulty of construing theologically the Person of our Lord.

"No effective atonement can be made for the sin of the world except an atonement in which God is Source, Agent and Sufferer." But is Jesus really God?

"I wonder whether many of our laity appreciate the intellectual difficulty which some of our younger ministers have in giving to our Lord, however much they may revere Him, the status and value of God.

"We older men can easily, though wistfully, recall a time when we read our New Testament, preached our sermons, and prayed our prayers without a shadow of hesitancy about the Godhead of Jesus. Unitarianism for us was unthinkable, condemned by its chill sterility.

"But then came upon us wave after wave of 'New Testament criticism': the elevation of the Synoptic tradition to a place of historic value all its own; the analysis of the documents; the confidently trumpeted results as to the picture of Jesus which was the 'true historic residuum'; the rejection of the Fourth Gospel not merely as unhistorical, but as a distortion of the real picture; the slighting of St. Paul.

"What we really need is a return from the humanistic and naturalistic ways of looking at our Lord (which have become too fashionable because of our sociological interests), and the concentration of scholars upon the steps by which Christian folk in the first century came to give Him the honors of Godhead. What happened in 'the tunnel', A.D. 30-50? How does the 'Jesus of History' emerge as Lord of Providence and Dispenser of Grace and Judgment in St. Paul's earliest letters?"

And now, Mr. Editor, one thing more. What is to be the answer of the "considerable number of Christian people, including a fair proportion of ministers", and "some partially educated and very dogmatic preachers" to the challenge of your editorial?

I do not know. But I know the answer of one. I am proud to be classed in this connection with "unlearned and ignorant men". One of the unmistakable badges of presumptuous ignorance in the realm of religion is the approval of the mechanical, ostentatious, oracular, religious, "scholarship" of the much-exalted and smugly complacent "modern" academician. From this imprimature may I by God's good grace, for ever be delivered!

I have written strongly, I know, but not impulsively. I write at this moment deliberately and in contemptuous anger. It is time some Canadian Baptists became angry! And I write to provoke the question: When will the "considerable number of Christian people, including a fair proportion of ministers", and "some partially educated and very dogmatic preachers" who are "still threshing away at many of those questions touching the Scriptures which are regarded as settled in Great Britain", demand a reckoning of those in the Denomination who boast of having laid those views aside, and who so noisily complain their own ascendancy in denominational counsels?

We are talking of a "Forward Movement". "Forward" whither? and to what? Is it to be in the direction to which your editorial points? Does this editorial view fairly represent the views of the majority of the members of the churches of this Convention? Are they willing that the denominational organ should so represent them to the world? Some of us must by some means discover where the Denomination stands on these vital questions, and whither it is moving. I am personally of the conviction that the farther we move "forward" in the direction in which your article would lead us the farther we depart from "the faith once for all delivered to the saints". If the only principle for which Baptists now stand is the much-valued "liberty" to doubt everything and be sure of nothing—except that those who believe the Bible to be the inspired and authoritative Word of God are "partially educated" and are not to be classed with "intelligent Christian people", it is a principle which few will sacrifice to "forward". And I am much mistaken if it be not found that the majority of our churches still believe that Baptists still have a peculiar mission; and that the distinctiveness of our message consists in positive principles and not in mere negations. And I would here venture with all respect to urge the "considerable number of Christians, including a fair proportion of ministers" and "some partially educated and very dogmatic preachers" who have not yet thrown their "crude theological views" to the critical wolves to attend the coming Convention with the determination of making their views known, and their votes felt in the shaping of our denominational policies.

I am prepared for the torrential Niagara of adjectives which will be loosed to describe my uncharity and unmitigated and hopeless ignorance. But I cannot understand how any one who loves the Bible as the Word of God because therein and thereby he has learned Christ, and because his infallible Lord has borne witness to its absolute reliability, could carefully read your editorial without being deeply grieved and indignantly angry. I am resolved to avail myself of the first opportunity of testing the attitude of the

Denomination toward the position taken in your article. Meanwhile I send you this, my indignant protest. And I send it in the earnest hope that it may be possible to demonstrate at the coming Convention, what I feel certain is the fact, that the Denomination as a whole still stands true to its historical position in its present attitude to the question of the inspiration and authority of Scripture. Then we can all heartily co-operate in a real and great "Forward Movement".

(Signed) Thomas T. Shields.

P.S.—Permit me to add, that at the Ottawa Convention I intend to move an amendment to the motion to adopt the report of the Publication Board to provide an opportunity for the Convention to say by vote, whether or not *The Canadian Baptist*, in the article in question, correctly represents the Denomination's view of the Scripture.

T. T. S.

(From *The Canadian Baptist*, Oct. 16, 1919)

I may add that at the beginning of the Convention week, October 20th, I personally took a letter to the Editor of *The Canadian Baptist*, addressed to the churches of the Convention, informing them of my intention of raising the question on the floor of the Convention, and urging every church to send its full quota of delegates to the Convention at Ottawa. The Editor of *The Canadian Baptist* said he would have to consult some members of his Board before consenting to publish it. This he promised to do within a few hours, and to advise me. I went again to his office, to receive his answer. He replied that he could not publish my letter. I asked him then for the copy. I had the letter printed, and that night a copy went by first-class mail to every pastor and church in the Convention. Had the Editor published my letter, it would not have reached the churches until Friday, and some of them, not until Saturday. By that time some of the delegates would have left for Ottawa. But, going to the pastors direct, many churches that had not intended to send delegates, held a special business meeting on the Wednesday evening, and appointed their delegates, in some cases, paying their expenses. Pastors who had thought they would be unable to attend, by some means, "raised the wind", and determined to go.

The result was that the delegation was the largest that, up to that time, had ever been recorded as in attendance at a meeting of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec.

In the next instalment I shall ask my readers to accompany me to the Union Station, and board a train for Ottawa.

### THE LATE DR. MACHEN

(Continued from page 5)

Later the modernistic tendencies of the Presbyterian Church of the United States North, as manifested in their tolerance of extreme modernism in the department of foreign missions, led Dr. Machen to organize a new Presbyterian Foreign Mission Society.

It is rather a striking fact that Dr. Machen's course followed in precisely the same track which we had felt compelled to take in respect to the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec. Because McMaster University had commandeered the missionary enterprises of the Denomination for their defense, we organized in 1926 the Regular Baptist Educational and Missionary Society. In Dr. Machen's case the organization of a Foreign Mission Society was held to be an act of insubordination, and, on that ground, he was expelled from the Presbyterian Church. This fact furnishes another

point in which Dr. Machen's experience was parallel to our own; for when Jarvis Street Church was declared to be ineligible longer to send delegates to the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, at the Convention in 1927, the ground of the Convention's action was our support of the Educational and Missionary Society organized the year before.

We have always had a fellow-feeling for Dr. Machen, and several times have referred to his experience, and have received sympathetic and appreciative communications from him as a result.

Following Dr. Machen's expulsion from the Presbyterian ministry on the grounds above-mentioned, a new Presbyterian Church, composed of evangelicals, was organized, of which, if we are not mistaken, Dr. Machen was elected the Moderator.

Dr. Machen's death in the prime of life, and at a stage in his career which promised even greater usefulness in the future than had marked his record of the past, from the human point of view, is a tragedy of the greatest magnitude. We sympathize profoundly with our Presbyterian brethren, and join in their lamentations over the loss of this veritable prince and great man in Israel, a loss which the whole evangelical world shares.

## Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 1 1st Quarter Lesson 5 January 31st, 1937

DR. T. T. SHIELDS, EDITOR

### ENQUIRING OF THE LORD

Lesson Text: John 7:14-18; John 14:15, 21-24.

Golden Text: "And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"—Acts 9:6.

The main emphasis in this lesson should be laid upon the obligation of the believer to enquire the will of God, and then to do it.

#### I. HOW THE APOSTLE PAUL BEGAN (Acts 9:6).

The golden text gives us the secret of Paul's illustrious career. He began by enquiring, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The unsaved man should enquire, "What must I do to be saved?" As soon as he is saved, he should enquire, "What wilt thou have me to do?"

#### II. OUR FIRST LESSON TEXT (John 7:14-18).

(a) Many attempt to justify their disobedience by the pretext that it is difficult to know the will of God. In this passage our Lord says, "If any man will do his will"—or, in the Revised Version, "willeth to do his will"—he shall know of the teaching." There is a proverb which says, "Convince a man against his will, he's of the same opinion still."

(b) The important consideration is that we should be willing to do the will of God. If we are really willing to do it, and enquire what the will of God is in respect to any matter, it is never difficult to know what the Lord would have us to do. Therefore, the all-important thing is that we should live in an attitude of submissive enquiry. Enquiring God's will through His Word, and being ready always to do it, there will be no difficulty in knowing it.

#### III. THE SECOND LESSON TEXT (John 14:15, 21-24).

(a) No man is saved by his own works: "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified." But, being saved, it is our privilege to prove our love for Christ by a faithful endeavour to keep His commandments. (b) In verse 21 our Lord teaches that we prove our love for Him by our obedience, and implies that it is useless for us to profess that we love Him if we do not keep His commandments. In another passage He enquires, "Why call ye me, Lord, and do not the things that I say?"

**NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES**

**KIRKLAND LAKE**—"The use of the radio has proved a great help to us in our work," writes Pastor John Cunningham. "Every week we hear of some who are regular listeners to our broadcasts. Last Sunday night was our best so far as numbers are concerned. There were almost sixty present, and most of these have been contacted through our radio broadcasts. Some of these, I am sure, will become regular adherents in time. We are greatly encouraged in the Lord's work, and rejoice that in every way He is leading us forth. We do pray that before long we shall be able to tell of some that have been saved through the preaching of God's Word."

**MAPLE GROVE**—During the Christmas holidays, two of the Seminary students supplied for Pastor K. M. Cutler. On the evening of Christmas Sunday, Student E. B. Roberts preached and had the joy of seeing his brother openly confess Christ as his Saviour.

**COURTRIGHT AND WILKESPORT**—These churches are now broadcasting their "Fireside Fellowship Hour" over CFCO Chatham, 630 kils. every Sunday evening at 6 o'clock. Listen in and tell your friends.

The work in Sarnia is maintaining the peak of interest which it reached some months ago. Last Sunday there were approximately 75 out to the service. Pray that this work may continue.

**CHATHAM**—"God has blessed us abundantly in our work in Chatham, whereof we are glad. Our Prayer meetings and Young People's meetings have been well attended, but still there is room for more. Although we have not had the privilege of seeing many saved in our midst, we know that God is able to save and we believe that the hearts of some who gather with us from time to time have been touched. So we would ask you to pray with us that the Holy Spirit would convict them of their sin, and that they may come to know the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour. We do also long to see a revival in Chatham."

**STRASBOURG, SASK.**—In a recent letter from Mr. Donald Dinnick, pastor of Strasbourg, he says: "I am especially encouraged with the work we are carrying on 'up country'. I still drive thirty miles in my open flivver to conduct a Children's service and an adult service. . . . What a joy it is to meet with the children. They all love me and 'look for my appearing'. It is worth travelling thirty miles in the cold just to see them and hear their cheerful, 'Hello, Mr. Dinnick. Can we help you carry the hymn books in?' You should hear them sing! After the service this week one of

the fathers of our congregation, whose children had attended and were saved, said he had been saved recently after one of our services. God has worked in a strange way in Govan. We have preached the Word, and without any extras, His Spirit has done the rest. The devil is busy. We had a Catholic widow and her three children intensely interested in our work. One of the children was an exceptionally good singer. Well, the Priest forbade her to enter the house of the heretics again. We had bought the children Testaments, but these were graciously returned as not wanted!

**BAKER HILL AND SECOND MARKHAM**—A Young People's Society has recently been organized combining the Baker Hill and Second Markham Baptist Churches. They meet every two weeks with the services alternating between the two churches. A watch night service was held which was largely attended. The pastor, Rev. W. E. Smalley, gave a message from Isaiah 43:25, and then a number led in consecration prayers.

**MEDINA**—We are rejoiced to hear of good times at Medina, where the brethren have had many discouragements. "Last Sunday evening (10th) the spirit of revival began," writes the pastor, Rev. M. Henry. "There was a breaking down; grievances were buried, and Christians reconciled. Disciplined members renewed their covenant and were brought back into fellowship. We hope to report greater things hereafter. Thanks to our many interested friends for their prayers. 'Prayer changes things'."

"We had a crowded house Tuesday evening at Atkins Corner, eight miles away. The house in which we hold our meeting is partly a grocery store with three rooms including store. The room in which we hold our meeting was filled to capacity, numbering about thirty-five, overflowing into the adjoining rooms. One raised a hand for salvation. We covet your prayers for this work."

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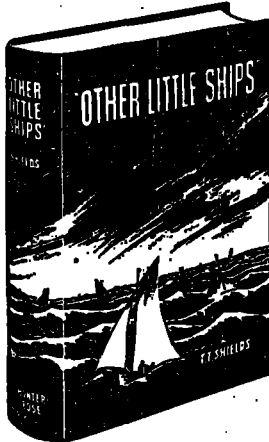
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