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

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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"BECAUSE THEY FEARED THE JEWS"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, January 24th, 1937

(Stenographically Reported)

Broadcast over Station CKOC—1120 Kilocycles

"These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

"Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him."—John 9:22, 23.

Outside the Bible itself, you might search the whole realm of literature without finding so much of human nature portrayed within the same compass as is revealed in this ninth chapter of the Gospel by John. The Bible is the word of God, and as such it is a living word. The principles of its precepts and its promises, as well as of its prophecies, are abiding, and operate in human life in all ages, and among all ranks.

This chapter is full of spiritual suggestion. We turn to it most frequently perhaps to learn what we may from the experience and testimony of the man who had been born blind, whose eyes had been opened when a Man called Jesus made clay, and anointed them, and bade him go wash in the Pool of Siloam. But I propose that the main subject of the chapter shall be but incidental to our analysis this evening, and that we give our thought particularly to some of the circumstances attendant upon his healing, and to an examination of the people who were directly or indirectly affected thereby, more especially to the parents of the man, whose attitude is described in the verses I have read to you as a text.

Very naturally the miracle of the opening of this man's eyes greatly stirred the community. We are told that his neighbours were aroused. They remarked upon the great change which had been effected in him, and asked if it were not he who had been born blind, and who had sat begging. Later we are told that the Pharisees became interested when he was brought to them as to experts for an opinion. They made further enquiry, and showed themselves to be very critical of the methods which were reported to them as having been employed, and particularly of the fact that the alleged miracle had taken place on the Sabbath Day.

We are told also of the Jews generally who were skeptical as to the reality of the miracle. They thought there must be some trick about it, and refused to believe that one who had been born blind had had his eyes opened. They resorted to the parents to enquire of them what their opinion was. It is with their answer chiefly we shall concern ourselves this evening.

One might have expected that the whole city would be ringing with the praises of One Who had wrought so great a miracle. One might have expected that everyone concerned would be quite unreserved in his expressions of gladness. It would not have been unreasonable to look for some enthusiasm on the part of the religious leaders of the day; for if religion be not designed for human benefit, as well as for the divine glory, of what value is it? Here is a man who was born blind, who is now able to see, yet there seems to be no enthusiasm on the part of the Pharisees or the doctors of the law.

But the persons one might have supposed would be more happy about this great miracle than anyone else, turned out to be the most reticent of all. Other people expressed their opinions more or less freely; but when this man's parents were asked for their opinion, their answer implied a recognition of the miracle, but they would not express an opinion as to how it had been brought about. They said, "He is of age; he is able to speak for himself; put him in the witness-box; let him answer." They would express no opinion whatever.

That, I submit, is rather an extraordinary situation—that the parents of a young man who had been born blind, should have evinced no special gladness, certainly no recklessness of expression, so far as their gladness was concerned, when their blind boy was made to see.

But within the realm to which this scripture refers, I think we shall find, on examination, we are most of us more or less familiar with the same reticence. To an examination of the philosophy of it, I direct your attention this evening.

Why was it that people were so afraid to give credit to the Man of Nazareth, and to praise Him for what He had accomplished? Why is it that to-day many people, even religious professors, should be reluctant to magnify the Lord Jesus Christ? What is the explanation of that reserve?

These were religious people, and it is within the sphere of religion we shall make our investigation this evening. They were members of the synagogue, and were afraid of losing their membership. They were afraid of being put without the pale. That is why they would not speak. But strange it was that any religious organization should have been disposed to penalize anyone who should acknowledge the benevolent power exercised by Jesus Christ. What was their religion?

### I.

IT WAS A RELIGION WITHIN THE SCOPE OF WHICH NO MIRACLE WAS EVER EXPECTED OR PERFORMED. Their religion was not actually and experimentally familiar with any sort of supernatural power. At the very best, it was but an ethical system, an idealism which led men to endeavour to pattern their lives after certain rules and regulations objective to themselves.

We are all expert at making resolutions. They were made less than a month ago—and have been broken and discarded long since. That is the kind of religion with which most people are familiar. I recall a friend upon whom I called in his office some years ago, who had just identified himself with one of the service clubs, so-called, which were then very new. He pointed me to a very elaborate motto suspended over his desk, very attractively designed and framed. "Do you not think that is magnificent?" he asked. "What do you mean, the style of lettering, the frame, or the words? Is it a thing of beauty and a joy forever, or has it some utility?" Do you not think it is a magnificent idea?" I replied, "If it does you any good to hang it over your desk, I have no objection. It will not regulate your conduct, nor the conduct of any of those who belong to your club. It may help salve your conscience by enabling you to persuade yourself that you are running in the right direction; and even though you do not get within leagues of its attainment, having the motto before you, may, I suppose, prove a spur to your endeavours."

That is popular, whether in service clubs, lodges, or religion, so long as it is a thing of name and form, without any power. These people knew nothing about a dynamic ethic; nor did their teachers, the Pharisees. Neither had this religion of theirs anything to do with the inner life, but only with the outer trappings, the externals. It never occurred to them that within the realm of religion there was discoverable a power that could make a man other than he was by nature. They had never heard of such a thing, and therefore did not expect it—and had no experience of it. They were quite content to move within that religious circle that had no vital effect upon them. As to what had happened to their son, it was something entirely beyond their thought or experience. They desired that their religious relationships should be undisturbed.

### II.

HERE WAS SUPERNATURALISM DEMONSTRATED BUT UN-CONFESSED. They had no difficulty in recognizing that their son had been born blind. They knew that he had been a child who, from the beginning, had suffered certain disabilities, and were not disposed to deny that simple fact.

A good place to begin an examination of a religious profession is in the home of the one who professes. Go to the place where the man lives. That is the proper place to prosecute your enquiry. That is the place where people are most directly under observation, and where the majority of people, untrammelled by fear of anyone, throw off all disguises, and show what they really are.

Parents may be expected to know something about their children. Not very many of them have any difficulty in believing the old-fashioned doctrine of total depravity. They see it exemplified. When the children are very little, they may appear to be "darling angels", but they soon develop into obstinate imps. They are not so "darling" when they get a little older. I remember a fond mother who was disposed to deny the doctrine of man's natural depravity, because her child, as she thought, showed no symptoms of it. He was a little angel, and seemed likely to grow up to be one. He was always obedient. He always did exactly as he was told promptly. That mother could have given an address to any mothers' club any time, telling other mothers who had a dozen children how to bring them up. She had one—and she knew.

I have heard her say all the fault was with the parents, and that a child's behaviour depended wholly on his training. And of course the supreme example was this ideal little gentleman of hers. After a while there came another little gentleman to that home. He belonged to the same family, had the same blood in his veins—but somehow he was always going upstairs when mother wanted him to go down, and down when she wanted him to go up. It made no difference what anyone desired him to do, he always wanted to do the opposite, and what was more, was determined to do it.

One day—unwisely, as I should suppose—his mother shut him in a dark cupboard, and told him he must remain there until he would say he was sorry for misbehaving. When she went up to his little prison-house hours afterward—she thought she might as well give him a good sentence while she was at it—she said, "And what now?" He turned his head from the corner, stamped his little foot, and said, "Me 'ont". That mother knew a great deal more, after that second child came, about the scriptural doctrine of total depravity.

And the parents of our story knew their son had been born blind. Furthermore, they were willing to acknowledge that some change had taken place. That is implied in their answer, "By what means he now seeth." They did not dispute the reality of the miracle. When anyone is really converted, it will be sure to show at home. I heard a man say, not facetiously, but speaking the sober truth, that the night he was converted, when he went home even his dog knew it. Certainly his wife knew it, and all the children knew it. He was a different man.

These parents knew that something had happened to the boy. They needed no argument on that score. He had been blind, and now he could see.

Blessed be God, there is a way of convincing people of the power of Jesus Christ without argument. There is a way of displaying something of the virtue that has gone out of Jesus Christ—and into the recipient, who has re-

ceived Him by faith. If one has been really saved, divinely enlightened, his outlook upon life is different; and while people may not be able to explain how the change was effected, as to the reality of it there will be no dispute whatever. They will have to acknowledge its genuineness.

These parents acknowledged that it had done their son good to come into contact with Someone. They were unwilling to announce His name, or to acknowledge that that contact had brought about the change: but he had received sight from Someone, or by some means.

There are people who are ignorant about the psychology of religion. They may not argue the question—the proverbial man of the street, whoever he is—but they naturally reason after this fashion, that if religion is good for anything at all, it ought to be good for everything; that if a man be a religious man, he ought to be different, and the difference should make him a better man. There are thousands who make no profession of religion, but who insist that if they were religious, they would be different. The publicans and sinners have no liking for a counterfeit religion. They prefer something that counts for something. I suppose that even these parents, although they were unwilling boldly to declare the faith that was in them, must, in their hearts, have felt some gratitude for what had been done for their son.

We have a large Sunday School in this place, and many of our children come from godless homes. There may be some fathers and mothers listening this evening whose children were with us this morning. We have found some parents who make no religious profession, who are particularly anxious that their children should go to Sunday School. They are not ungrateful for the benefits they derive from their association with religious people. They have no religion of their own, but sometimes they will actually privately admit, "I have noticed a difference in my little boy since he has been going to Sunday School." They would not call it conversion, they would not say the child is saved, for such terms have no meaning to them, but they do say, "It has some effect upon him." And that is all to the good.

When religion demonstrates its genuineness within the home circle, as did the miracle of which this man had been the subject, it cannot be denied. But the parents would go no farther than that. They were unwilling even to express an opinion as to how this change had been wrought.

### III.

#### THEY WERE UNDER THE FEAR OF A RELIGION THAT WAS ANTAGONISTIC TO THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Most religions are antagonistic to Him, even religions that bear His name. There are churches in this city in which the Lord Jesus, were He to appear and assert His authority, and exercise His power, would be most inhospitable. As an historic ideal He is discussed and quoted, but His presence, I fear, would be most unwelcome. These Jews professed to believe the scriptures which predicted the coming of Messiah. The majority of religious people profess to have at least some respect for the Bible. Not all of them would say it is the inspired and infallible—and therefore supremely authoritative—word of God; but that there is some good in it all would acknowledge. The majority of preachers in this city to-night will at least take their text from the Word of God.

But this Jesus did not fill out the Jews' conception of what Messiah ought to be. He was radically different from the idea which they had entertained of the Coming One. They did not want a spiritualized religion. They did not want a religion which exercised authority, not only over the outward life, but over the heart and conscience. They did not want Messiah to come and demand absolute surrender of themselves, and of all their interests, to His control. And when this strange Teacher, Jesus, appeared, they developed a pronounced antagonism toward Him, even those who professed to believe the Scriptures which predicted His coming.

I wonder why so many professed Christians so strenuously object to the full-sized portrait of Jesus Christ that is given us in the Bible? Do you not want a religion that will insist upon bringing every province of life, not only under its survey, but under its sovereignty? Will those who hear me to-night, whether in this building or out of it, welcome a religion that will exercise supreme authority in the office, in the shop, everywhere; that will spiritualize business, and insist that, whether a man be an employer or an employee, he must behave himself as a Christian? Those, for example, who may be sitting comfortably at their radios this evening, in this city, who are heads of great corporations or executives in some great commercial or industrial concern—some of them took advantage of the depression to reduce everyone's wages, and to economize in every direction when it was not a necessity, but a pretext—as we have recently discovered. For example, if the four men, investing one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars each to start a new enterprise, and paying themselves back in full within two years, were to hear me to-night, and if they are church members, religious professors, would they like someone to come and tell them that they are unmitigated scoundrels, legalized thieves whose conduct ought to be outlawed? That is what the religion of Christ would tell them.

Or the employee who would take advantage of his employer, and fail to put conscience into his work, and demand a day's pay for half a day's labour, purloining his master's time—would you like a religion that would say, "You serve but one Master, and you are accountable to Him." Do you say, "I am a professed Christian. I do not get drunk; I do not swear—unless it be when someone ruffles my temper. I am a respectable citizen. I go to church on Sunday, and hope when this life is over, I may find a comfortable passage to the next." What I ask is this, Is yours a religion that affects an absolute reversal of life, turns it upsidedown, and compels you to make restitution to the people you have wronged and unfairly served?

If the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ were applied to-day, and made a term of church membership, some of the churches of Toronto would have few members left. That was true of the religion of that day; it consisted in an observance of a form of godliness, without the power thereof. When this new Teacher came, teaching with authority and "not as the scribes", laying the axe to the root of the tree, going to the very heart of matters, and telling men that the function of religion is to control a man's thinking, and purify his heart, as well as his life, and make him fit for the company of angels, religious officials hated Him.

These people said, "We do not want that, and we are going to keep it out of our church"—"These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews, for *the Jews*

had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue."

The Presbyterian Church of the United States North but a few months ago expelled from its ministry one of its greatest lights, a distinguished scholar and theologian in the person of the late Dr. J. Gresham Machen, who was recognized everywhere by friend and foe as a man of outstanding scholarship. Why did they do it? Because Dr. Machen had said, "I will not give my money, and will discourage others from giving their money, to a Mission Board that sends out missionaries that do not declare that Jesus is the Christ." He insisted that He was Christ, and that He must have supreme authority. And they expelled him from the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of the Northern General Assembly.

That is not unusual. He is not the only one whose fellowship is not wanted. What if preachers in pulpits in Toronto, of different denominations, should rise and insist that Jesus is the Christ, and that His word is final in respect to the inspiration and authority of the Bible, they would not last long. The popular religion of our day does not receive Jesus as the Christ—I mean, the Christ of the New Testament. They call Him Christ as a courtesy, but not as "God manifest in the flesh", the great Reconciler, the suffering Jehovah Who took the world's sin upon His own heart, and made atonement for it. That religion is as unpopular to-day as it ever was. Only by the grace of the Divine Spirit is it possible for men to receive it.

#### IV.

Look at THE EXTENT OF THE FEAR OF THESE PARENTS. One might have supposed that they would be so overjoyed on account of the great blessing that had come to their son, who had been born blind, that they would throw discretion to the winds, and boldly ally themselves with his great Benefactor; but *their fear of the Jews exceeded their natural affection*. It often does. It does in our day. There are people who hear me to-night who would tell me that they are concerned for their children's salvation, but are unwilling, with their children, to go without the camp, bearing the reproach of Christ.

Are you willing openly to avow your confidence that there is no salvation for your home apart from the regenerating power of Christ, with all its implications? That even if you have to break company with all your associates, you will follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, if only your children may be saved? You say, "I am in a situation that makes that impossible. I should like to do that, I should—I should"—I know all about it. I have heard it again and again. You think more of your situation, of your social interest, than you do of your children's eternal destiny. That bald statement shocks. I beg of you, receive it from one who loves you, for it is true. If you put the salvation of your children first, you would say, "I care not what the cost, I will so condition myself in relation to Jesus Christ that I will go anywhere and pay any price, if only these children of mine may be saved."

I do not know the measure of the intelligence of these parents, but *the fear of the Jews developed in them a singular subtlety of mind*. We had a denominational controversy over the Bible some years ago in which many engaged. I knew in those days some ministers whom I regarded as Christian men, but, I must now frankly admit, for whose intelligence I had not the greatest respect. Many duffers get into the ministry. Sometimes you may observe about as much stupidity in the pulpit as in the pew—and sometimes a great deal more. Even as I

speak to you, I have in mind two or three men whom I thought of as being fairly good men, men who might do good, but men who—well, whose best furniture was not in the upper story. I would not say it was altogether vacant, but there was plenty of room for more. They became dominated by a strange fear. They were not subtle of mind, not sagacious; they were not men of large mental calibre, yet under the pressure of that fear they developed a cunning and subtlety that was amazing—I suppose on the principle that self-preservation is the first law of nature. If one is threatened in any sphere of life, he instinctively looks to see if there is any way out—and certainly some of these brethren looked and found a door of compromise and took it.

If this father and mother had been trained for years, they could not have been more skilful in evading the issue. The Jews said, "Now we shall know. We will talk with his parents. They will be off-guard, and will be perfectly frank; they will tell us what has happened to the boy." Turning to the parents they said, "Is this your son?" "Yes; we recognize and acknowledge him." "Was he born blind?" "Yes." "How does he see?" "That is another story. That he is our son, and that he was born blind, is indisputable, but—but—but—but by what means he now sees, we know not. He is of age, ask him." To themselves, perhaps, they said, "He has not much at stake: we have. He can afford it: we cannot. We do not propose to be put out of the synagogue even for our son's sake."

Have any of you been conscious of the exercise in your own mind, under pressure, of a certain wisdom that is superhuman, but is not divine? There is a subtlety of the serpent that possesses men and women sometimes, which makes them skilful in dodging issues, and in evading responsibility, as did these people. Does it mean that we have our choice between the wisdom of the Holy Spirit which is from above and is first pure and then peaceable, and the wisdom of the subtil serpent?

What a pity! How blessed it would have been had they willingly—gladly—borne witness to the healing power of Jesus! They knew of it. They were not ignorant: they were unwilling to proclaim the knowledge that was within them. How blessed had they said, "We know all about it. We can tell you what happened, how it happened, and Who was responsible for this miracle." But not a word did they utter, notwithstanding the son who had been born blind, could now see clearly.

#### V.

Before closing, let me ask you to turn, incidentally, to THE MAIN FIGURE OF THIS STORY, and see, on the other hand, how careless, with what a holy recklessness, this man who had been born blind, declared himself. His was the fearlessness of a genuine experience of divine power. His was not a religion of theory. Actually he did not know who Jesus Christ was—he had been blind, he had never read much, and perhaps had moved about but little, therefore, had heard less about Jesus than others. He said, "I do not know where He came from, I do not know who He is: I can only tell you His name. A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed mine eyes, and told me to go and wash in the Pool of Siloam. I did as I was told—and I came seeing"; and, he seemed to imply, "What next, gentlemen?"

They argued the point with him and said, "We know that this man is a sinner." To which he answered, "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, whereas I was blind, now I see"—"What did he

to thee? how opened he thine eyes? He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples? Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is." Very shrewdly, I think, the man answered, "Why herein is a marvellous thing that you doctors of the law, you who know so much,—herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes . . . since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind."

I read many years ago a great sermon on that text by Joseph Parker, on agnosticism, "know-nothing-ism", in which he described these great doctors of the law as saying to this erstwhile blind man, "We know nothing about this man." And the blind man's replying, "I do. I will set my positive knowledge against your agnosticism. It is a marvellous thing that you do not know whence He is, but He opened my eyes. Account for that."

They said, "Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out"—as the parents would have been cast out had they taken his course.

A little while after the Stranger found him, and said to him, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" He answered in effect, very simply, "I do not know who He is, but if I knew who He was, on Thy introduction I would believe in Him. Anything that Thou dost recommend to me is acceptable. Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" The Stranger said, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee." Instantly he was prostrate before Him, saying, "Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him."

A little faith? Yes. He was hospitable to the truth in general? Yes. A little light? Yes. And he welcomed more light. There is a vast difference between doubt and unbelief. If only you had time and inclination to stay—but do not worry, I shall not—I should like to preach half a dozen more sermons to you. I should like to take the story again, and show you the difference between unbelief and doubt. The Pharisees were unbelieving, positive in their attitude. The Jews were unbelieving, positive in their antagonism toward Jesus of Nazareth. This man whose eyes had been opened was only doubtful. He did not know, but he said, "I should like to know." Doubt is a negative quality; doubt leaves the door on the latch; doubt answers the slightest knock of truth; doubt welcomes the truth when it comes. Doubt, when Jesus introduces Himself, becomes faith, falls at His feet and worships Him.

How many of us believe, really believe, and are not afraid to say that Jesus Christ is the Healer, the Saviour, of our souls? Sometimes I have a feeling that the devil's greatest temptation to most of us is to be cowardly, to be afraid of our shadows, to be dominated by the fear of the Jews, of some strange fear that brings us into bondage. What a glorious thing it is to be free, absolutely free! Here is the way of freedom: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." If we are His, let all the world know we belong to Him, and without apology let us ever and everywhere profess and call ourselves Christians.

Let us pray:

O Lord, we thank Thee for the patience of Thy great grace. We bless Thee that patience is an element in the grace of

God. Otherwise, we should have been consumed. It is because Thy compassions fail not that we are here to-night. We are undeserving of Thy mercy. We might well have transgressed the limit of Thy forbearance. Our attitude has so often invited Thee to rise up and shut to the door, and put an end to all opportunity by withholding further overtures. Yet Thou dost come to us again and again, ever bidding us come, ever patient with us. We would remind ourselves that the day must come when Thou shalt issue Thy last call, and give the last invitation. Help us that we may be responsive ere the fatal hour shall strike.

May those of us who have been the recipients of Thy bounty, who are so inestimably indebted to Thy grace, by that same grace be enabled always to give a reason for the hope that is in us! Help us that we may never be ashamed of Thee, even as Thou art not ashamed of us. Make our meditation this evening spiritually and lastingly profitable to us all within this building and to our radio hearers too, and help us that we may be more courageous in Thy service, that we may put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. We ask it for His name's sake, Amen.

### A FURTHER STUDY OF THE PAPACY IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE

An Address by Dr. T. T. Shields

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto,

Thursday Evening, January 14th, 1937

(Stenographically Reported)

I spoke to you recently on the claims of the Papacy in the light of Holy Scripture, quoting from a Roman Catholic author, to show that the Church of Rome professes to find its primary authority for the Papacy in the New Testament itself.<sup>1</sup> That being so, since we recognize no authority in religion but the word of God, it is sufficient for our purpose that we should enquire what light the Bible itself can throw upon this subject.

In my last address I endeavoured to show you that neither Peter, nor his fellow-apostles, in the early days of the church, put such construction upon Christ's words to Peter<sup>2</sup> as is placed upon them by the Roman Catholic Church.

In dealing with a question of this sort, one's mind cannot fail to recognize that we are combating the claims of an institution that is worldwide, and hoary with age. There are people who would be inclined to ask how it could be possible that so many should have been for so long, and to such an extent, deceived into accepting the extraordinary claims of Rome if her pretensions were without scriptural warrant?

Introductory to the subject in hand, it may be remarked that it seems to be a human habit to accept people and institutions very largely at their own valuation. There are certain people who earn for themselves great reputations by much personal advertising. I recall receiving a letter from my father when I was barely out of my teens, telling me that he had just listened to a sermon by an extraordinary evangelist. He said he had long assumed that in zeal for the Lord, in consecration to His service, in the abundance of his labours, and in his sufferings for Christ, the Apostle Paul had set an example which had scarcely been equalled. But after listening to this gentleman, he said it would be quite easy to conclude that the Apostle Paul was a mere tyro, who had accomplished but little, and whose record of sacrifice was scarcely worth recording. The man had so loudly and successfully blown his own trumpet, had so

<sup>1</sup>Published in THE GOSPEL WITNESS, January 7th, 1937.  
<sup>2</sup>Matt. 16: 18-19.

effectually advertised himself, that the majority of the people accepted him at his own estimate.

Doubtless that was good advertising. Good advertisers do not argue: they proclaim. If there were a man named Smith making a certain soap, and if he had money enough to tell people that Smith's soap was the best in the world, and to tell them often enough, it would be unnecessary to explain or justify its alleged superiority, to outstrip his more modest competitors.

There are people and institutions which know how to "sell themselves", as the phrase goes. I knew a man who made it a rule to hear all the visiting preachers who came to town. They were advertised as a modern Elijah, a human dynamo, a cowboy from the wild west, or something of the sort. Invariably this brother would report what a wonderful man So-and-So was. When I enquired whether he had personal knowledge of the greatness of the man's achievements, I invariably discovered that he knew nothing beyond what the much advertised preacher had said of himself.

When ex-President Taft of the United States visited Toronto some years ago, he told a story about Mr. Theodore Roosevelt. He said Mr. Roosevelt always reminded him of a little girl of whom he had heard, who came home from school and told her mother that she was the cleverest girl in her class. "I am delighted to hear that", said her mother, "did your teacher say so?" "Oh no." "Did the other members of your class tell you that you are the cleverest girl among them?" "No." "Does your record show that you are the cleverest girl?" "No." "Then how do you know?" "I found it out myself."

The Roman Catholic Church for centuries has proclaimed its superiority to all others. It has declared, not that it is one of many churches, but that it is the only church. All others are imposters. All ministers are frauds. They so teach in their catechism. The one and only church on earth is the Holy Apostolic Church of Rome. Without apology they have declared that there is but one visible head to the church, the Pope; and that submission to the Roman Pontiff is absolutely indispensable to salvation.

There is nothing neutral about the Roman Catholic Church—nor anything particularly modest. Boldly it proclaims that it is the one and only church. It is therefore not surprising that so large a part of the world should at last have come to believe it.

Moody used to say that a lie could travel around the world while truth was getting its boots on. If you are a big enough liar, and you have a loud enough voice, people will accept what you say without asking for proof. But when you proclaim the truth, almost invariably they will demand that you prove it!

I believe that in all human history there never was foisted upon the sons of men a more colossal fraud from the foundation to the top-stone, than the Roman Catholic Church. It is founded in a lie, it teaches and preaches lies, it is fabricated of falsehood through and through; and where it touches the truth, it is only to pervert it, and prostitute it to its own purposes.

Let me complete briefly to-night an examination of the scriptural teaching respecting this matter. The author whom I quoted in my last address insists that there is scarcely any doctrine of the gospel that has such solid scriptural support as the doctrine of the Papacy. I have already shown you that Peter did not interpret

what the Lord had said to him as intended to exalt him above his fellow-apostles, for, impulsive as he manifestly was, gifted with initiative as he undoubtedly was, there is nothing within the New Testament to indicate that Peter ever attempted to lord it over his brethren. The Apostle Paul, also, who said he was not a whit behind the chiefest of the apostles, failed to recognize the primacy of Peter.

There are two things to which we shall direct attention this evening. First, a further study of the question of Peter's primacy; and, secondly, what the Scripture has to say in respect to the Romanist claim that Peter was the first Bishop of Rome.

## I.

In considering THE QUESTION OF PETER'S PRIMACY, let me call certain matters to the minds of those of you who know, at least in outline, the books of the New Testament. In many places there would be found in a company like this not very many who could from memory scan the New Testament, but I am happy to believe that we have not a few here who can, perhaps not in detail, but in general, summon before their mind's eye the contents of the various books of the New Testament.

We have in the Acts of the Apostles an inspired history of the Christian church of the apostolic era, when the foundations of the church were laid, and when the apostles in person exercised their ministry among the churches—and I feel sure you have only to reflect for a moment or two upon the Acts of the Apostles, and mentally scan that record, to reject utterly the postulate that the Papacy can be scripturally supported.

Consider the outstanding personalities whose work is recorded in the Acts, beginning with Peter and John, going on to the seven who were elected to serve tables, the most conspicuous among whom was the first Christian martyr, Stephen; then recall the career of Saul of Tarsus who becomes Paul the apostle to the Gentiles; think also of Apollos, and Silas, and John Mark, and James, and the other apostles, not many of whom are mentioned after the first chapter of The Acts of the Apostles, and I am sure you will fail to recall a single incident in which the inspired record even suggests that Peter, beyond the exhibition of ordinary initiative, ever took precedence of his brethren.

Consider the two examples where Peter was called to account by his brethren. The first<sup>1</sup> was for having gone in to men uncircumcized, when his right to do so was challenged. The implication there is at least that there was no recognition of his superior authority. He was justified by the brethren only when he recounted his experience in Cæsarea, when the Spirit of God came on the occasion of his preaching to Cornelius and his household.

Later at the assembly of the council at Jerusalem<sup>2</sup> over which James presided, Peter again related his experience, and Paul and Barnabas told of how God had set His seal to their testimony to the Gentiles. The council was very much like an ordinary Baptist Convention where the brethren convened to confer with each other, and discuss their work, and a resolution embodying their findings was read by President James—but there is nothing in the account of that proceeding comparable to the history of the ecclesiastical councils of the church since that day.

<sup>1</sup>Acts 11:1-18.

<sup>2</sup>Acts 15:1-31.

Next, glance at the Epistles of Paul, and you will fail to find, either explicitly or implicitly, any word which would indicate that there was anyone in the church who was recognized as its visible head. Indeed, wrapped up with the doctrine of the Papacy is the Roman Catholic conception of one vast church, highly organized, with a hierarchical form of government headed by the Pope—that conception of the church is alien to the New Testament. It cannot be found in the Acts, and certainly not in Paul's Epistles.

On the occasion of my last address a brother came to me at the close, with the open Bible, calling my attention to Paul's statement of his burdens, to which the apostle added, "Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." Paul must have been interfering with somebody else's office in taking upon his own shoulders the burden of the churches—taking it away from "papa" the Pope, the Holy Father.

Call to mind Paul's Epistles: Romans, first and second to Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, first and second to Thessalonians, Colossians, Timothy, Titus, Philemon, the Epistle to the Hebrews if indeed Paul was the human author of it. You will read them all in vain to discover anything to indicate that the Apostle Paul, who was caught up into paradise and given such an abundance of revelations, and who was in labour more abundant than all of them, and who wrote the major part of the New Testament—you will search his writings in vain to find any suggestion that could by any reasonable process be construed as indicating that the Apostle Paul had ever heard of a Pope, or anybody like him.

As to the Papal claim, one might have supposed that Peter, having, allegedly, received such commission, and having been established as Pope, in writing his Epistles—the second of which was written near the end of his life, for in it he says that the Lord had shown him that He must "shortly put off this tabernacle"—if, I say, as our Roman Catholic friends allege, Peter had "reigned" as Pontiff for twenty-five years in Rome, he ought to have known something about it. And it is surely inconceivable that he would make no allusion to the important office he occupied, had he been Pope. But he simply called himself an "apostle of Jesus Christ". He exhorts the elders, and speaking of himself, says, "Who am also an elder." Nowhere does he claim that he had been appointed head of the church.

## II.

Turn now for a moment to the second consideration, namely, the **CONTENTION THAT PETER WAS THE FIRST BISHOP OF ROME**. Understand, I am confining my examination this evening to the historical record of the Scripture itself, because the Church of Rome claims that Peter had a Pontificate of about twenty-five years, beginning to reign in the year forty-one or forty-two, and continuing until his martyrdom perhaps about sixty-seven. If that be so, one might expect some reference to it somewhere in the New Testament. I affirm—and then I shall endeavour to prove the statement—that it is impossible from Scripture alone to prove that Peter ever visited Rome.

I anticipate the objection of some, in saying that I know very well that there is a tradition that Peter was martyred in Rome, that he was crucified, and that at his own request he was crucified head downward because he

thought he was not worthy to be crucified in the same manner as his Lord. Even if that could be historically established, it would not prove that he was Bishop of Rome. But it is a tradition which may, or may not, have an element of truth in it. He may have been martyred in Rome, but the Scripture does not say so. But even if he were martyred in Rome, there is no scriptural evidence of his having been Bishop of Rome. In fact, I believe the general teaching of Scripture is to the contrary effect.

But, to our proof. The Epistle to the Romans was written by the Apostle Paul probably about fifty-eight. That date is generally accepted. If the allegation of our Romanist friends be true, that Peter became Bishop of Rome in forty-one or forty-two, Peter had been "reigning" in Rome for some sixteen years when Paul wrote his Epistle.

Sketch the picture for yourself. Peter—we say nothing for the moment about his being the Pope—is the Bishop of Rome. Paul writes to the Romans, and tells them that he has long wanted to visit them, and that his reason for desiring to go to Rome was that he might have some fruit among them also: "As much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." You will recall that it was invariably the way of the Apostle Paul not to build upon another man's foundation. According to the Romanist theory, there must have been a well-established church, with Peter at its head, for at least sixteen years at the time Paul addressed this Epistle to the Romans.

Read the Epistle carefully. It contains a number of salutations to people of whom Paul had heard, but he does not say anywhere, "Be sure to remember me to Bishop Peter." He does not send his greetings to the Bishop of Rome! For a man occupying such an influential position in the apostolic church as the Apostle Paul did, to write to Rome where Peter had already been "reigning" for sixteen years, and completely to ignore Peter's position and presence would have been the essence of discourtesy. There are people who go all the way from this continent to Rome to visit the Pope. Certainly in the Epistle to the Romans, Paul is absolutely silent on the subject of Peter's presence in Rome. I have a shrewd suspicion that the reason for it was that Peter was not there, and Paul knew he was not there.

But again, several of Paul's Epistles were written from Rome. Paul was a prisoner in Rome for some time. You remember how the Acts of the Apostles concludes? Paul was part of the time in prison, but the last two verses of the Acts of the Apostles tell us that "Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him."

It is worth remarking too that the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, recording Paul's arrival at Rome, and his subsequent course there, fails to mention the presence of so important a person as Peter.

But some of Paul's Epistles were written from Rome. We speak of them as the prison Epistles. They are Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and II. Timothy. Look at Ephesians a moment: "I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles." In this

Epistle Paul makes no mention whatever of Peter. He does refer to "Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord", who apparently carried the Epistle from Rome to Ephesus. Paul evidently designed to give the Ephesians news of his own personal affairs by word of mouth: "Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts." If, as the Church of Rome contends, Peter had been Bishop of Rome from about forty-one it must be admitted as a strange omission for Paul to neglect to make the slightest allusion to Peter, either as apostle or bishop.

In Philipians, also written from Rome, Paul says, "Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you. All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, Amen." Can you conceive a man of Peter's prominence being in Rome, and Paul's making no mention of the fact in either of these Epistles?

Colossians is another of the prison Epistles, and a number of names are mentioned therein. Again Paul sends Tychicus, and with him "Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother . . . Aristarchus, my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him); and Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only are my fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me." Where is Peter? "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapoli. Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you. Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house. And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea." But never a word about Peter.

The Second Epistle to Timothy is another of the prison Epistles, and Timothy was Paul's own son in the faith, a fellow-preacher. Paul gives a brief account of certain people: "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me." Where was Peter? If he had left, why was he not mentioned with the others who had "departed"?

But again: "Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren." Was Peter unnamed because he was so inconspicuous, but included, perhaps in "all the brethren"? Can you imagine that possible?

But there is another especially important passage in this epistle: "The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me." How deeply the great apostle appreciated the affectionate ministry of

this rather inconspicuous Onesiphorus! Can it be supposed that Peter, the Bishop of Rome, would have allowed his "beloved brother Paul" to languish in prison without visiting him? Or, if Peter were there, and did visit him, that he would have given such honourable mention to Onesiphorus, while failing to record a visit from Peter? To ask such questions is to answer them: Peter was not there.

John's Epistles are supposed to have been written years after the termination of the ministry of Paul and Cephas. Perhaps nearly thirty years had elapsed between the writing of Paul's second Epistle to Timothy and the writing of John's first Epistle. John must have been an elderly man when he wrote. His second and third epistles were probably written some time after 95 A.D. If there had been any head of the church, one might have supposed John would know something about it. But there is not the remotest allusion to that conception of things in either of John's three Epistles.

The Book of Revelation also was probably written after ninety-five. Paul's last Epistle was written perhaps about sixty-six: and Revelation about thirty years afterward. The latter book contains in its first chapter a representation of the church, and the Head of the church walking amid the seven golden candlesticks, and the seven golden candlesticks are the seven churches, and the stars in the right hand of Him Who trimmed the lamps are the angels of the seven churches. The book is "the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John." God sent a message to the seven churches—not to *the* church, not to a universal, visible Church of which the Bishop of Rome was the visible head. Why was the Papacy, then more than half a century old, not mentioned? Because there was none.

It is quite obvious that John had never heard of such an office.

That is enough. I affirm that it is utterly impossible to find a vestige of scriptural support for the doctrine of Peter's primacy, under any conditions, and equally impossible to find scriptural proof that Peter was Bishop of Rome.

Two simple observations, and I have finished. First, that the whole spirit of the Papacy is alien to New Testament teaching. Neither Paul nor Peter, nor any of the apostles, were "princes" of the church. There is not a word in the New Testament of any one of the apostles who accompanied with our Lord, presuming to "reign" over individual or church. On the contrary, they were forbidden to lord it over God's heritage. The conception of a hierarchical government of a single church is as pagan. It is not Christian. It is not in the New Testament.

If it be so that Peter was martyred somewhere about the seventh decade, the year sixty-seven or so, one might have supposed that some provision would have been made for a successor. You are familiar with the New Testament. Let your mind run from Matthew to Revelation, and ask yourself whether there is the remotest suggestion anywhere of a gathering of the heads of the church to elect one of their number as Pope—as will, I suppose, take place in Rome some time soon if the present Pope passes away, a conclave of Cardinals to elect one of their number to be the vicar of Christ, God's sole representative on earth, clothed with divine authority, submission

<sup>1</sup>Eph. 6:21-22.

<sup>2</sup>Phil. 4:21-22.

<sup>3</sup>Colos. 4:7-16.

<sup>4</sup>II. Tim. 4:10, 11, 20, 21.

<sup>5</sup>II. Tim. 1:16, 17.



to whom is to be made a term of salvation. Was anything more absurd ever offered for human acceptance than the pretensions of Rome? How amazing that so large a part of the world's population should have accepted these claims as though they were scripturally authorized, and therefore valid!

I wish, as you read your New Testament—and I hope you will read it often. I hope you will never assume that you have become familiar with the Word of God. If you have already read it through a hundred times, I beg of you to begin again. You have not received one-thousandth part of the truth it contains for your edification—I wish you would keep in mind, as you read it again, to look for the Papacy in the New Testament. Talk about hunting for a needle in a haystack! That would be easy in comparison. Puzzle: find the Papacy. I can promise you that you will never earn a prize for so doing, for the simple and sufficient reason that it is not there.

As you study, ask yourself the question, What has the New Testament to say of the church and its officers? It abounds with teaching respecting the church, a body of regenerated people, who have been "born again", who have been called out from the world, separated from the world and worldliness, and separated unto the gospel of Christ. You will find the record of companies of people who came together to pray, and worship, and observe the ordinances, and to approach God through the one and only Mediator, Jesus Christ our Lord, without the assistance of saints or angels—and certainly without the help of an earthly priest. The privilege of direct access to God at the mercy-seat, through the one and only High Priest, the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, is taught plainly in the Scripture.

Furthermore, you will find the alleged first Pope, Peter, telling those to whom he writes that they are all priests: "We are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood." We do not need a priest. We have one High Priest Who has entered into heaven itself with His own blood, "now to appear in the presence of God for us". The simplest and youngest child, who can but lip the name of the sinner's Saviour, may kneel before Him and find acceptance. The vilest sinner and the purest saint come on the same terms, and find acceptance at the same place: the mercy-seat, the throne of grace—and all through the precious blood of Christ. How beautifully simple it is!

I would have you see what a grotesque representation of God is involved in the assumption that the Lord Who made heaven and earth and filled them both with beauty, is responsible for the mummery of the Roman Catholic Church. May God save us from turning again to the beggarly elements of the world from which He, through the Spirit of grace, has for ever emancipated us! We are only the Father's little children, but we have a great Intercessor. We can talk to Him, we can stammer out our poor prayers, we can worship Him here, we can worship Him at home.

"Where high the heavenly temple stands,  
The house of God not made with hands,  
A great High Priest our nature wears,  
The Patron of mankind appears.

"With boldness therefore at the throne,  
Let us make all our sorrows known;  
And ask the aid of heavenly power  
To help us in the evil hour."

## Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 1 First Quarter Lesson 6 February 7th, 1937

DR. T. T. SHIELDS, EDITOR

### NEW TESTAMENT BAPTISM

Lesson Text: Matthew 3:13-17; 28:19-20; Acts 2:37, 38; 10:47, 48.

Golden Text: "And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."—Matt. 3:15.

The subject of Christian baptism is of great importance. With the exception of the Friends and the Salvation Army, and a few extreme dispensationalists of various names, we know of no body of Christian people who do not recognize that baptism of some sort is enjoined in the New Testament.

The four lessons we are to study on the subject will afford us scriptural proof that baptism is vastly more than a mere ceremony. It is specifically said respecting the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, that they who observe it, "proclaim the Lord's death till he come". So we shall also find that baptism is a teaching ordinance; and if it be kept in its proper place, and observed in its scriptural order and form, it will be found to be a very clear setting forth of the very heart of the gospel.

#### I. CHRIST HIMSELF WAS BAPTIZED

The symbolical significance of His baptism is full of interest. There must surely have been a predictive element in it which anticipated His death and resurrection. At all events, He set us an example by His own act, and its accompanying words, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." "If any man serve me", He says, "let him follow me." We are told that He has "left us an example, that we should follow his steps". By His own baptism, He points the way to us.

#### II. CHRIST SPECIFICALLY COMMANDS BAPTISM

Both in Matthew and Mark, baptism is linked with the preaching of the gospel, and those who are sent to preach, are commanded also to baptize. It is as much the duty of the preacher and the teacher to teach people who believe, that it is their duty to be baptized, as it is to teach them to believe in the first place. We are not justified in withholding our testimony in respect to baptism, and leaving people to discover their duty for themselves. We should, of course, bring them to the Scripture, and follow the teaching of Scripture. But this, we must do in respect to all other matters as well.

#### III. THE APOSTLES COMMANDED AND ADMINISTERED BAPTISM IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

It is fair to assume that the apostles, who received their commission directly from the Lord, and who were especially selected as media of His revelations, would understand the Lord's meaning in what we call the Great Commission. On the Day of Pentecost, as recorded in the Second of Acts, Peter gave a prominent place to baptism. When the people asked, "What shall we do", he did not hesitate to tell them to repent and be baptized; and, as a result, three thousand were immersed. Again, when Peter preached the gospel to the Gentiles, first on the occasion of his visit to Cornelius and his household, while he preached "the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word"; and He particularly tells us that when he witnessed this, he remembered the promise that they should be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. He identified that spiritual experience as the baptism of the Holy Ghost when He was poured out upon the Gentiles as He had been upon the Jewish church at Pentecost, thus coming to take up His abode with His people.

We mention this here for the sake of showing that even those who had received the Holy Ghost, were required to be baptized. Peter commanded them to be baptized.

In this lesson we have not been concerned with what constitutes baptism, who are included in its provisions, and who are excluded from it: we have been concerned only with the fact that it is a duty on the part of the church to teach baptism, and of believers to be baptized.

# 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 XII.

Last week I published the editorial from *The Canadian Baptist*, and my letter of protest in reply which issued in the discussion of the subject at the Annual Meeting of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec which met with the First Baptist Church, Ottawa, October 24th to 30th, 1919.

It may be well to refresh my readers' memory a little by reminding them that the sermon in which I made my first public objection to *The Canadian Baptist* editorial was preached on the morning of October 5th, nineteen days before the meeting of the Convention. During those nineteen days, reports reached me to the effect that groups had met from time to time to prepare to meet the protest I had announced I would make at Ottawa. But some of those reports were little more than rumors, so that I was completely in the dark as to the strength and strategy which my opponents would employ at Ottawa.

My resolution had been carefully prepared, and put in printed form. I had taken only two men into my confidence: one was a Pastor, a fellow-member of the Home Mission Board, whom I had trusted with a copy of my resolution; the other was a Deacon of Jarvis Street Church, Mr. Gideon Grant, K.C., who had promised to second the resolution at the Convention. No further reference to the controversy was made from the Jarvis Street pulpit during the interim. My wife and I left Toronto for Ottawa Monday morning, October 27th. When sitting in the car at the Union Station, we observed that on the next track another Ottawa train was drawn up beside us, and we could see that that train was largely occupied by delegates to the Ottawa Convention.

My wife did not accompany me to the evening session of Tuesday, and being rather weary, retired early. We were staying at the Chateau Laurier, and on returning from the meeting I found a telegram in my box from Mr. Gideon Grant, informing me that on account of a prolonged case in court, it would be impossible for him to attend. I immediately thought of the only other man to whom I had shown my resolution. I tried to get him by telephone that evening, but failed.

To finish with him at once, I may anticipate the morrow by saying that I made several unsuccessful attempts to communicate with him Wednesday morning, and it became quite evident that he was avoiding me. When I got to the church I met him, and told him my seconder had failed, and asked if he would take his place. He replied that, while he was heartily with me, he preferred not to second my resolution, as he thought he could better serve the purpose we had in view in another way. Later developments showed that he had taken advantage of my confidence to frame an amendment to my resolution, with a view to defeating it. I had reason to believe later that he had deliberately planned at a certain stage to propose a compromise, and make himself the hero of the hour. His conduct was one of my early experiences of ministerial treachery. I was forced to tell him frankly that

I had recognized his perfidy—and that day our fellowship ended.

But returning to Tuesday night. Having no seconder, I felt rather much alone, so I sat down prayerfully with the Book. I say; I *sat down* prayerfully; for I have long felt that prayer consists in spirit and attitude more than in words. Jarvis Street Church was generally recognized as the premier Baptist Church of the Dominion. Certainly in relation to denominational affairs, it was the most influential of the churches. I knew that I had already offended many of my best friends in Jarvis Street by my uncompromising attitude in this matter; and, so far as I knew at the time, all Jarvis Street members were my friends. Nor do I mean that any were offended because they were Modernists, but that many who held evangelical views were not prepared to fight for them, but preferred peace, at any price.

As I sat alone in the hotel room, contemplating the morrow, it seemed that the course I proposed was ministerial suicide. But, on the other hand, it appeared that to be silent in such circumstances would be to be guilty of an offence as black as Simon Peter's—or blacker. To take no sides where Christ and His Word were being challenged, I felt to be impossible.

Then I definitely asked God for some particular word of guidance from His Book. I have never had any sympathy with the practice of opening the Bible at random, and accepting whatever appeared before the eye as a special message from Heaven. When there was handed the roll to the Lord Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth, He "found the place where it was written" when He wanted a word specially relating to Himself. And I have always felt that we ought, as believers, to know where to find what is "written", in precept and principle, for our guidance.

Having prayed, as I continued to meditate, it appeared to my mind that I should be most likely to find a word of special guidance in the pastoral epistles, since they were written by a veteran to a younger preacher. I therefore turned to Timothy. Opening the Book, I came upon the concluding verses of the last chapter of Second Timothy, and my eyes fell upon these words: "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

I despair of conveying to my readers an accurate understanding of that moment. I was to speak the next day in defense of the Bible as the Word of God. At that moment I knew, as perhaps I had never known before, how truly it is the word of God. If the words had been uttered out of the open heaven, or communicated by some special visible and audible heavenly mes-

senger, it would have been impossible to be more thrilled than I was at that moment. I went into my wife's room, and wakened her, and asked her to rise and join with me in thanksgiving for the victory God was to give on the morrow. If there had been any subconscious fear in my heart, it was banished; and I went to sleep that night with perfect confidence that the day following would mark a victory for the truth.

The report of the Board of Publication, responsible for *The Canadian Baptist*, was to be submitted at the Wednesday morning session. The attitude of those who were responsible for the programme of the Convention was indicated by the fact that Rev. Edgar Watson, of Fenelon Falls, whose letter to *The Canadian Baptist* had precipitated the discussion in the columns of that paper during the summer, had been appointed to preach a sermon Wednesday morning on, "The Church and the Changing Order". The sermon at a week-day morning service was itself an innovation, and the selection of Mr. Watson as the preacher, a man of whom few in the Convention had ever heard until he wrote to *The Canadian Baptist*, surely indicated that there was some official sympathy with the views he had expressed.

The Publication Board's report was timed for eleven o'clock, and its presentation and discussion put us forward to within about fifteen minutes of noon. When the seconder completed his speech, there was no one to follow him. After a few moments of profound silence the President, Dr. O. C. S. Wallace, turned to me and said he had understood that I intended to submit an amendment to the report. The building was crowded, which was unusual at a morning session. I had obtained about the last seat near the door, at the platform end of the church.

In response to the President's enquiry, I explained that I had intended to submit such an amendment, but, as the hour was late, and there would be no time for a full discussion of so important a matter before adjournment, I would submit my protest in the form of a resolution when the Resolutions Committee reported after luncheon. It was quite apparent that this action was a disappointment to many. It had evidently been planned to push forward the discussion of the Publication Board's report to near the time of adjournment, so that they might have my amendment between sessions and plan what course to take.

One minister came from his place to where I sat, asking if I would have any objection to their knowing the terms of my amendment. Another preferred the same request publicly. The President again enquired of me, and I explained that I had no desire to resort to any sort of strategy in submitting the matter, and was not supremely anxious to win. What I really wanted was an unmistakable expression of the considered judgment of the Convention. If the Convention approved of the principles of the editorial at issue, I, for one, wanted to know it; and I believed others had the same desire—that we might determine where our future fellowships were to be found.

I announced that the resolution was in my bag in printed form, and that if the Convention desired it should be released before luncheon that all the delegates might have an opportunity to study it, I should be quite agreeable. That suggestion was accepted, and copies of the resolution were immediately distributed by the scrutineers.

The Committee on Arrangements met, and very courteously proposed to clear the way for me to present

my resolution at two-forty-five. When the hour came, the building was packed in every part, with people standing in the aisles roundabout on the floor and in the gallery.

And here let me pause to say that I desire to give all glory to God for the conduct of that afternoon's meeting. Many of the brethren had gathered early that morning for prayer. There had been much prayer on the part of the delegates to the Convention; and I heard of many prayer meetings being held throughout the churches at home. "I am certain that that hour was one in which God came very near to His people. As on the day of Pentecost, the Spirit of God filled all the place where we were sitting.

I shall have to relate how proposed amendments were rejected, and how the whole debate progressed to a victorious issue; but never was I more conscious of the presence and direction of the Spirit of God. There seemed to be no need for deliberation and extended thought as to the merits of certain proposals. They were instantly made to appear as clearly to my mind's eye as if they had been marked by an expert, "Reject this". I was credited with political sagacity, with extraordinary shrewdness, and I know not what else. I deserved none of it. That meeting was God's meeting; and if ever there had been a day from Pentecost until then, in which the Spirit of God presided and controlled the affairs of His people, He did it during the progress of that debate at Ottawa.

I need not weary my readers with even a summary of my speech. I began at quarter to three, and concluded at quarter past four. In opening my address, I explained that the gentleman who had promised to second my resolution had been unavoidably detained, that I had provided no one to take his place, and that it would be left to the delegates at large to second it if there should be one so disposed. It was an hour and a half of intense interest for both the speaker and hearer. During that time, there were some interruptions in the form of hearty applause, but for the most part I felt the approval of the delegates rather than heard it.

At the conclusion of the address the house fairly rocked with deafening applause. During that hour and a half the promise, "It shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak", was abundantly verified. Scriptures passed in procession before my mind like moving electric signs, ablaze with glory; and those who were present on that great occasion, who read this account, will remember how often during the course of that afternoon the word of the Lord was as a hammer breaking the rock in pieces.

At the conclusion of my speech, my resolution was seconded by Rev. W. W. McMaster, then Pastor of James Street Baptist Church, Hamilton. At this point I had better set out in full the resolution as it was then presented:

"Whereas *The Canadian Baptist* is the official organ of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, and therefore may be regarded as editorially representing the general denominational attitude toward questions with which its editorials deal;

"And whereas the issue of *The Canadian Baptist* of October 2nd, 1919, contained an editorial entitled, 'The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture', the first four paragraphs of which read as follows:

'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."

"And whereas the said editorial reviews a book which it represents as containing:

"The story and explanation of how certain 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 whereas the said editorial calls it 'a singular circumstance' that some on this continent still dispute over 'questions touching the Scriptures which are regarded as settled questions in Great Britain', and characterizes the religious views which 'still prevail in many quarters' as 'crude theological views', and inferentially defines the said alleged settlement of these questions as the substitution of some implied new view of the Scriptures for 'views and theories which were laid aside years ago in England and Scotland';

"And whereas the said editorial implicitly commends to the readers of *The Canadian Baptist* this new view of the Scriptures, and implies that arguments for the maintenance of the former view 'have ceased to interest or influence intelligent Christian people', thus impugning the intelligence of all who maintain the former view of the Scriptures; which view, it implies, is held only by people who are 'partially educated';

"And whereas at the Convention held in the Bloor Street Church, Toronto, October, 1910, the report of the Senate and Board of Governors of McMaster University presented to the Convention, October 24th, contains a report from the Theological Faculty of the University to the Senate in which the following occurs:

"The trust deed of Toronto Baptist College commits the care of the institution to the Regular Baptist

Churches, and these are described as holding and maintaining substantially certain specified doctrines, among them this:

"The divine inspiration of the Old and New Testaments, and their absolute supremacy and sufficiency in matters of faith and practice";

and this further:

"The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and are the only sufficient, certain and authoritative rule of saving knowledge, faith, and obedience";

"And whereas the said report of the Senate and Board of Governors of McMaster University to the Convention of 1910, containing the foregoing historical statements with respect to the Scriptures, the latter dated 1885, and the former being embodied in the trust deed of Toronto Baptist College declared:

"These statements refer to fundamental doctrines and indicate the attitude of the people of our Baptist Churches, as well as the attitude of the University towards the Bible";

"And whereas the said Report of the Senate and Board of Governors of McMaster University, including these statements respecting the Scriptures dated 1885, was approved by the Convention as being still representative of the unaltered attitude toward the Bible of the churches of the Convention in 1910;

"Therefore this Convention hereby declares its disapproval of the editorial in *The Canadian Baptist*, of October 2nd, entitled, 'The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture', on the ground that in its representative character as the organ of the Convention, *The Canadian Baptist* in the said editorial commends to its readers some new vague view of the Scriptures different from that to which the Convention declared its adherence in 1910, and upon which the denominational University is declared to be founded."

After my resolution had been seconded, according to the *Baptist Year Book* of 1919, page twenty-six, Mr. James Ryrie moved an amendment:

"That the Convention reasserts loyalty to the Baptist positions:

"(1) That the Bible is the inspired Word of God, and is the sufficient and only authoritative standard in all matters of faith and practice, and

"(2) That the individual believer has an inalienable right to liberty of thought and conscience, including the right of private interpretation of the Scriptures in reliance on the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

"(3) At the same time the Convention strongly deprecates controversy at this time as to the interpretation in detail of our distinctive beliefs as uncalled for, and sure to minister to heart-burnings and divisions in our body, when we ought to be presenting a united front in grasping the opportunity of the hour."

Next week we shall deal with the speeches of the mover and seconder of the amendment, Mr. James Ryrie, and Rev. W. A. Cameron, respectively.

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