

# 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

### "THE EXCEEDING GREATNESS OF HIS POWER"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto.

(Stenographically Reported)

"The exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe."—Eph. 1:19.

This is part of Paul's prayer for the Ephesian Christians, that they might know "what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe." A minister of Christ, if he would be faithful, can have but one theme. Whenever he preaches, whatever the circumstances, to whatsoever people he may address his message, he ought ever to speak of the salvation that is in Christ. Last evening earnest prayer was offered that many might be saved to-day. Somebody prayed that the Pastor might be unusually simple in his message, and I shall try so to be.

We have "no end of a subject" when we discuss the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. It is perhaps the most difficult of all subjects to understand; and we need, by the power and illumination of the Spirit, to endeavour to be very simple in our statement of truth which is beyond the capacity of natural men to understand, which can be understood only as the eyes of our heart are enlightened. It was for that Paul prayed, that the Ephesians might have a special anointing from heaven, that they might know what this salvation really is.

How far from the truth of Scripture has the modern pulpit departed! How little men really know of the salvation which is the gift of God's infinite grace! What is it to be saved? Far more than to have a chance to save yourself; far more than a marvellous prolongation of life in order that by self-effort one may prepare himself to appear before God. Salvation is something which comes from God, and yet which is in God Himself.

We might multiply illustrations. Sometimes we sing about the lifeboat: "Leave the poor old stranded wreck, and pull for the shore". Salvation is vastly more than that. Sometimes we sing about throwing out the "life-

line". That is a very, very, inadequate view of salvation. Salvation is far more than a lifeline thrown to a drowning man. We speak of it under many figures, as a light shining in a dark place, as food for the hungry and drink for the thirsty, as rest for the weary, as a garment for such as have need of clothing. It includes all these, but it is infinitely more. Salvation is Christ.

It is possible for one to be saved—and to know he is saved—and yet to know very little of the height and depth and length and breadth of the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. In fact, even the most advanced Christian knows but very little of what it is to be saved. We may know that we are saved, but all the potentialities of that priceless gift of eternal life no man has ever measured in this life, no one has even guessed the dimensions of it. I am sure that when we have been a million years in heaven—if time can be measured in that timeless land—we shall be saying to each other, as did the queen of Sheba when she came to Solomon, and beheld his wisdom, his riches, his servants, the meat of his table, and the approach by which he went up to the house of the Lord, "It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me."

What a blessed thing it is that we have a subject whose fulness we shall never exhaust! We have in prospect a life of everlasting progress, and infinite enlargement. There is no possibility of ever coming to the place where we shall become spiritually stagnant; but we shall always keep going on, and on, and on, with God.

I take this phrase from Paul's great prayer as at least suggestive of the heart of the subject. He says that salvation is a power not our own, that it is something, apart from us, that comes to us and takes possession of

us; and that that something comes from God, is part of God, that it is His power, and he is not at all redundant in his expression when he speaks of "the exceeding greatness of his power which is to us-ward who believe."

I wonder are there some here this morning who are the Lord's, who are deeply conscious of the need of divine undergirding?

When you have walked a long distance, and have grown somewhat weary, and you get a lift by the roadside, are taken into a vehicle that has power in it, you just rest and say, "What a relief!—to be carried forward by energy other than my own." Do you ever grow weary, tired of your pilgrimage—at least tired *in* it, if not *of* it? Do you grow weary of the burdens that press upon you? Do you feel the need of some power beyond yourself, wrapping itself about you, coming into every faculty of the mind, and every part of the body, and reinforcing you, rejuvenating you, making you young again, energising you so that you are able to do, by that power by which you are invigorated, what you could not possibly do by your own efforts?

Are there some here who are not Christians, who have been beaten in the struggle, utterly baffled, overwhelmed by the enemy, until you have been led to say, "It is of no use to go on; my hands are down, my spirit is broken, the powers that are against me are so much superior to my utmost strength that I acknowledge my defeat; I am beaten to the ground, and unless somebody, or some thing, can come and lift me, put a new power within me, then I am a lost man"?

I shall not prescribe for you, and tell you how to live and what to do. I bring to you this message, that there is in Christ a great power, and that that power in its entirety, "exceeding great" as it is, is toward you; it is at the command of such as believe.

Let us examine it a moment. What is this power? Sometimes we use words that are too big for us. We talk about Almightyness and Omnipotence. They are big words; they describe a power that has no limit. When we speak of Omnipotence, we mean that the Lord has all knowledge, that nothing is hid from Him. And that conception is well. But it is of vital importance that I should know that the power of God is adequate to a particular purpose, that it is useful for some special service which I need rendered to me, that the knowledge of God is equal to a particular emergency which arises in my life. And so we are given a rule by which the "exceeding greatness" of the power of God can be measured.

I do not know how they measure the voltage of an electric current; but they do whose business it is. I do not know how men manage to measure the velocity of the wind, but they do. It has always interested me when I have been at sea to see how the speed of the ship is measured. Being a landlubber, I know how fast I am going when I travel past something stationary. But when one is out from the shore, and everything looks alike, and the water everywhere is moving, it is a little difficult with the eye to gauge speed, but the captain can do it.

How can this great power of God be measured? There are many measurements. "He weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance"; "He gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment." If you have a telescope and are mathematically skilled, you will be able to measure almost immeasurable distances. You will stagger us with your figures. You

will see yonder countless millions of miles away. "He made the stars also." What a mighty God He must be, not only to have made this world, but all other worlds! Yet in this prayer Paul has another rule of measurement, for when God made the stars, and made this world, that was not His greatest work:

"God, in the gospel of His Son,  
Hath all His mightiest works outdone."

What is this great power that you and I are to know experimentally? What is the measure of it? Said this inspired writer, "If you would know how great God is, if you would know His utmost power, if you would see the mightiest thing God ever did, behold Him as, by the energy of the grasp of His might, He laid hold of your Substitute, Who, in your room and stead, had entered into the prison house, and had been laid in the grave—as He laid hold of Him, and raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. That is the measure of God's power. From the grave to the glory, from the lowest depth of sin to the highest height of holiness, from likeness to the devil himself to perfect conformity to the image of God's own Son. And the power to effect that miracle is toward everyone who believes.

What a salvation that is! It infinitely outspans the following after an ideal that is recommended to us in our day, this effort to build ourselves up, to lift ourselves up by our own shoe-straps. We need to look to God, and see what the Maker of all worlds can do for a poor guilty sinner.

It effects the prisoner's release from prison. That is a very difficult task to accomplish. Suppose your son had come under the condemnation of the law, suppose your son were in prison, and the doors were shut upon him, bolted and barred, what could you do to effect his release? You are not afraid of the material structure, of the bars that shut him in, and the great sombre walls that make life to him a living death. There is an intangible something of which those prison walls and bars are but the symbols, which have made him a prisoner, and put him beyond your aid. You know very well that no matter how much money you may have, you cannot with a golden key unlock that prison door; that even if you had arms sufficiently strong you could not break down those stone walls. There is a moral something that has bound that boy with fetters that are stronger than iron, or brass, and has put him beyond your reach.

Let us look at the fact. We have all come under the condemnation of the law. There is no doubt about that—and that is why we need salvation. God's laws, His moral laws, are just as inexorable as the laws of the physical realm. No government can change the law of gravitation. You may build an elevator, you may rear a stairway, and thus bring into operation certain powers that overcome that law to a certain extent. You may climb the stairs—but you had better be careful what you do when you get to the top, because if you fall you will find that the law of gravitation is still in operation! No legislative law in the world can change it. If you follow the man of science into his laboratory, he will tell you how to observe certain natural forces. He will tell you of certain secrets which he has torn from the breast of

nature, and he will lead you into some mysteries which are hidden from ordinary men. But he will tell you, among other things, that he has no power whatever to change the operation of natural laws.

There are certain forces in nature that no human power can change, and the same is true in the moral realm: God's laws are like Himself, unchangeable. When we have come under the dominion of the law, our sin has violated not only the law of nature, but the law of the moral universe: it has actually violated the nature of God Himself. That is what sin does. It drives nails into the hands of God, and a spear into the very heart of God. It crowns Deity with thorns. Sin, when it is finished, is just what Calvary reveals it to be, a horrible thing that has hell at its heart. Who but God can deal with a thing like that? To make it very, very simple, though I cannot explain it, and simply proclaim what I cannot explain: Jesus Himself took our place. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh; was born for us; He lived for us; and He died for us. And when He went to the grave all our sins were laid upon Him, and He carried them away into the wilderness, casting them behind the back of God. He was laid in the grave, numbered with the transgressors, as one who had died on account of sin.

But the Bible says that God provided a way whereby the grave could open. The stone was not the difficulty. The women said, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the sepulchre?" But when they came there they found that the stone was rolled away already. There was something more than the stone that would have held Jesus Christ had He been a man only. But because He had rendered adequate compensation to the law, dying the Just for the unjust in some mysterious way that no philosopher of earth can ever explain, He made it possible for an infinitely holy God to open the door of the sepulchre and let me out—and you, if you believe. When Jesus rose from the dead, He was as a sinner coming out of jail with all penalty paid, and the record of transgressions utterly, forever, cancelled. And the power which raised Him from the dead, is "to us-ward who believe," ready to cancel our sins, to apply the cleansing of the precious blood of the Lord Jesus, so that every stain may be purged away.

Some may think that a strange metaphor is involved in the hymn we sing:

"There is wonderful power in the blood."

But did you ever have a stain upon a garment that you tried to remove with water? When the coat was dry the stain was there! You have tried soap and when it was dry the stain was still there. But when something more powerful was applied to that coat—behold, the stain was gone. There is a moral stain, there are spots upon us that can never be purged away but by the purging, the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus Christ. I cannot explain it, but I know that in the blood of Christ there is the life of Christ, and in the life of Christ there is all the power of Deity, and the power of God is applied to these natures of ours to cleanse away our sins, to open prison doors, and make it possible for us to come out into liberty.

— But that is not all. The atonement does for us what the women wanted somebody to do for them; it rolls away the stone from the sepulchre. It does for us what Jesus instructed the people to do as He stood at the grave of Lazarus and said, "Take ye away the stone." But

after the stone was removed, and the grave was opened, the prisoner within the grave was still dead. After the stone had been removed, He Who had created all worlds, by whom all things were made, and without Whom was not anything made that was made, said, "Lazarus, come forth!" And he came forth out of the charnel-house, out of the grave, quickened into newness of life. He walked out a living man.

The exceeding greatness of God's power which is "to us-ward who believe", effects the regeneration of our natures. It will not do, my friends, to substitute a mere embalment for regeneration. You may devise what schemes you will, make what human effort you can, but death is death! How they dress up death nowadays! But all your carpets cannot make the grave other than a grave, nor can flowers convert death into life. "The wages of sin is death." What we need is the mighty power of God to stoop and touch the soul that is dead, separated from God, and quicken him into newness of life, give him a new nature, a new heart, a new mind toward God, a new will toward God—everything new.

That is what it means to be saved. It means to be born again, to become a new creature, to be changed at the very root. The gospel of Christ goes right to the root of the matter, and the power to effect that marvellous change, giving us a nature that is akin to God Himself, is "to us-ward who believe".

This word and I have done. When Jesus was laid in the grave, the soldiers stood guard without. They put a seal upon the sepulchre, and they kept watch so that no one might steal the body of Jesus. But the soldiers were only representative of others who did not appear to the naked eye, for there were principalities and powers, the rulers of this world's darkness—all the hosts of hell—gathered about that sepulchre. All the enemies of God, all the powers of the wicked one, were engaged to keep Jesus Christ in the grave. Why? Because He was our Representative and mine; and could He have been kept in the grave, then we must have remained there. Death would have had its sting, and the grave would have had its victory to the end of time. There was more than the rolling away of the stone to bring Jesus from the grave. Could those women but have seen; all the powers of darkness were concentrated upon Him Who was the second Adam, and the Representative of a new race, saying, "If we can hold Him here, then we have accomplished our purpose."

But what happened? This mighty power of God was exercised in behalf of Jesus Christ. He had the power within Himself, for He said, "I lay down my life, and I take it again." He was our champion. He was our David, ready to go forth against the armies of spiritual Philistia. And when the time came, He rose as a Conqueror by the power of the Holy Ghost within Him, and stepped out of the sepulchre.

Do you remember when they met Him in the garden, they came with staves and with torches to take Him, as though it were necessary to overcome His resistance by physical power? When He saw them coming, Judas among them, His disciples being with Him, He said to them, "Whom seek ye?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." And as He spoke they fell backward: They had no power against Him. By a word He could have blasted them all into eternity! But He was there to lay down His life, and therefore He permitted them to take Him;

He permitted them to nail His hands and feet; He permitted them to put Him on a cross; He permitted them to press the crown of thorns upon His brow.

But on the third day He arose! Though all hell stood guard at the sepulchre, when He rose they fell back. He "spoiled principalities and powers, making a shew of them openly." By the mighty power of God, or, as the word is, "according to the energy of the grasp of His might", God Himself stooped and with the hand of Almighty laid hold of Christ, took Him out of the grave, and lifted Him up until He set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places. Where is that? Again, can you measure that distance? Only in this way, that it is "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." Superior to all the powers of the universe, He set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, a Conqueror over sin, and death, and the grave.

And the power that did that for Jesus Christ will do it for you. It is "to us-ward who believe". Do you want it? You can have it the minute you believe. There is nothing that is impossible to us, if we do but trust Christ. And in the measure in which we trust in Him, we shall rise above the things of this life, and be "more than conquerors through Him that loved us".

NOTE: The above sermon by the Editor, preached some months ago, is printed by request, and of necessity without his revision.

### MIRACLE

In religious discussions there is often much fruitless debate caused by ambiguity or obscurity of terms. Especially in our day "weasel-word chicanery" has caused endless confusion.

One of the terms most commonly misused is "miracle". What is a miracle? How shall we define it?

Should we be wrong if we said that to most people "miracle" is something wonderful? Speaking of the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand men a popular writer on the life of Christ says that it

"was wrought by His power Who, as Lord of the Harvest, does a similar and greater miracle every year of our lives, multiplying for us each little grain of wheat thirtyfold, sixtyfold, an hundredfold."

Unthinking people may accept that, but really it cuts out the miraculous. The growth of a tiny grain of wheat into as many as an hundred grains is wonderful, but it is not a miracle: harvests come by natural law, miracles do not.

A would-be defender of the faith said that the miracle of the axehead floating was nothing; why, iron vessels as big as a town now cross the Atlantic! Iron ships are wonderful, but they are not miracles. They are kept up by the law Archimedes found when he jumped from the bath and ran down the street, crying, "Heureka", "I have found it." Axeheads do not float in streams by that law.

A woodsman of my acquaintance told how, as a soldier on guard by a mill near the lake at Hamilton, he was asked by an officer what he considered an "unusual event". This bushman is as sharp as the axe he wields. He said: "If a battalion of muskrats should come out of the lake and cross the railroad, I should consider that an unusual event, but I should not call

out the guards." He would not need to. It would be unusual, but it would not be a miracle.

Again, it is sometimes said that what is called "miracle" is only something new. The first steam engine that scared many into thinking the devil and his fire were coming down the road, would be a miracle to those people, but not to us. But that engine worked by laws that James Watt discovered. Miracles do not occur according to such laws.

When some say a thing is a "miracle", they mean only that they recognize the hand of God. A certain American poet said:

"As for me, I see nothing but miracles. To me every hour of the light and dark is a miracle."

We suppose he meant that to him the wonder of the world brought the sense of the Divine. God made the world, God upholds the world, the laws of the world are God's laws. But God working through nature is not a miracle.

"Miracle" assumes that there is a natural order, that the laws of nature really exist. Events outside of those laws are therefore impossible. But "miracle" further assumes that there is a personal Governor of the universe, and that He is not merely a force within the machine He has made, but God above His world. Miracles are therefore possible. Old John Chrysostom had it right when, in discussing the Virgin Birth, he said that the angel told Joseph that it was "above the laws of nature". Note that, a miracle is *above* the laws of nature, not *against* them. It is supernatural, not contranatural. "Miracle" is God working, not mediately, but immediately.

Christianity is a religion of the miraculous, many Modernists to the contrary. Christ is Himself

"the great miracle, . . . the great interruption of the order of nature, or rather a new element which had entered into the order of nature to enrich and enable it, and His miracles entered with Him, not to disturb, but to repair its harmony. Therefore all His miracles bore the stamp of His character. They were not mere exhibitions of power, but also of holiness, wisdom and love."

Miracles are for us men and our salvation.—B.

### THE EDITOR

Because of the holiday we have to go to press on Tuesday evening, and as we do so, Dr. Shields is preparing to celebrate coronation day by securing at least some measure of freedom. To-morrow (Wednesday) he will try sitting up for the first time, and after that we are assured by the doctor that he will rapidly gain strength. We are sure the host of WITNESS friends who have been earnestly praying for his recovery will receive this word with thanksgiving and gladness.

### OUR BIRTHDAY.

With this issue, THE GOSPEL WITNESS celebrates its fifteenth birthday, and enters upon the sixteenth year of publication. Enjoying the favour of God, and the prayerful interest and support of its host of friends that circle the globe, as it manifestly has in the past, it is our earnest expectation that in the year just begun it will exercise a still larger and more fruitful ministry.

**THE PRESIDENT'S CONVOCATION MESSAGE**

May 6th, 1937.

To All Friends of Toronto Baptist Seminary,  
Assembled at the Commencement Service,

My Dear Friends:

I regret inexpressibly my enforced absence from the service of this evening. Jarvis Street Church exercises a manifold ministry, but I believe no part of the work is of greater importance than her share of the maintenance and administration of the work of the Seminary.

The Seminary was not definitely planned. It grew spontaneously—or shall I rather say, by divine implantation—out of sheer necessity. I believe God has given us intelligence that we may not be as the horse or the mule “which have no understanding”, to enable us to be led of the Spirit by some other means than by bit and bridle; and being given “an understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do” at that particular time, a few of us brought the Seminary into being. Its subsequent record, I believe, has established, beyond dispute, that from its beginning until now it has enjoyed the divine favour.

In the bringing together of each individual member of our splendid Faculty, each one the complement of all the others, there is evidence of the hand of Him Who doeth all things well. In the provision for our need, financially, since we began without a cent, even until now, the favour of God has been similarly shown. In many of the students who have come to us also we have been made to rejoice greatly.

I think we have never had greater pleasure in any class than in the class we graduate this year. I should like to assure every one of them personally—other members of the Faculty will speak for themselves—that they have a large place in my affections, and will never be forgotten in my prayers. I covet for every one of them the fullest and richest of divine benedictions; praying above all that they may fight a good fight, and keep the faith, and at last win the greatest of all prizes—even the crown of righteousness which is laid up for all who love the Lord's appearing. I would beg

of them to “preach the word; be instant in season, out of season”, and to “pray without ceasing”. And especially would I urge them to remember that the discipline of their Seminary course has been designed only to teach them how to use the workman's tools; that the real work of life lies beyond this brief term of their apprenticeship. I would urge them, moreover, to remember that whatever a man's natural talents, capabilities and capacities may be, they may be multiplied and enlarged by consecrated effort, or rendered useless by neglect. I therefore hope that the men and women of the graduating class will become as renowned for their industry as for their piety. Even the salvation which

is our own by God's free gift, the purchase price of which is fully paid, and the title divinely registered, must be “worked out with fear and trembling” if we are to realize the utmost from life's estate. And even such spiritual gifts as may be supernaturally imparted, must needs be stirred up within us if they are to be exercised to the largest possible measure of fruitfulness.

I trust the graduates will never allow themselves to be puffed up to the point of making a providential puncture necessary to their usefulness; while, on the other hand, it is my sincere prayer that their achievements of the future may provide abundant reason for pride and glorying, such pride as recognizes it to be the highest possible human honour to become a divine instrument for the promotion of the divine glory, and that thus may be fulfilled in their experience that which is written: “He

that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

I should like to be allowed to express my great pleasure that the Faculty have been able to secure, for this occasion, the presence and services of the Reverend William Thomas, of Cooke's Church. He is one of the men for whom all true Evangelicals will give thanks at every remembrance of him. I am sure that his address to the students will obviate any necessity for my saying anything beyond the suggestions I have already made, that the habit of spiritual industry we have endeavoured to inculcate in them during their Seminary course may be continued to the end of their earthly career.

I deeply regret that I am unable to be present to wel-



—All photos by Simpson Bros.

**TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY GRADUATES**

Pictured above are the young men and women who graduated from Toronto Baptist Seminary at the graduation exercises Thursday, May 6th. (1) Miss Irene I. Downing; (2) Miss C. M. Sager; (3) Miss Leila M. Boyd; (4) Jack Scott; (5) G. M. Reeve; (6) F. M. Buhler, who delivered the valedictory address; (7) G. B. Hicks.

come Mr. Thomas, but I predict, should the pastorate of these two churches remain unchanged, Cooke's Church and Jarvis Street are likely to know each other more intimately in the future.

I would remind all the friends of the Seminary that our Seminary family is constantly growing; and that already our Seminary students are preaching every Sunday to far more than twice the capacity of Jarvis St. Church. Let us, therefore, pray the more. Financially, we have the same capital with which we began, which can be represented by a round cipher, plus the promises of God. That we have continued until this day is evidence that we have both worked, and prayed, and given, and that God has honored the cooperation of these three Christian activities.

Perhaps I may add this personal word: I am under the doctors' orders not to sit up until the six weeks' end, which glorious termination I shall celebrate on Coronation Day. But I would have my friends know that I lie in bed from no conscious inability to rise. On the contrary, I feel often like rejoicing "as a strong man to run a race". As far as my feelings are concerned, I imagine myself to be able to "run through a troop" or leap "over a wall". I feel a bit of a ministerial humbug to be lying in bed, given every attention, and showered with kindnesses by a multitude of friends, and allowed to do nothing, while I have not an ache nor a pain. The only special virtue I have developed during this period of inactivity is that for five weeks together, for the first time in my life, I have done exactly as others have told me to do. This rest behind the lines will give me time to burnish my armour, and fill my quiver with new arrows, and, perhaps, sharpen the sword a bit. I think we shall yet share many battles, and many glorious victories together; and I still believe, profoundly, that God will yet make Jarvis Street the scene of a Carmel-like fire whose light shall be seen around the world.

With warmest love to Mr. Thomas, Faculty, Trustees, Students, and all Seminary friends, I am,

Affectionately yours,

(Signed) THOMAS T. SHIELDS.

## TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY GRADUATION

The annual graduating banquet of Toronto Baptist Seminary of Wednesday last was indeed "a feast of good things". The roast beef was the kind the Seminary kitchen serves! the music and humour were good; and the speeches were on a high plane.

### "Consider Him"

Mr. T. D. M. Carson, President of last year's student body, struck the key-note in the first speech when he enjoined us to "consider Him". Mr. W. R. Slade replied as president of the student body for next year. Mr. G. M. Reeve spoke as representative of the graduating class, from the scripture where Abraham went out to receive an inheritance, but "not knowing whither he went". Mr. F. M. Buhler briefly discussed the consecrated use of time—the Christian's major problem. At the close of his speech, Miss L. M. Boyd, on behalf of the Faculty and students, and particularly of those who have studied French with Mr. Buhler, made a presentation of a purse in appreciation of his fine service.

Pastor Duncan Macgregor spoke for the graduates of the Seminary who are now in the work. Rev. H. N. Duncan, Superintendent of the Fegan Boys' Home, England, who has spent two terms as a missionary to the Eskimos in Baffin Land, and who has been paying a brief visit to Toronto, giving Jarvis Street Church a very welcome share of it, gave a fine address on the inner and outer life of the minister. Rev. E. E. Shields followed with a discussion of the principle of death in order to life: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Finally, Rev. A. C. Whitcombe, as representative of the Faculty, gave wise counsel, which will be appreciated by the graduates in days to come. Altogether, "a good time was had by all"—and that, in the Lord.

Graduation exercises took place in the church auditorium Thursday evening, May 6th. There was the largest attendance this occasion has brought together for several years, a number of friends being present from a distance.

### Prizes and Diplomas

Following the opening exercises, the letter of Dr. Shields, our President, which is printed elsewhere in this issue, was read. Rev. W. S. Whitcombe presented the following prizes: *French Two*, Miss Rheta Rodgers; *French Three*, Mr. W. S. Cutler; *French Four*, Mr. T. D. M. Carson; *English Three*, Mr. C. E. Close; *English Four*, Mr. F. M. Buhler. Rev. W. W. Fleischer made the presentation of diplomas. Those receiving diplomas in the *Four-Year Divinity Course* were: Leila May Boyd, Frédéric Martin Buhler, George Bowerman Hicks, Grahame Montagu Reeve, Clarice Muriel Sager; and Jack Scott; and Miss Irene Isable Downing received the *Two-Year Bible Course Certificate*. Miss Florence E. Britton and Mr. Robert Bowers Morrison received the *Two-Year Bible Course Certificate* and the *Three-Year Theological Course Diploma* respectively at the Convocation last fall.

### The Task

Our readers will be interested in knowing what this year's graduates are doing or intend to do.

Mr. Robert B. Morrison is Pastor of a Baptist church on the outskirts of Ellwood City, Penna., where, according to a recent letter from a friend, he is proceeding with care that he may build for the future. Since his going there, interest, attendance, and offerings, have greatly increased.

Mr. F. M. Buhler will do deputation work for the French Baptist Mission, as announced in last week's issue, for some weeks; then proceed to Timmins, Ontario, to help in the work that church is doing in French evangelization. In the fall, he will return to his native land, Alsace-Lorraine, France, and attend the famous University at Strassburg, which is near his home town. Following that he must do two years' military service in the French army; then he will be free to accept a pastorate in the Association of Evangelical Baptist Churches of the French Language. Throughout his four-year course in the Seminary, Mr. Buhler made an enviable record, in spite of the handicap under which he came; a then limited knowledge of English. His record has been the best of any in his class, and hence it was his honour to deliver the valedictory.

Mr. George B. Hicks has, for two years, been Pastor of the Tottenham and Churchill Gospel Missions. This work he resigned the Sunday before graduation, in order to proceed to Geraldton, Ontario, where a new work is being started, as related in last week's issue. Mr. G. M. Reeve will take up pastoral work here in Southern Ontario. Mr. Jack Scott has for some time been student-pastor of the Regular Baptist Church, Belleville, and will continue his work in that city. Misses L. M. Boyd and Irene I. Downing will enter training as nurses in the fall, in order to fit themselves further for missionary service. Miss Clarice M. Sager expects to take up Christian work.

As we have just said, Mr. F. M. Buhler delivered the valedictory. It might have been called "Fellowship", for he spoke of the fellowship which the graduating class had had with the teachers of the Seminary, with their fellow-students, with Jarvis Street Baptist Church, with which the Seminary is affiliated, with churches of the Union of Regular Baptists, and with friends who had kindly assisted from time to time. This valedictory was really a farewell. We are sure Mr. Buhler will be much missed in the days to come.

Pastor J. R. Boyd, who began work last spring in the city of Sudbury, in an appealing manner, presented the needs of the North—the need of those who have got away from the religious influence of the homes they left for that mining country, of need of the children whose parents do not go to church—the appalling need of a vast territory where men seek mammon rather than God.

**Convocation Address**

The chief address of the evening was delivered by Rev. Wm. Thomas, M.A., of Cooke's Presbyterian Church, Toronto. In a scholarly, spiritual, and forceful manner, he discussed "The Scriptures in the Experience and Ministry of Our Lord and His Disciple Paul". Pointing out that in our day destructive criticism has undermined confidence in the Old Testament, the speaker proceeded to show that the Lord Jesus—"very God of very God"—stood squarely upon the Old Testament as the word of His Father, as He talked with His friends, as He faced His enemies, and in the hour of the cross; and also that the Apostle Paul, than whom there has been no greater preacher, took the same attitude, and insisted that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God".

We predict an increasingly great ministry for Mr. Thomas in Cooke's Church in the years to come.

**NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES**

**MEDINA**—Rev. M. Henry—Sunday, May 9th, was a great day. The church was taxed to capacity in the afternoon, and the Clause Sisters from Niagara Falls, N.Y., furnished special numbers in song. At the evening service the Bell Ringers from Hamilton, Ont., provided special gospel music on the bells. They opened the musical part of the service with "The chimes of London, England", and the doxology; following this number a prayer was offered, and then, in honour of our King the Bell Ringers played "God Save the King", and the congregation sang. After this a number of gospel hymns were played. Mr. Harry Dorman, a member of Stanley Avenue Church, brought to us a message. Three responded to the invitation and will follow our Lord in baptism next Sunday, at 1.30 p.m. Standard time, in addition to others who are to be baptized.

**STRASBOURG, SASK.**—Pastor D. S. Dinnick—Last December Pastor D. S. Dinnick reported from Strasbourg, Sas-

katchewan, that he was driving a Model T "Fresh Air Taxi" over the prairie at about fifteen below zero. We are glad to hear that he now has a "good car", one that got smashed up in an accident, and which he is himself fixing!

The Swedish Baptist Church, of which he is pastor, has for some years met in the local school house. They are now planning to build a church. This we remarked some weeks ago. We hear that the money is coming in but slowly. The brethren are very anxious to open the place free of debt. A good work is being done, and this venture is worthy of help.

**SHENSTONE MEMORIAL, BRANTFORD**—Rev. A. C. Whitcombe—The Sunday school of this church has been growing steadily for the past year and a half. We have gradually shifted our objective from 125 to 200. Sunday before last there were two hundred present on a regular Sunday to study the lesson in their classes. One remarkable thing about that attendance is that our roll carries less than 225 names. Last Sunday we put on a drive to interest the mothers of the Cradle Roll and Primary classes. It was an open session at which there were 265 present when the count was made. More came in later but could not be counted in time for the records. Numbers in themselves are valueless, but we rejoice to know that there are conversions among our classes, and that the children of our Bible School carry the gospel into the homes and do their parents good.

**WILLOWDALE**—Pastor Bruce Hisey—Evangelistic meetings are being held in the Willowdale Baptist Church from Sunday, May 9th, to May 23rd. Rev. Roy Hisey of Lachute, is the special speaker. Sunday was a very good day, and in the evening the Misses K. and I. Twiss gave forth the gospel in song. Remember these meetings in prayer.

**24th of MAY RALLY—BRANTFORD**—A Committee appointed by the Board of the Union arranged for a Rally to be held in Shenstone Memorial Baptist Church on the 24th of May. This church extends a warm welcome to the whole membership of the Union to visit us on that day. The ladies of the church will provide the evening meal at the reasonable sum of twenty-five cents. Mr. Hutchinson of Jarvis Street will lead the singing, that will be worth going for. Miss Mary Jeffery will play the violin. We all want to hear that. Rev. H. C. Slade of Timmins will be the speaker. No one should miss that. This is not a private venture. It is a Union project: If you are within reach of Brantford, come. We will see you at Shenstone on the 24th of May.

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## Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 1      2nd Quarter      Lesson 21      May 23rd, 1937

DR. OLIVE L. CLARK

### ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

Lesson Text: Romans 10:8-13; I Peter 1:1-9.

Golden Text: "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."—2 Tim. 1:12.

#### I. Introduction.

Lack of assurance of salvation may be the result of a profession of Christ, without possession; one cannot have the assurance of salvation unless first he is really saved. Teachers should bear this fact in mind, and pray that, as the Scriptures showing God's way of salvation are presented, the Holy Spirit may convict of sin.

Again, lack of assurance may be due to an undue emphasis upon feelings. The Word does not say "he that feeleth", but "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John 3:36).

Our safety depends upon what Christ did, our certainty upon what God says. Aim to show that God has clearly stated His promises, and the terms on which we may be saved. Our duty is to take Him at His word. Such trust will bring glad assurance that we belong to Him, full assurance of understanding (Col. 2:2), full assurance of faith (Heb. 10:22) and full assurance of hope (Heb. 6:11).

Children believe plain statements of truth more readily than adults. Use an illustration such as is suggested in Rev. 3:20, emphasize what God says He will do for us and in us, if we give Him permission, then encourage the children to depend on God to do what He has promised.

#### II. The Faithful Promise of God—Rom. 10:8-13.

These verses state clearly the "word of faith"; that is, the message of salvation through faith; they tell us how we may be made righteous. The One in Whom we are to repose our confidence is not far away (v. 6, 7), but He is very near, so near that at any time and in any place, we may lift our hearts and voices to Him, and He will hear. All stumbling-blocks have been removed, and the transaction takes place between the individual soul and Christ Himself.

"Speak to Him, thou, for He hears,  
And spirit with spirit can meet.  
Closer is He than breathing,  
Nearer than hands or feet."

There are two conditions of salvation (v. 9, 10); the first, an outward confession, the second, an inward conviction.

We are to confess Jesus as Lord. What does that imply?

(1) We acknowledge that He is Jesus, the One Who saves from sin (Matt. 1:21; 1 John 4:2, 3). I must say that He is a Saviour, *the* Saviour and *my* Saviour. Make it a personal matter. Such a confession is impossible unless the Holy Spirit has already convicted of sin and righteousness.

(2) We acknowledge that Jesus is the Lord, that He is Jehovah God (Matt. 16:16, 17; 1 Cor. 12:3). He is also our Lord, our Master, the One Who bought us, the One to Whom we owe allegiance. He has the right to rule our lives.

Confession with the lips is but the outward expression of the conviction of the heart. We must believe in our hearts that God raised Christ from the dead. It does not say "believe in thy mind", but "believe in thy heart". I may believe in *my mind* that a bridge is safe, but I believe it *in my heart* only when I am willing to trust myself to that bridge and walk across. Faith is not a matter of giving mental assent to certain truths, but it is the result of yielding heart-obedience to the Lord Himself. John G. Paton, the missionary to the New Hebrides, in translating the New Testament into the native language, used for "believe" the word signifying "I lean my whole weight upon". We hand over to Him the responsibility of saving us.

"We may trust Him fully  
All for us to do.  
They who trust Him wholly,  
Find Him wholly true."

The resurrection of Christ is God's receipt that the price of our redemption has been paid. It is God's assurance to us that His holiness has been vindicated. To believe in

the resurrection of Christ will mean that we believe in His vicarious death (Rom. 4:25). Faith in His death for us involves faith in His sinless life. Again, if we believe that God raised Him from the dead, we shall believe also in His ascension, His session at God's right hand, His coming again. In a word, we shall believe what God has said about Christ; we shall believe God's record, His testimony concerning His Son. Not to believe will be equivalent to saying that God does not speak the truth (1 John 5:10, 11). It is a serious matter to neglect, refuse, or despise God's message to us in His Son (Heb. 2:1-3; Rom. 2:4; Heb. 10:28, 29; 12:25).

As soon as we have a heart-trust in the Lord, He takes away our sin and counts us righteous (v. 10; Zech. 3:3, 4). Assurance of salvation comes when we act upon our faith by open confession in speech, for the moment we acknowledge that Christ is our Saviour, He acknowledges before God that we are His children (Matt. 10:32). Then His Spirit gives us the assurance of this fact (Rom. 8:16; 1 John 5:10). The one who truly believes in Christ will not be ashamed to give testimony to His grace (v. 11).

All, both Jews and Gentiles, are sinners before God (Romans, chapters 1 to 3), and hence, all need to be saved. The same Lord who redeemed all men is ready to pour blessing upon all; He is rich in mercy (Eph. 2: 4, 7; 3:8; 1 Pet. 1:3). Whosoever shall call upon Him shall be saved (v. 13; Joel 2:32; 1 Cor. 1:2). Could the way of salvation be made more simple? What a safe resting-place for our trust does the Lord afford us in this His own Word! He is faithful that promised (Heb. 10:23), and all who will may come (Rev. 22:17).

#### III. Salvation Safe and Sure—1 Peter 1:1-9.

The Apostle Peter, in writing to those who were suffering in the name of Christ, reminded them of the complete salvation which was theirs in Christ. The full blessings which are in Christ rest upon a sure and safe foundation; (1) Salvation is the work of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (v.2). In His sovereign mercy God the Father has chosen us (Rom. 8:29), the Holy Spirit has set us apart, and our Lord Jesus Christ has shed His blood for us. As a result of God's choosing, and the work of grace in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, the believer is enabled to obey the message of the Gospel.

(2) Salvation brings living hope (v. 3; Titus 3:7), "a hope which has in it the elements of a perennial life". To be saved is to be born again (John 3:7), to have a new life, new divine life imparted (2 Pet. 1:4; Titus 3:5). The Father of our Lord becomes our Father also (Rom. 8:15-17). The ground of our hope is the resurrection of Christ (Rom. 8:11), God's pledge to us that He has accepted the sacrifice of Christ on our behalf.

(3) Salvation is an inheritance reserved for us (v. 4). "The title which the saints have to their inheritance is of the most valid and unquestionable kind; viz. by birth." Unlike earthly inheritances, it is not subject to corruption, stain or decay. It is unfading in glory. Some day we shall have full possession of the inheritance of which we now have the title-deed (Heb. 11:1; Eph. 1:13, 14). The inheritance is reserved in a safe place, even in heaven (Matt. 6:20). We are insured in a company that will not fail, with a policy non-forfeitable.

(4) The same One Who keeps our inheritance for us, keeps us for the inheritance (v. 5). We are kept; that is, garrisoned, by the power of God. What a strong garrison! No enemy can break through the line. We are preserved by God through faith. Teachers may illustrate by reference to a bank. A person deposits money in a bank, trusting the bank to keep or invest the money, returning it when required. We commit our souls to the Lord, believing He will keep us safe. Emphasize the Golden Text in this connection.

(5) Our salvation is "ready to be revealed in the last time" (v. 5-8). It is complete in the plan of God, and awaits only His time to be manifested. Even now, amid trial and sorrow, we rejoice in our unseen though beloved Saviour. When He comes again, we shall see Him, and be like Him (1 John 3:2), our bodies will be redeemed (Rom. 8:23), and, all testing over, we shall be freed forever from the presence of sin. This is the goal of our faith. At that time we shall experience fulness of joy, praise, honour and glory.

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!  
What more can He say, than to you He hath said—  
To you, who for refuge to Jesus have fled?"