

# 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 WEDDING WAS FURNISHED WITH GUESTS"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, August 22nd, 1937

(Stenographically Reported)

"And the wedding was furnished with guests."—Matt. 22:10.

Those who are familiar with his history must, I think, regard Job as the most perfect merely human embodiment of patience of which history has preserved any record. We think of his name as representing the utmost of physical pain, of mental anguish, and of spiritual conflict, that could be compressed into a single human life. And yet when God answered Job out of the whirlwind, He told him that when He laid the foundations of the earth the "morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy". Surely such music could never have been designed to accompany the laying of the foundations of some vast prison-house! God must have some happy plan for a world whose birth was heralded with such songs of triumph. It never was designed that the dissonance of this planet should ultimately make discord in the music of the morning stars. Somehow or another, it must be retuned to enable it to join harmoniously in the universal music. As a matter of fact, that is the teaching of the whole Bible. The purpose of God's communications with men is that He may give them "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness". The end of all our preaching is that men, by sovereign grace, shall be brought to a place where "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes".

Christian service is not always easy. There are burdens to bear, hills to climb, difficulties to encounter, enemies with whom we must do battle. Sometimes, indeed, we may have to stoop to hard and menial labour in the carrying out of the divine programme. But who would object to any labour could he always keep in mind that he is honoured by the great King in thus being permitted to have a share in preparing for the bridal day? We shall be able to endure the cross and despise the shame, as did our Master, if only we keep our eyes upon the joy that is set before us.

The end of it all is summed up in this brief sentence which I have read as a text. To this end we are all engaged who are Christians. For this purpose all Christian enterprises are initiated and maintained. For this, the gospel is preached: that the wedding may be furnished with guests. And in this parable we are assured that it will be so. Notwithstanding all the obstacles that were put in the way of the accomplishment of the King's purpose, our Lord declares that in the end the wedding was furnished with guests. If I could only give you that text, and send you home with that assurance, I think it would be well worth your while to have come. Let us have done with all complaining, and with all mourning, as believers. In spite of all the difficulties of the time, let us rejoice in this promise, that in the end, the wedding will be furnished with guests, and the King will have His way.

Now let us look at this parable of which the sentence I have read to you is the climax.

### I.

And I begin with the remark that at first blush it would appear that IT OUGHT TO BE EASY TO FURNISH THE WEDDING WITH GUESTS. One might suppose that the gospel would appear to every one to be good news, and nothing but good news. One might reasonably expect that the herald of the gospel and his message would be everywhere welcomed. There must be some strange reason for the fact that difficulties are ever encountered in the execution of this divine plan. One might expect that it would be easy to secure guests, *because the event to which they were invited was a wedding*. It was an occasion of joy and gladness. This world has sorrow enough, surely, without our deliberately attempting to intensify it. Personally, I never court the company, still less the companionship, of long-faced, gloomy, people. I

like, myself, to walk on the sunny side of the street, and, as they used to say in England, to put "the best side toward London". Why should not we do so? Surely there is no virtue in being gloomy, in adding to the shades and shadows of life? When one is invited to a wedding, especially when it is a wedding for which elaborate preparations have been made, and a wedding which is representative of the loving purposes of all who are engaged therein, when one may reasonably expect that it will be an occasion of general delight, one would expect that an invitation to such a festive event would be welcomed by everyone who was fortunate enough to receive it. I repeat, they malign and misrepresent the gospel who suggest that it ever diminishes the joys of life. The angel heralded the coming of Jesus as a day of gladness: "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people", while the multitude of the heavenly host sang "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men". The gospel is good news, or it is nothing. Therefore we who preach it ought to be able to preach it with happy faces, with joy expressed in the very tones in which the gospel is proclaimed. It is described as "the glorious gospel of the blessed God", or it might be rendered, "the glorious gospel of the happy God"; "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore". No wonder the religion of Christ is a singing religion. It does teach a man to make melody in his heart unto the Lord. If there are any here this evening who have formed a contrary conception of the function of Christianity, if you imagine that it is designed to take the joy out of life, and to plunge people into perpetual misery, then you have been unfortunate in those who have represented the gospel to you. The gospel is a call to a wedding, to an occasion of "joy unspeakable and full of glory". One might expect, I repeat, that such an invitation would be welcomed and gladly accepted.

Furthermore, it was not only a wedding, but a *wedding of great importance, a wedding in high places*. Sometimes—I do not stop to read them very often—but sometimes as I turn the pages of the newspapers I get a glimpse of some happy bride, with a report of a "fashionable wedding"—and oh, how the ladies love to display themselves on such an occasion, and what glowing descriptions are written of all that they wore, brides and bridesmaids! It was rather amusing to me—I did not know what it meant, and I do not know why it fastened itself in my mind, but it just comes to my mind now—to read an advertisement the other day: "Gloves for the bride, four dollars; for the bridesmaids eight dollars"! I do not know why, but I suppose they all have to put on something more than their Sunday best when going to a wedding, especially if it be an important wedding, when people who are supposed to occupy exalted positions in life, are numbered among the guests.

But oh, to be invited to the wedding of the King's Son, to receive a royal invitation! I never had one but once. Once when I was in London during the War I was invited to attend a certain place. I was not really invited, but I received a communication "by royal command", and you may be sure I was there. I was told what to wear, and all the rest of it. What an extraordinary thing that anyone should be averse to the reception of an invitation to a royal wedding! Everyone who received any kind of invitation to King George's coronation, I think, somehow, whispered it to the newspapers so that everyone should

know about it. They were not in the least ashamed at being included. Seriously, my friends, the gospel proposes to every recipient of its invitation a higher honour than it is possible for any earthly potentate to confer.

There could not possibly be a greater honour than for one to be summoned to attend in the presence of God, and to go, not as a visitor, but prepared to stay. How wonderful it is that we are invited to be guests of the King of kings! Not less than that is the purport of the gospel message.

There is still another reason why one might suppose it would be easy to secure guests for the wedding. *Everything was already prepared*. Said the king: "Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage". They were not invited to bring a present for the bride. I dare say sometimes some of you have wished you had not received an invitation to a wedding. Now be honest! You have said: "I suppose I shall have to send something." The lady said: "I suppose I shall have to get a new dress". Altogether, the acceptance of such an invitation may have been quite a costly affair. But not so, this invitation. The intended guests were invited to bring nothing but themselves. They were assured in advance that no preparation was necessary; that everything was all ready for them. Oh, if the gospel were a message summoning us to arduous toil, to incessant labour, to a life that was little better than one of bondage—and how many people imagine it is! The Mohammedan measuring his length in his pilgrimage to Mecca, the Hindoo with his prayer wheel, poor benighted soul; and others trying to pile up merit for themselves by the mortification of the flesh, and the infliction of all kinds of pain—if that were the religion of Christ, one might even wish that he never had heard of it. But that is not the gospel: the gospel is a message of grace. It bids you come without anything. You do not need even to get a new suit. The dress which you must wear is prescribed and provided. Why, my dear fellow, there is no tailor on earth who could make a suit that would be fit to wear in God's presence! Worth of Paris could not design a gown for you ladies that would do to wear in the presence of the angels. Hence, salvation is all of grace without an infinitesimal element of works in it. We do well when we sing:

"Nothing in my hand I bring;  
Simply to Thy cross I cling."

And to be invited to such a feast—one is tempted to linger on it, but that is beside my subject for the moment—to sit, not on terms of equality, but of superiority, with the denizens of that upper world, to be honoured by God and the angels, and provided with all that the resources of grace can provide, and bidden come to the marriage—one might suppose that such an invitation would be received with great delight.

## II.

Yet the parable tells us that **THERE WAS GREAT DIFFICULTY IN FURNISHING THE WEDDING WITH GUESTS**.

When the servants of the king were sent out with the invitation *there were some who merely ignored it*. They did not even condescend to make an excuse. They made no answer. They simply would not come. How graphically descriptive that is of the spirit and attitude of a great many people to-day, and in all the days that have

gone! They utterly ignore religion. They have no interest in it. They do not debate about it. They will not discuss it. They will not come. How many utterly godless people there are, who make absolutely no response to all the divine overtures!

There were others *who did condescend to listen*. They listened with a smile, a supercilious smile, with an air, an attitude of superiority; but "they made light of it": "I beg your pardon!" "Would you come to church with me?" "What?" "I should like very much if you would come to church with me." "To church! Why, I never go to church. I have no religion. It may be all right for you, if you want it." "But have you never thought of the claims of religion upon you?" "No; not at all." That is a common attitude to-day. They "make light of it". This is true of many young men, perhaps going to university. What a lot they can learn in a year or two! They can put more into their little heads in that time than all the accumulated knowledge of the ages. Of course, it does not take long to fill a small vessel! I have met them by the hundreds. They make light of religion. They laugh at their father and mother, and at everything religious. They do not argue about it: they could not! They do not combat it, do not dispute about these profound matters: but regard religion as an interesting avocation for people who have nothing else to occupy their minds.

I wonder are there any here to-night like that? The first class are not here—they would not come. They avoid all religious influences. But there are others who, perhaps, at the request of a friend, accept an invitation to go to church. But they say: "You must not expect that it will do me any good"; thus they make light of it. Are there any such here this evening? Have you dared to make light of the word of God? Have you dared to scoff at divine communications?

"But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise." In other words, *they subordinated the all-important matter to what ought to have been secondary considerations in life*. There was no sin in the man's going to his farm, or to his merchandise. But it was an evil thing to allow either the farm or the merchandise to stand between them and the king's command. So do men allow their minds to become preoccupied with temporal concerns. Not necessarily with some outrageous wrong, perhaps the thing may not be intrinsically wrong at all: its evil consists in this, that it usurps the place which he supremely important matters of life should occupy. It is thus they make light of that which ought to command their first attention.

And *there were still others who were positively antagonistic, and displayed great enmity toward the king and his servants*. I wonder, if you Christian workers have sometimes been a little discouraged, a little disheartened when you have touched people who seemed to be positively the enemies of the gospel? They do not make light of it: they attack you. You gave them an invitation, and immediately their anger flamed. That has been so in ages past. Men, for preaching this gospel, for delivering the King's invitation to the wedding, have been burned at the stake. We thought we had passed that, but they are likely to face the same thing in Germany, in Italy, in Spain, and in Russia. Indeed, they are facing it in all these places, and in our measure we face it here.

I wonder if I may speak personally without your misunderstanding. I am sometimes almost amused when somebody comes to me and tells me of some bitter thing that has been said. I heard of a man of my name, who was a minister of a certain church. He went to a little village as pastor, and they had a reception for him. All the denominations were represented. After they had all made their complimentary speeches, the new minister spoke. His name was Shields—I do not know where he got it! And I have not the remotest idea where he came from. But he began his address by saying that he wanted all that community to understand that he was no relation whatever to Dr. Shields of Toronto. We are mutually satisfied, so far as that is concerned. What the dear man had in his heart I do not know, and until someone whispered that story to me, I had not even heard of the distinguished gentleman's existence. I do not know what he had against me. I do not think I am so hard to get along with. Do you think so, you Jarvis Street people? I have been here for a long time. Why do people hate preachers of the gospel? I had a friend here visiting me a few years ago on his way to Scotland. He came from British Columbia, and while here he gave two or three addresses. Later I got a letter from him, posted at Quebec. It was written on the ship on his way down the St. Lawrence. He said: "I am a passenger in a four-berth cabin, and after we left Montreal I went to my cabin, and found one of my fellow-passengers unpacking his grips. He said: 'Well, I suppose we shall have to behave ourselves on this trip. We have a padre in our cabin.' 'Oh, is that so? Where does he come from?' The man replied, 'I think he comes from Calgary.' 'Do you know anything about his church affiliations?' 'I think he is an Episcopalian.' 'Well now, you will have to be doubly careful, because there are two of us.' 'Oh, are you a preacher too?' I said: 'Yes.' 'Are you a Shieldsite?' 'I do not know. Dr. Shields and I are friends. We believe the same old Book, and preach the same old gospel, and I have just been at his church.' 'Oh, then', said the other, 'you will get along with this other man, for he is an out-and-out Shieldsite.'" I do not know who he was.

Well, that is a personal matter. But what I mean is this, that any individual, or any church that will stand uncompromisingly for the old gospel in our day, will incur the enmity of natural men. And people who have never seen you, or talked with you, will be angry, and hate you. They took these servants and "entreated them spitefully, and slew them". You teachers experience something of this when you go visiting. Generally, you are welcomed as you seek the welfare of the little children. Sometimes you meet those who will not come. Sometimes you meet those who make light of your gospel; but sometimes you meet those who slam the door in your face after they have almost cursed you. Yes; there is in the carnal heart, a bitter, natural, antagonism to the gospel, notwithstanding its glorious programme.

### III.

We must therefore face the fact borne out by the parable, that THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE WHO RECEIVE THE INVITATION OF THE GOSPEL, WHO WILL NOT COME TO THE WEDDING. *There are many invited who never come*. They do not cross the threshold of the King's palace; they never become guests at the wedding, notwithstanding the King's invitation to them. However you may choose to try to explain it, the fact is, there are

people who will not obey the gospel. "They have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?" So you must not be downhearted if some do not come the first time, nor the hundredth time you invite them. You must not be discouraged if there are some who refuse to come at all. The Bible tells us there will be some, and that, *notwithstanding they have been invited by many different servants*. I read that the other day, and I found great comfort in it. Sometimes if we preach, and people do not receive our gospel, we say, "Perhaps if someone else were to preach they would hear. If somebody else invited them, they would come." Have you not felt like that sometimes? And when you have tried—and tried—and tried a hundred times and failed, you have said, "It must be my fault". Not necessarily so, my dear friend, for the king sent "other servants"—and other servants—and other servants, but they all received the same treatment. There were some who would not come. There are men who have gone to perdition under the preaching of D. L. Moody, and C. H. Spurgeon, and the mightiest witnesses that the God of grace ever had. They steeled their hearts against the gospel, and did not come to the wedding. Do not blame the preacher; it may not be his fault. It is his fault if he does not give you the message of the gospel. But however stammeringly he proclaims it, if he preaches the gospel of grace, and bids you come to Christ, that is the measure of his responsibility: the rest is yours. They would not come in spite of the many invitations.

Sometimes if the government has an important communication to send to anyone, they send it by registered mail. They have a way of knowing whether you received your tax bill or not. You cannot say, "I am sorry; I did not know." You did know. They have proof that you had your bill.

The other day a policeman called to see me. I was out in the garden. He came out with a bundle of blue papers in his hand. He said, "Are you Dr. Shields?" I said, "Yes." He said: "I have something for you—a summons." "Oh," I said, "What have I been doing now?" "Speeding on Parkway Avenue." "How fast was I going?" He told me, and told me the time. Then I said: "I wish it were true. I have been shut up to this house and lot for about four months." "You have!" "Yes; and my car is in the garage and has been there all the time, unless some ghost had it out."

When God demands a settlement of your account He is not content to send one preacher, or one witness: He sends His prophets, "rising up early and sending them". "But that does not make any difference?" Does it not? You will find out whether or not it makes any difference. I do not believe any man or woman ever received an invitation to come to Jesus Christ in this world, that it has not been written down by God's angels; and for every such opportunity every one of us must give account some day. "Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." God has His witnesses, and He knows whether or not we were invited to the wedding. We cannot plead that we did not know.

*The king accepted the spiteful treatment accorded to his messengers as though it had been offered to himself.* That is what the Lord Jesus Christ said: "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." It is unimportant whether you know my name or not. If you are here and unconverted, God knows your name, and the treatment you accord the

message of the gospel He will regard as having been offered to Himself.

What followed? Ah, *there came a day of judgment for all those who would not come to the wedding*. They refused to come to the wedding; they elected instead to go to their own destruction! Do not let us forget that aspect of the gospel. I affirm, on the authority of God's Word, that the gospel is "the savour of death unto death", or "the savour of life unto life". To every one that hears it, it will save us to glory, or will it add to our condemnation at last when God opens His books.

#### IV.

And now hear this simply, and finally: **NOTWITHSTANDING ALL, "THE WEDDING WAS FURNISHED WITH GUESTS"**. I long ago wearied of those who speak as though the gospel were on trial. I have heard so much of it, I cannot listen to it with patience any more, that unless—unless—unless we do certain things Christianity will be discredited. We were told during the War how we should have to shape our course, or else the soldiers would not accept the gospel. Hence Mr. Professor "re-states" the gospel to meet the popular taste. Poor silly professor, you cannot make the work of God acceptable to men. Only God can do that. Whether men like it or not, God will not change His gospel.

But let me sound this triumphant note: the Master Whom I represent cannot be defeated. The cross of my Lord Jesus Christ was not erected at the place called Calvary in vain. He did not count down the precious ruby drops as the price of our redemption, ultimately to be robbed of that which He purchased with His own blood. No, no! the gospel, the whole scheme of redemption is no experiment: it is the revelation of the eternal purpose of a sovereign God: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son." That is what it is. And the marriage day was set, and the marriage was performed, and "the wedding was furnished with guests", in spite of all opposition.

There were no hope for the gospel if its ultimate success were conditioned upon the caprice of the human will. But it is not. The Lamb was slain from before the foundation of the world. It is written: "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." The wedding shall be furnished with guests; and if you do not come, someone else will, but the guests will be there. There will not be a vacant chair at the table. Of all the many mansions in the Father's house, you will never find a sign "to let" in one of the windows. They will all be occupied. When the number of His elect is accomplished the wedding shall be furnished with guests. There is no doubt about that. So cheer up, we are on the winning side. Others may try and fail; we shall succeed: the wedding shall be furnished with guests. The provisions will not be allowed to go to waste. The unsearchable riches of Christ will be utilized. The provisions of grace will enrich somebody; beyond any doubt, the wedding shall be furnished with guests.

*The king could not allow his son to be dishonoured by the absence of all the guests.* How terrible that would have been had the marriage day dawned at last with all the attendants there, while all the guests had insulted the king by refusing his invitation, and thus done dishonour to his son! "No," said the king, "my son shall not be dishonoured thus. The wedding shall be, must

be, furnished with guests." So will it be when at last God's purposes are complete. There will be before the throne a "great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues"—all washed in the blood, all saved with an everlasting salvation, every one of them without fault before the throne of God, when the wedding is furnished with guests. Do not make any mistake about it, the Lord Jesus will be honoured. It was for that He came. He "took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross"—Listen!—"Wherefore"—by virtue of His death, and the provision of grace made thereby—"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father"—every tongue—every tongue—your tongue! You shall glorify His mercy, or His justice, one or the other. Every tongue shall thus make its contribution to the glory of God.

*He was determined, and he inspired his servants with his own determination.* He said to his servants: "You have been denied a number of times. Now then, go out into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage."

I know there are some people too clever to be Christians! I know there are some who think they are too good to be Christians; and some who are too busy. I know a multitude are preoccupied, and will not receive our message. But thank God, there will always be some who will receive it. Out into the highways must we go and press the claims of the gospel upon those who have need of Christ. And the poorer they are, and the more sinful I suppose the more likely they will be to feel their own need of the sinner's Saviour. And so at last, by the determination of the King, and the persistent efforts of His servants, at His command, by the goings of His Spirit upon their own hearts, at last they came, countless thousands, until every seat was occupied, and the wedding was furnished with guests, and the wedding feast went on.

Oh, my dear friends, let us rejoice that the gospel is bound to triumph. The Lord Jesus will have His bride, He wills it so, and the wedding shall be furnished with guests.

If you are a Christian rejoice in it. If you are not a Christian, I beg of you, be among those whom the servants meet in the highways of life. Whatever your status, come to the marriage, come to the wedding. Let grace triumph. Yield to Him now. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shall be saved."

Let us pray:

O Lord, we thank Thee that we go not a warfare at our own charges. The gospel is not the power of man unto salvation, but the power of God. It is made effectual by the energising ministry of the Holy Ghost. Make Thy word effectual in the experience of any who came into this place without Christ.

May those of us who are Thy people, feel something of its sanctifying power as once again we rejoice in the assurance of the ultimate conquest, and the gloriously complete victory, and the everlasting reign of Him Who is the King of kings and Lord of lords! For His name's sake we ask it, Amen.

## NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

**SHENSTONE MEMORIAL, BRANTFORD**—Rev. A. C. Whitcombe. This has been a very busy summer. We conducted a Summer School for boys and girls under fourteen years of age during the last two weeks of July. The enrolment reached the two hundred mark. The average attendance for the last week was in the neighbourhood of one hundred and fifty. Seventeen different churches were represented in our school. The enrolment cards show that a number do not attend any Sunday-school, and these will be prospects for our Sunday-school when we begin the Fall work.

The School met for two hours every morning except Saturday and Sunday, to follow a carefully prepared programme. After our opening hymn and prayer, we divided into three groups according to age, for periods of Bible study and Scripture memorization, after which there followed music, hymn singing, sometimes another story, a recreation period, and a work period. During this period the younger children coloured pictures or cut and pasted. One class of boys made scrap-books which afterward went to the Brantford Sanatorium. The girls sewed, and the older boys made small wooden things. On the final night the parents were invited to hear the songs and hymns and memory work, and to see the work done by the boys and girls.

We have benefited in three ways from this school. First, we had the opportunity of teaching many children the Scripture and the gospel. Secondly, we have impressed upon their parents our interest in the children, and they appreciate it. Thirdly, the church has made a contact with homes heretofore untouched by it. It might be added that some children have already come to our Bible School who were not coming before, and we have hopes of reaching others very soon.

Since the middle of June we have had conversions and baptisms frequently. In three months we shall have had more than a dozen additions to the church, eleven of them by baptism. We all rejoice because of these blessings and pray that they may continue and increase.

**TENT MEETINGS IN THE EAST**—"Since last writing concerning the tent, we have had a three weeks' campaign about four miles south of Cumberland. There a goodly number attended the meetings every night, and twelve made public profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Besides these, there were some who privately confessed Christ. For these precious souls we are rejoicing exceedingly and glorying in the power of Christ. Rev. James Hall, Rev. L. Hisey and Pastor H. G. Hindry did the preaching.

"The tent has now been moved across to Silver Creek, which is situated between Thurso and Buckingham, a little to the North. We have had services there all of the past week and expect to carry on another week or more. God has richly blessed in many ways. The attendance has been splendid. We have seventy-six chairs in the tent and each night there have been but three or four empty.

"God has graciously supplied all our needs. We had a little difficulty in finding transportation for the tent. Then we heard of a certain man trucking cord wood across the river to Cumberland. We mentioned the matter to him, and he gladly accepted the task. And though it meant delay in his own work, he refused to accept any remuneration. We also had difficulty in providing suitable music. We had borrowed a portable organ but found it not very satisfactory, so announced at the tent that we should appreciate the loan of a piano. At the close of the service the man who operates a dance pavilion offered to place a piano in the tent for our use. So we had transportation and music from God's hand."

H. G. HINDRY.

**SARNIA TENT MEETINGS**—Since the first of July meetings have been carried on in Sarnia each night in a tent, under the leadership of the Courtright and Wilkesport Churches. During that time some fifty have publicly confessed Christ as Saviour, and the meetings are continuing throughout August. During these meetings a number of people have been brought together in this common cause of proclaiming the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is expected that a permanent work will be established. The brethren are seeking a suitable building and will appreciate the prayers of God's people that as they go, step by step, the Lord will open up the way.

# THE SEMINARY AT WORK

*Those who are closest to the Seminary know best the value of the summer "holidays", which are not holidays but working days when students practise what they have learned in school. There is no greater joy for a teacher than to welcome back the erstwhile raw recruit after the first summer's campaign, not yet a seasoned veteran, but with the joy of battle in his eye, and the first signs of coming maturity in the great and glorious ministry of the Gospel. As the end of the summer now approaches, we share with our readers a few of the reports of student activities that are beginning to come in.—W.S.W.*

## THE GOSPEL TENT AT KAPUSKASING

The large Gospel Tent is now set up in Kapuskasing. Pastor Brackstone secured a central location for the tent. The whole town has been canvassed from door to door, and for two weeks a faithful band have been joining together in prayer; and in the atmosphere created by prayer they have all been labouring with healthy and vigorous spirit.

Pastor Slade of Timmins who is directing the campaign in Kapuskasing writes: "We all turned out to the open-air meeting Saturday evening. The crowd was not large, but a goodly number listened with rapt attention. Sunday meetings were encouraging. We had nearly sixty in the tent at night, and one woman came forward for baptism. We all felt that God was speaking in the meeting; and it cheered our hearts to see a group of young men enter the tent."

Students Cook and Slade have been holding meetings in the mornings for the children. Beginning with an enrolment of slightly more than forty, they have had as many as fifty-seven present at some meetings. They report that the children are more eager to learn than any others they have worked with in the North.

Pastor Robert Guthrie of London also preached several times in the tent, and is enthusiastic about the work in the North.

## AMONG PIONEERS IN THE NORTH

The young men spent several days visiting in a rural Protestant settlement that is surrounded on every side by Roman Catholics. They found the direst poverty prevailing in the most primitive pioneer conditions. In every home they left a portion of Scripture and had reading and prayer. In many of these homes they had never had a minister do this before, and seemed deeply appreciative.

A meeting was announced, and about twenty people gathered in one of the homes to listen to Pastor Wellington's message. When the invitation was given to accept Christ, one man unhesitatingly stepped forward. "In this," the young men write, "we all rejoiced, knowing that our trip was more than worthwhile."

We invite our readers to pray very earnestly for this difficult work. If we were to begin to tell of the problems and trials that have beset the workers in the North we should soon exhaust the entire space in this paper. In Kirkland Lake, for example, the ground was so rocky that it was necessary in some places to use a steel drill to make a hole for the wooden tent pegs, while in Val d'Or the ground was so soft that the pegs were blown out of the ground. The car and trailer have been over roads that are so bad that the Motor League does not give out any reports on them. This

summer has been unusually wet in the North and this has not only kept the people away but has brought out the mosquitoes and the flies for which the North is justly famous. But the greatest difficulty of all has been the hardness of men's hearts, as hard as the rock they work in. But God can break in pieces the rock.

## PASTOR JOHN BOYD AT SUDBURY

Mr. Boyd reports that they have had some encouragement at Sudbury. He writes: "Our attempt to get more children by chartering a bus to two distant sections of the city has resulted in our getting between thirty and forty new Sunday-school scholars, and has given good openings into quite a number of homes. Our great need is teachers to enable us to do a similar thing in another neglected part of the city. This need has been met in part, but it is still urgent, and it is very difficult to handle extra children. We have the children stay for morning service, but let the little ones have a short recess during the opening exercises of the service, and then file in for one hymn and the sermon.

We had a baptismal service last night, when two young people were baptized. We combined the baptismal service with the Black Lake meeting, and had the privilege of hearing a good testimony by the lake shore. I expect that others will follow the example of these two, and be baptized before long.

Some progress is being made at Levack, although it is difficult to work at such a distance. There is a need for some intensive work there, and I earnestly pray that the Lord will make it possible for us to devote more time and labour to it without neglecting the work here in Sudbury. I do not know what we shall do when Mr. Tompkins goes back to school, but I am persuaded that the Lord will make some provision for our continuing to go on in this work which must advance."

## FRENCH WORK

A cosmopolitan church in a cosmopolitan town, the Timmins church has caught the vision of the need of foreign missionary work at home. For the last two years our former student-professor of French, Mr. F. M. Buhler, has been invited by them to preach in French over the radio. A letter of recent date reports as follows:

"I was very glad to discover that the contacts which I had made last year would be a great asset in the work. In the home where I used to have meetings last year, we have had an average of two meetings a week. There are always about ten or twelve people there. Through those visits, I come into contact with other people. Last night, I had a meeting of eleven people in the home of people that I had met at the other place. Meetings are very informal and may be held at any time. Sunday, we had a meeting after the evening

service. The previous Sunday we had a meeting after the communion service in the church. They consist in discussion, Bible reading and prayer; often a great number of questions are asked, which I endeavour to answer by a Scripture passage, in order to make them feel that I speak, not of myself, but that the Word of God is my authority. They express their appreciation in very strange ways. A dear old man said to me the other night, "Thank you very much for your interest in me and your explanations, I feel like saying a prayer for you."

"As far as the radio ministry is concerned, I do not know how many people we reach. Contrarily to what we did last year, I have my broadcasts from the studio, twenty minutes in the morning and fifteen at night. Thus, I can be much more at ease; I can make myself right at home. In a way, I am glad that television is not yet in general use, for when I preach in the studio, where it is very warm, I take off my coat, and for the last two Sundays I took off my collar and tie and went right to it. Two weeks ago I had my first funeral service in French."

Our hearts rejoice in this great work. Let us pray that the increase of the Lord may be given to it. We have often wondered why the French Roman Catholic hierarchy in Quebec exhibits such anxiety over the threatened inroads of Communism into its flock, while it treats Protestantism with light disdain. The church's attitude in this matter is to be explained, in part at least, by the fact that it knows which enemy is the more active. We may be sure that there will be much opposition to preaching the Gospel in French to Roman Catholics, but we may rest assured that it is still the power of God unto salvation.

### FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE

Miss Leila Boyd, a graduate of this last year, is now in Sudbury assisting her brother in the work of the Church there. She writes:

"Visitation forms the chief part of my work here. The new venture of hiring buses to run into sections of the city where no work is being carried on necessitated the canvassing of these districts. Experience at Jarvis Street Sunday School was a good preparation for this arduous task, but some conditions peculiar to the North made it almost new work to me. It is some time before one learns how to make a worth-while contact when one must speak through an interpreter, frequently one of the children of the house, concerning things of which the child has no former knowledge. This one must often do in order to obtain permission to enroll the child.

"Other contacts are made and visited regularly. The seed is thus sown, where one cannot expect any immediate results in connection with the public services, but in this way many are reached who would otherwise know nothing of the way of life.

"Perhaps the most difficult and yet the neediest part of my work is the opportunity of saying a few words and quoting a few verses in French at the open-air meeting. How I wish that the burden of so many souls was more heavily upon my own heart and upon the hearts of those yet in the Seminary that there might be men who would fit themselves to preach the Gospel in French!"

### EMMANUEL CHURCH, VERDUN

Mr. John Paterson who is student-pastor of the Verdun Church for the summer months gives the following report of the work there:

"The people at Emmanuel Church, Verdun, are all anxious that men and women, boys and girls should ac-

cept Jesus Christ as personal Saviour. The prayer meetings which have been carried on right through the summer months show that, for they have been well attended by young and old. The Church services and Bible school have continued well with an average attendance of fifty—more than some of the larger churches in the city which join together for Union Services. There are young people in the congregation who manifest that they are being moved by the preaching of the Word. We are praying much for them."

In addition to this splendid report from a live church, Mr. Paterson also had the privilege of preaching at several different points in the Prairie provinces, while visiting his brother there.

### THE HOME GUARD

"While other soldiers of the Cross have been fighting its battles in other fields, the 'Toronto Home Guard' has been carrying on important functions here in the city. Not the least of these is the weekly Tuesday night meeting at Yonge Street Mission. The congregation at the Mission usually number from twenty to forty on week-nights, and we feel that an important witness is being exercised here."

### A FINE EXAMPLE

Early this month we received a letter from the Pastor of a Baptist church in Michigan. A cheque for \$25.00, as a contribution to the Seminary, was enclosed. This, coming from a church and pastor beyond the bounds of our own Convention, is greatly appreciated. There are other churches in the United States that contribute to the Seminary, and we are most grateful for the help these brethren afford.

We publish this letter in the hope that it may induce others to do likewise:

August 2, 1937.

"Rev. T. T. Shields, D.D.,  
Jarvis Street Baptist Church,  
Toronto, Canada.

"My dear brother:

"For some considerable time I have longed to have this Church do a little to help along the work of the Seminary, but not until last week was I able to get away to bring it to pass. Here it is at last, just a small amount.

"I have attended two of your convention meetings, one with McGinlay in London while you were in England, and the other last fall at Jarvis Street. At these meetings I noted the calibre of the young men who are trained at your Seminary and I have been more than delighted with their knowledge of the Word, and their ability to preach the same.

"I am happy to know that you are back to your great work again. Thanks be to God for your recovery for which I daily prayed. I shall now pray that you may be kept in the best of health to carry on for years according to His will.

"I still enjoy THE GOSPEL WITNESS. After all my work was done last night I read your sermon on "The Blood-Token". Your sermons are a great help to me. I wish now I could have heard you preach thirty years ago.

"I have several volumes of Spurgeon's Sermons on my shelves. Last week I read two of his on the same text from Exodus twelve. They are great.

"Much love to you and yours. Please give my greeting to Deacon and Brother Hyde whom I dearly love. He was more than kind to me last fall while attending the convention.

"Yours cordially,

"Signed \_\_\_\_\_"

## Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 1 3rd Quarter Lesson 36 September 5th, 1937

OLIVE L. CLARK, Ph.D. (Tor.)

### THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Lesson Text: Luke 10.

**Golden Text:** "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself."  
—Luke 10:27.

#### I. The Seventy Messengers Sent Forth—verses 1-16.

Since the harvest was great, and the labourers few, Christ sent forth seventy messengers, in addition to the twelve disciples (Chapter 9:1-6); to prepare the hearts of the people for His personal visit to each place. The instructions given to the seventy suggest practical hints for spreading the Gospel message in our own day.

1. The need of the people is great (verse 2).
2. The Lord must send the messengers (Rom. 10:15).
3. House-to-house evangelism is effective.
4. For mutual support, and for a stronger testimony, two can work together to advantage.
5. Opposition is to be expected.
6. They were exhorted to go in confidence, just as they were assured that the Lord would provide.
7. The seventy were told not to salute people on the road, since the Eastern salutations were long, and time must not be wasted in idle ceremonies. They were to go as men bound on a solemn mission.
8. The message will not be without efficacy. Those ready to receive it will have blessing; those not ready will find that the solemn proclamation and the ambassador's symbolic act of shaking the dust from his shoes, will be a testimony against them.
9. Neither message nor messenger can be slighted without dangerous consequences (verse 16).

As warning to other cities not to be inhospitable to the truth, Christ pronounced judgment against some of those whose period of probation was past—Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum (see Matt. 11:20-24).

Chorazin, a town about 12 miles from Capernaum, is not mentioned by name in connection with our Lord's ministry. We know that Bethsaida, the city of Philip, had witnessed the healing of the blind man (Mark 8:22-26), and the feeding of the five thousand (Luke 9:10-17). Christ had made Capernaum His home after leaving Nazareth, calling it His "own city" (Matt. 9:1). Capernaum was thus the centre of His rich ministry in Galilee. Exalted to the heights by Divine favour, it would suffer the deepest humiliation.

#### II. The Seventy Messengers Encouraged—verses 17-24.

The harvest, the time of reaping, is always a time of joy (Isa. 9:3; Psa. 126:5, 6; 1 Thess. 2:19). While the messengers rejoiced that the demons were suffering defeat, Christ rejoiced that their chieftain, Satan, would be overthrown (Isa. 14:12-19; Rev. 12:8, 9). His fall would resemble the lightning in the suddenness with which its dazzling brilliance is extinguished. Even serpents and scorpions, agents which Satan might use to hurt the Lord's messengers, would be subject unto them. Yet their chief source of rejoicing, and the ground of their hope and assurance, must ever be their personal salvation. To be used of God gives no ground for boasting (1 Cor. 1:26-31; Gal. 6:14); by His grace we are privileged to give the message of salvation to others.

As the seventy rejoiced, so also did their Master. These matters had been committed, not to men of earthly wisdom, but to simple fishermen, whose hearts had been touched. They were the instruments to be used in His mighty work. While the Son alone could know the Father in His perfection, God had decreed that He and His Son should be revealed to those of child-like faith (Matt. 18:3). Someone has said: "To pride of knowledge, blindness is the answer; to that simplicity of heart which wishes truth, revelation". To know Him is to have eternal life (John 17:3).

The disciples seem not to have appreciated fully the privilege which was theirs of beholding the wonders of the grace of God in Christ (verses 23, 24).

#### III. The Good Samaritan—verses 25-37.

The lawyer who wished to test the Master (Matt. 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-34), proud of his own wisdom and attainments, evidently thought of salvation as an inheritance to be won by good deeds. Yet, the first great commandment, and the second, like unto it, together summarize the teaching of the law that the way of life is the way of love, love to God, and love to man. The heart, in Scripture, represents the whole inner personality (Prov. 4:23); the soul, the powers of feeling; the strength indicates the might, or will, the mind, the intellectual powers. If the lawyer should love God with his whole heart, soul, strength and mind, and his neighbour as himself, he would surely be saved.

One would expect that an acknowledgment of this high and holy standard of life would bring about a feeling of self-condemnation; that he would have asked how such love is to be obtained. He did not abhor himself (Job 42:6), but desired to justify himself, excusing himself for not obeying the law by discussing a technical question, defining the word "neighbour". Christ gave a parable condemning all self-righteous ones who say, but do not (Matt. 23:3), and justifying those who obey the spirit of the law, though they may be ignorant of its letter.

The priest was utterly indifferent, not sufficiently interested to find out whether the wounded man was dead or alive. The Levite was knowingly cruel, seeing the need, yet refusing to help. The Samaritans were a part-Gentile people, separated from the Jews by a great national hatred (John 4:9). The Jewish leaders would not think of showing a neighbourly spirit to the Samaritans; still less would they give them credit for a display of kindness. The Samaritan was journeying, and might have been excused on that ground, but he went immediately to the wounded man, using his own supplies of oil and the wine, the grape juice which every traveller in the East carried, and which was in general use because of the scarcity of pure water. The money left with the host amounted to about 30 cents according to our reckoning, a sufficient provision in those days.

The parable of the good Samaritan does not teach that one can be saved by performing deeds of kindness; only "the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man" (Titus 3:4, 5) can avail. It illustrates the Gospel, however, and teachers may use it to point out the ravages of sin, robbing man of all that is worth while, wounding him, and leaving him helpless; the failure of law or ceremony to rescue; the compassion of Christ Who came where we were, stooped down, saved us, put us in His own place, heals our every wound, and provides for our needs.

#### IV. Martha and Mary—verses 38-42.

Martha, Mary and Lazarus lived in the village of Bethany (John 11:1), which is about five miles from Jerusalem, but much farther from Galilee, the scene of the evangelistic tour recorded in these chapters. It may be that the incident occurred during a short visit to Jerusalem which Christ seems to have made at about this time (John 10:22). The two sisters, both beloved by Christ (John 11:5), but contrasted in character, form an interesting study.

Martha, as hostess, received Christ into her home, but did not display the same considerate regard for His wishes as did her sister. "I seek not yours, but you" (2 Cor. 12:14), depicts the attitude of Paul, and also of Paul's Master. Mary had evidently performed her share of the household duties, then also sat at Jesus' feet to listen and to learn of Him (Matt. 11:29).

Martha was distracted, her energies dissipated by "much serving", a true indication that her activity was not under the direction of her Lord. In her nervous excitement and irritability, she forgot the courtesy due to Christ as friend and guest, and began to reproach Him for Mary's seeming lack of sympathy. Jesus loved her; He was sorry to see her burdened, and repeating her name tenderly, showed her that her distress was unnecessary, and displeasing to Him (Phil. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:7).

"Thou art anxious and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful." To serve Christ was not as essential as to be served by Him. Mary had chosen the "good part", the place of honour at the feast, which was hers at that time, and which is still ascribed to her as we read the account of her humble devotion. She received Him, and also sat at His feet. Those who yield Him honour as guest, find their position in relation to Him reversed. He becomes the host, and honours as guest the one who has received Him.