

# The Gospel Witness

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

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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"MY JOY"—WHAT WAS IT?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, December 5th, 1937

(Stenographically Reported)

"And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

"For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God."—Luke 22:15,16.

### Prayer before the Sermon

O Lord our God, there is but one Name by the merit of which we may dare to come where Thou art. We thank Thee that ever it was said, Thou shall call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins. We thank Thee, O Lord, for an High Priest Who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, Who understands all our human nature, Who enters into sympathetic relation to us in everything save our sin—and comes to save us from our sin. Oh that we all may be saved therefrom to-night! We bless Thee for the truth that the blood of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, cleanseth us from all sin.

We invoke Thine aid this evening, for we cannot understand the things of God unless Thou shalt interpret them to us. We have no capacity for their reception unless and until Thou dost open our hearts, as Thou didst open the heart of Lydia, that we may attend unto the things that thou wouldst say unto us. Come to us this evening, O Spirit of grace and truth. Lead such as do not know Thee to receive Thy salvation; and may those of us who are called Thy children be brought at least a little nearer to Thee. Help us that we may see the Lord Jesus in such a way that we may love Him better than we have ever loved Him before, that henceforth we may be led to do His commandments, and be more wholly given up to His holy service.

We thank Thee for the privilege that is to be ours a little later in the evening, when we shall gather about Thy table, and once again remember Thy love for us. O that our hearts may be knit to Thee, that there may well up within us a spring of gratitude, thus the love of Christ shall for ever constrain us. Lord, we are very poor and needy. We have no strength, no wisdom of our own. We can do nothing at all unless Thou dost help us. So help us to-night. Help Thy servant to preach, and help the people to hear; and may this occasion minister to the spiritual upbuilding of everyone before Thee, and somewhat at least to Thy greater glory among men. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

I suppose I may assume that most of us here this evening know historically the significance of the passover

feast. When the Lord was about to deliver His people from Egypt, and His final visitation upon the rebellious Egyptians was due, when the firstborn of all in the land of Egypt were to be slain, the people were admonished to take a lamb from the flock, of the first year, and without blemish. They were to take a lamb for each family. The father was to gather his family under the shelter of his own roof; the lamb was to be slain, and the blood to be caught in a vessel, and with a bunch of hyssop the father was to sprinkle the blood upon the doorposts and the lintel of the house in which they dwelt—and none of them were to go out of the house until the morning. The Lord said that that night He would pass through the land; He would come with sword unsheathed. It was to be a night of terrible judgment, but He said, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." That night there was a great cry in the land of Egypt as the stroke of judgment fell, but among the people of God, sheltered behind and beneath the blood, there was only salvation.

That night they were enjoined to eat the Passover: "And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire . . . and thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord's passover." The king of Egypt thrust them forth at last, yielding to the divine pressure; and they went out, saved through the blood. Thenceforth the people of God were enjoined to keep annually the feast of unleavened bread, which was called the Passover, they were to keep in everlasting remembrance the great miracle of deliverance which God had wrought for them.

But "they kept not the covenant of God and refused to walk in His law; and forgot His works and His wonders that He had showed them." And as surely as "their heart was not right with Him, neither were they steadfast in His covenant," they ceased to observe the Passover. That command was one which, in the subsequent history of Israel, was more honoured in the breach than in its observance; and whenever God visited His people with reviving grace, one of the marks of that revival was their observance of the Passover: When the book of the law was found in the house of God, where it had been buried many years, in the days of good king Josiah, "the king commanded all the people, saying: Keep the Passover unto the Lord your God, as it is written in the book of this covenant. Surely there was not holden such a Passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah."

Then He came Who was the Lamb of God "slain from the foundation of the world." Through the days of His flesh, He fulfilled to the minutest particular the prophecies relating to that earthly ministry, to that divine parenthesis stretching from Bethlehem to Calvary; and now that the time of the feast of unleavened bread called the Passover was come, and the time was come when the Passover must be killed, He sent two of His disciples to make ready the Passover—I have read to you the story this evening. When He came to the guest-chamber, that upper room was furnished, and he sat down with the twelve, He opened His heart to them and said: "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer."

It is a very strong word employed here, translated, "With desire have I desired." It represents an eager, almost insatiable passion, something stronger than hunger or thirst. He said to His disciples: "With a passionate longing, I have come to this hour." To this last hour He did not come with reluctant feet. He needed no exhortation to observe the Passover. He welcomed the striking of the hour. Through the long centuries He had waited. He was longing for "the fulness of time" to come. At last His hour was about to strike, and He said in effect to His disciples: "I can scarcely tell you how my eager soul has longed for this hour. I wanted to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."

That is the subject of our discussion this evening, Why that eagerness? How shall we interpret that outburst of His passionate soul? Why was He so anxious, moved almost with a holy impatience, an inexpressible longing? What was to be accomplished?—for He added, in effect: "This is the last Passover feast I shall observe with you, the next time we will eat it together in the kingdom of God."

It is significant that He said: "I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God; until the Passover, with all that it symbolizes and promises, completely be fulfilled." It was for the complete fulfilment of that which the Passover prefigured that He longed.

How I wish I could be sure that all of us this evening who come to this Memorial Feast will come in a like spirit, hungry for it, eager for it, desiring with a passionate desire to remember Him.

### I.

Let me say to you that HIS DESIRE WAS NOT A MORBID INTEREST IN THE THING ITSELF. We have read of people who morbidly take delight in seeking a kind of martyr-

dom; as, for example, devotees of pagan systems, who find pleasure in self-inflicted pain, persuading themselves that they are thereby laying up for themselves a store of merit. I am sure that our Lord had no such pleasure in this Passover feast. To Him, this world must have been a world of wickedness, a world of gross darkness. The world, to His holy nature, was like some vast lazaretto, the very soil of it was cursed and corrupted. All its springs were polluted. Its very atmosphere was morally putrid to His holy sensibilities. His very coming into this world must have inflicted excruciating torment upon His sensitive soul, even before He came to Gethsemane or the Cross.

Jesus Christ had no pleasure in the cross. To Him, it was a thing accursed; it was representative of that to which His whole nature was opposed, even the sin that was so hateful to the holy nature of God.

Nor had He any pleasure in the suffering that the cross entailed, the physical agony, and the deeper soul-torture which became His as He yielded Himself to crucifixion. There was nothing of sweetness in that awful cup which He was about to put to His lips, the wine of the wrath of God which was poured out without mixture, into the cup of His indignation. He was not eager to drink that.

Why, then, did He come so eagerly to this Passover feast? The Scripture tells us that He "endured the cross," He endured it as no one could have endured it unless humanity had been joined with Deity—but He endured. As for the shame of it: He "despised" it; He rose above it; He trod it beneath His feet. But why did He die? Why did He want to die? Why did He welcome the hour when He should lay down His life? It was "for the joy that was set before Him." The cross and its agony were but parenthetical in His view. He looked beyond them, to all that was to be accomplished by His death; and for the indescribable, inexpressible, ineffable joy that was set before Him, "He endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Not the bitterness of the cup, but the sweetness of its issue attracted Him; not the shame and sorrow, but the glory that was to follow. It was upon that His heart was set as He came to His disciples, this "Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," saying: "I am happy to be here. It is the hour I have anticipated from all eternity—and all this is to be fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

What was that joy? Whatever that joy was, is to be the subject of our enquiry. It was that joy that made our Beloved like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bethel. What was that joy that was inseparable from the cross, and for which the cross was endured, and the shame despised?

### II.

It was first of all, I am sure, THE JOYFUL ANTICIPATION OF THAT POSITION OF AUTHORITY TO WHICH HIS CROSS AND PASSION WOULD EXALT HIM, WHICH WOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO GIVE ETERNAL LIFE TO AS MANY AS THE FATHER HAD GIVEN HIM. He longed to get the work done so that He would have it within His authority to say to all the sons of man: "Thy sins which are many are all forgiven." That was His supreme desire, to enrich this human world, to lavish upon the objects of His affection, not only the love of His heart, but that wealth and power which were to be the expression of His love.

I imagine a father whose love is centred upon his home. Above everything else in life, he loves his wife and chil-

dren. Sometimes he dreams of having ability to do all that he would like to do for them. He cannot do much, but he wishes he could do more. He would like to make them all rich and happy. There is no limit to his desire in respect to them. So he looks forward to a day—perhaps it is the Christmas season—and surreptitiously he sets aside a little of his income, so that he shall not diminish the regular household supplies to such an extent that it will become noticeable, and for months he saves a little. By and by he puts into that amount his last contribution. He had set before him a certain object, saying: "I am going to buy some things for them as soon as I get the money." Now at last he has it. To him, it is representative of hours, days, weeks of hard labour; but it is very precious to him.

At last I see him stealing away from the house—he is going shopping, he is going to spend what he has saved up. He says: "Now at last I am able to do it." I can see how eagerly he makes his way to the place where he is to count down the money acquired at such expense to himself. When at last he stands where these coveted treasures are which he is going to possess for himself, that he may give them to someone else, I think as he pays down the money, and the articles become his, he says to himself: "This is one of the happiest hours of my life. Now I shall be able to show them how much I love them."

It was something like that, but in a divine degree, that our Lord experienced. This sinful world had impoverished itself, it had utterly forfeited the favour of God. Those who should have been princes were paupers. They had no title to light or life. But He must needs come and be made under the law, and do our day's work for us, fulfilling all the requirements of the law. He said: "I want them to wear a robe of righteousness"—I spoke to you about that last Sunday evening—"but I shall have to work for them. I shall have to earn it for them. I shall have to keep the law, and work out a perfect righteousness." Now His day's work is done, and He has a righteousness that He is able to impute—shall I say it?—to a ruined, ragged world. "I will give them all new clothes, so that they can go to heaven in them. I will give them all new natures, so that they will be able to behave like princes when I put my princely robes upon them. I am going to obliterate all stain of their sin."

In but an hour or so He will do it. Do you wonder that He said to His disciples: "I am so glad of this hour." He had said at the beginning of His ministry: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor"—oh so poor! He did not mean to people who were without bread and butter: He meant that we were all poor. He came as a Messenger from heaven to preach good tidings "to the poor . . . to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." And in our text, He is saying to His disciples: "I am now ready to sound the trumpet. My work will soon be done. With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer, that all its implications might be fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

There is a story in the fifteenth chapter of this Gospel, of a father who was very rich—and when he had divided unto his sons his living, though one took the portion that fell to him and went into the far country, the father seemed to be no poorer. He was so rich! Yet the story suggests that the father did not find any pleasure in his

riches. He did not find any pleasure in his home, save as he contemplated the day when he would lavish it all upon one who now was far away from him. I think there is all that in the text. "Soon", said the Lord Jesus, "as Joseph opened all the storehouses, I will open the gates of the storehouse of infinite grace, and lavish it all upon a sin-cursed race." It was the joy of giving that inspired Him.

### III.

I think there was THE JOY, TOO, OF RECEIVING, THE JOY OF AN ANTICIPATED REUNION. I wonder why He waited so long after the tragedy of the garden? I wonder why He did not come quickly, there and then? I rather think that Eve thought He intended to come soon, for after Abel's death, when Seth was born, she called him Seth, which means, "Appointed", saying, "God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew."

And what was heaven then? He had been there. He made not a few appearances in the Old Testament time. But in His pre-incarnate state, He dwelt with the Father, and He knew the shadow which sin—if I may without irreverence say it—had cast upon the glory of Heaven. He knew that human sin had marred the joys of Heaven. You ask me for proof? If the angels rejoice over one sinner repenting, I am sure they must sorrow when men sin. The father's house mourned, for a place at the table was empty, while a member of the family was away from home; and I can imagine that that father, when the wild wind moaned about the house, and he heard the storm without, must have often said: "I wonder where he is? I wish he were home, within my own house. He would be safe here. But he is away from home. I can never be happy until he comes back."

How many a son has broken the heart of his father and his mother! How many a daughter has brought sorrow to the home! But it is nothing to the sorrow we all inflicted upon the heart of God. His prodigal world had journeyed to a far country. But now in our text, Jesus Christ is saying: "They will be coming home now soon. I know they are coming home. The hour is about to strike, when I shall pay the last farthing, the price of their redemption. Then they will come back."

Years ago, when I had not been long Pastor of this church, I received a letter from a man, not a member of the church. He told me he was in regular attendance upon the services, and said: "My wife and children are in England, and I am anxious to bring them out. I am employed, and I receive a certain weekly wage, and for some time now—ever since I came myself—I have been setting aside a portion of my wages, saving up to pay their fares out to Canada. The ships are crowded"—it was in the days when thousands were coming to Canada—"and by next spring or early summer, I shall have enough money saved to pay their fares, but by that time the ships will all be so crowded that I shall not be able to get them over, even though I have the money. The steamship company tells me that the only way by which I can ensure their coming is to buy their tickets three or four months in advance. I am sorry to ask you, but can you help me? I know I shall have the money when it is time for them to come, but that will be too late. I am writing to ask if you could lend me the money, so that I can book their passages and pay the money down. I promise faithfully that I will repay it by such-and-such a time", naming a certain date.

I did not know him, and in any case it was rather a large order coming from a stranger, to pay the passage

of a whole family from England to Canada. The fact is, I had not the money. But I sent for him, and when he came I identified him at once. He used to sit up in the gallery to my left. I had often seen him, and I recognized him as a regular attendant. I told him I should like to do it, but I was sorry that I had not the resources that would allow me to do so. I said: "I hope you will not be offended with me", and he said he would not. But I was rather afraid that I should not see him again. But the next Sunday morning he came in that door, walked down the aisle, took his place as usual. I looked at him—he had attracted by attention before. I thought he was one of the saddest men I had ever seen. He had a strong face, but he seemed sad and lonely. Sunday after Sunday he came, and his face haunted me. Often at night I could see him sitting in the gallery. He looked as though there was nothing in life worth living for.

After a month or so had passed, he wrote me again and said, "I have saved up a little more. I shall not need quite as much now. I wonder, sir, could you possibly lend me that money? I am so lonely. I so long to have my wife and family with me. If I do not get the money now, I shall have to wait another year." As that sorrowful face came before me with the letter, I said to myself, I cannot stand it any longer. I must get that money somewhere—and I got it. I wrote to him enclosing the amount for which he asked. He had said he would repay it on a certain day: I did not expect him to do so. I had had many promises like that, few of which had ever been redeemed. I knew there was no wisdom in my doing it unless I was prepared to lose the money; but I felt that if I could take the sadness from that face it would be worth losing the money. However, I sent a note with the cheque, in conformity with his suggestion that the amount should be repaid at a certain date; though prepared to lose it. Time passed, and when the date for repayment came, I had forgotten it. But the first mail in the morning brought a letter. I opened it, and the man had repaid the loan in full, to the last cent.

As the man came to church Sunday by Sunday, he looked a little more hopeful; and I shall never forget the Sunday morning, when I saw that man come in through the door, and with him his wife, and four or five children. He brought them down the aisle, his wife preceded him into the seat, then the children one after another, and he sat at the end of the seat. I looked up at him and caught his eye, and he caught mine. All the sadness was gone; he had his loved ones with him again. His whole aspect reminded me of the passage in the Song of Songs: "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away."

That is what my text means. The Lord Jesus said in effect, "I am so lonely, and heaven has been so sad—the sin and sorrow of earth have all but eclipsed the glory of heaven. I joyfully welcome the hour in the fulness of time when I shall pay the price necessary to bring all my loved ones home to my Father's house. I will not

drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come." Our glorious Lord anticipated the completeness of Heaven's joy, the completion of the whole household of faith, of the household of God. He said, "Soon I shall have them all home and heaven will be heaven again." No wonder they "began to be merry" when the prodigal came home.

#### IV.

I must say this further word before I close: *He anticipated the Joy of Completion*: "He sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover WITH YOU." You remember how, when He expounded the spiritual character of His mission, the multitude melted away until there were only twelve left; and He said, "Will ye also go away?" And Peter said, "No! No! To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." Those disciples who came with him—you remember around the throne there were the elders. They were representative of all the others, I fancy, the multitude which no man could number. Just about this time He said to His Father, "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

As I thought of that this afternoon, I wondered where I could find an illustration of that principle, and I found one that was so intensely personal that I wondered if I dared use it. Then I reflected that I do not often intrude personal matters upon my hearers, and that perhaps they would forgive me. I was blessed with a godly father and mother, and from my earliest recollection I heard my father pray daily that his might be an unbroken family in heaven. He went home to God when still in his prime. My mother survived him many years, and then she came to the time of departure. She seemed to leave us before she had actually gone. The doctor said to me, "You know, she is here as to her body, but really your mother is away already." Some hours passed, as I recall, and there was no recognition. Then all her children were standing about her bed, but it seemed as though she would never recognize us again on earth. But unexpectedly she opened her eyes and all the brightness came back, and she looked about and viewed each of her children, one by one. Then, with a smile, she said, "Just as I have always prayed it might be." Then the lucid moments ended, she lapsed into unconsciousness, and very soon she had gone "to be with Christ, which is far better". I think she meant that as she and my father had prayed for an unbroken family, she saw them all, knowing they were all Christians, smiled her good-bye, and went away to heaven.

Jesus Christ said, "I have desired to eat this passover WITH YOU before I suffer, and you are all here"—"A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father." That hour, I think, was to Him prophetic of the day when we shall all meet, washed in the blood, saved for ever in the Father's house.

Then He said to His disciples, "Now I will leave you a memorial feast—not the Passover feast; that is fulfilled. This is my body: this is my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's

death till he come. Then we shall all be together, an unbroken family in the Father's house."

I wonder will any of us be left out? I wonder is there anybody here who is not ready? Rutherford said of a place where he had preached (in Mrs. Cousin's words):

"The little birds of Anwoth  
I used to count them blest—  
Now, beside happier altars  
I go to build my nest:  
O'er these there broods no silence,  
No graves around them stand,  
For glory, deathless, dwelleth  
In Immanuel's land.

"Fair Anwoth by the Solway,  
To me thou still art dear!  
E'en from the verge of Heaven  
I drop for thee a tear.  
Oh! if one soul from Anwoth  
Meet me at God's right hand,  
My Heaven will be two Heavens,  
In Immanuel's land."

I love this place. I love every stone in this building, and every pew in it, every inch of carpet—even that which is worn through these twenty-seven years, literally by the feet of from two to three millions of people; and I am positive that some souls from Jarvis Street will meet me at God's right hand. I wonder are there any here—some of you to whom I have preached for years and years, and yet who have made no profession? I do not know whether you are saved or not, for you have never told me. If I could paraphrase it, I would say of Jarvis Street Church, Toronto—

"To me thou still art dear!  
E'en from the verge of heaven  
I drop for thee a tear.  
Oh! if one soul from Jarvis Street  
Meet me at God's right hand,  
My Heaven will be two Heavens,  
In Immanuel's land."

Will you not come? I wish I could woo you to Christ. I would do anything to bring you to Christ. Will you not come and receive Him as your Saviour, that you may become a member of the household of faith, an heir of glory, ready to become an occupant of one of the many mansions in the Father's house? Will you all join me as we pray together?

O Lord, we are all sinners. We do not deserve to be heirs of glory. We have not merited a place in the many mansions, and we deserve nothing but to be lost waifs in this poor world. But, Thou Good Shepherd, Thou dost seek and save Thy lost sheep.

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,  
Whom we, that have not seen Thy face  
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,  
Believing where we cannot prove:—

Thou has come to seek the Father's children. Oh help us to come! May those of us who are Thy children come to Thy table with a new gladness in our hearts. And forbid that there should be any present—as there was one among the twelve—without part nor lot in this matter. Save us all with Thy great salvation; have mercy upon us all, for Thy great name's sake, Amen.

### BAPTIST CONFERENCE AT PARIS, 1937

With the memories of our recent Convention still fresh in mind, readers of this page will find special interest in the following account of a similar gathering of delegates from Baptist Churches of like faith and order, held in Paris, France. The report of the Convention of the Evangelical Association of French-speaking Baptist Churches appeared

in the October number of the monthly organ of that body, "Le Lien Fraternel", from which we have translated a few paragraphs in the hope that they will serve to give our readers something of the spirit that animates the work of our French brethren. A "professeur de collège," Monsieur Marcel Guy, secretary of the Convention and a very able lay preacher, is the author of the report from which the following excerpts are translated:

"We met for the opening meeting in the comfortable hall of the Y.M.C.A. of Paris, Thursday evening, September 23rd. The convention was opened with prayer by Pastor Dubarry, who presided, and warm words of greeting were pronounced in the name of the Rue de Naples Church by its pastor, our brother Monsieur Georges Guyot. Then, in accordance with our custom, a representative of each of our fields of labour brought some brief message of cheer from his church, some recent experience, some encouraging testimony of blessing, even in trials perhaps, some word of plans for future action.

"At half past nine each morning, delegates, visitors and members of our churches in Paris gathered for prayer. These meetings were opened by short scripture lessons followed by suggestive exhortations given by Pastors Mafille, Seignol and Dubarry, who brought the great subjects of thanksgiving, humiliation and assurance before our minds, showing that supplication and thanksgiving spring from the same source."

During the two morning sessions and part of an afternoon devoted to business it was reported that forty-four delegates representing fourteen churches had registered at the convention. Pastor Dubarry presented the report of the "Commission administrative" (the Board), pointing out the splendid progress made by the churches since the last convention, and stating that "the income from the churches of the association continued to increase as did the average individual contributions of members of the churches, an increase that is all the more significant when the relatively modest income of most of the church members is kept in mind."

A letter was also read from the church at Bienne (Switzerland) asking to be admitted to the fellowship of the Association. Mr. Dubarry gave a short outline of the history of this work, which is full of promise for the future. Already the church has some thirty members, several of whom come from the churches at Curt, Tramelan and Paris (Rue de Naples). After several other brethren who knew the work personally had spoken, the conference heartily welcomed this young church into its fellowship.

One of the times of greatest blessing of the whole conference, says the author of our report, was the address of the President, Pastor Dubarry. We give the paragraph reporting this: "Mr. Dubarry recounted the history of our movement from the beginning, down to the events leading to the formation of the 'Association Evangélique des Eglises Baptistes de Langue Française'. It was not without profound emotion that we heard certain of the events of that history, poignantly dramatic in some particulars, but ever encouraging to those who see the hand of our God in it all. Without boasting, but certainly not without thankfulness, we say in the words of the Psalmist, 'Thou hast done great things for us, whereof we are glad.' Mr. Dubarry concluded his address by emphasizing the need of all applying themselves with one heart and soul to know the mind of God with respect to the church and its growth, the work of the Holy Spirit, final things, Satan, and the great end of Christian service."

Two visitors from foreign lands took part in the sessions of the conference. One of them, an Italian Baptist pastor, told of his conversion while a boxer and of subsequent experiences in the work of the Lord. The other visitor was from London, England, and represented the work of the Bible Society. Various pastors gave messages on the general theme of the conference "One in Christ". The account of the Convention concludes with these words: "The conference of 1937 is past. Like the preceding ones it will count in the history of our movement. At a time when the great Protestant communities are attempting to present to the world the spectacle of a unity that is theoretic and external, it was not without interest to hear our churches reaffirm their common adherence to the fundamental doctrines which alone can furnish the foundation of a true unity.

"Let us then express our gratitude to our God Who is the Giver of every good and perfect gift which cometh down from above. To Him be glory in the church, and in our churches!"

## NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

## A Northern Fellowship of Churches

Three days of special meetings marked the celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of the First Baptist Church of Timmins, Ontario. Through the generosity of the Timmins Church an invitation was extended to the pastors of the Regular Baptist Churches in the North to be present for the three days of fellowship meetings, and the following were able to be present: Pastor G. B. Hicks, Geraldton; Rev. R. E. J. Brackstone, Kapuskasing; Rev. S. Wellington, Noranda; Pastor C. S. McGrath, Val D'Or; Pastor J. B. Cunningham, Kirkland Lake. Some people are very hasty in the use of superlatives in describing conference meetings, but it was the common testimony of all present that these were the best meetings that they had ever attended. The Lord was manifestly in our midst in mighty power, and He spoke clearly to our souls. We do not hesitate to say that during these days God visited us with a mighty Holy Spirit revival. Each session in the three-day programme was better than the last.

These meetings were most deeply appreciated by us who are labouring in new fields for the Lord in this vast northland. During the last few weeks we have experienced something of the persecution which accompanies the founding of New Testament Churches; but during these days of blessings we encouraged ourselves in the Lord our God, and have now entered into the Lord's work with renewed strength.

The morning session each day was devoted to prayer unto God. What times they were! There was much prayer not only among us who are preachers, but also among those who came out morning by morning to seek the face of the Lord. There is no doubt but that it was these times of prayer which brought down the blessing from the Lord our God.

The speaker on Tuesday afternoon was Rev. S. Wellington of Noranda, and he brought a very thoughtful and searching message from Rom. 1:17. Rev. R. Brackstone addressed the large congregation on Tuesday evening, and spoke very forcibly on the call of Christ to the four fishermen on the Sea of Galilee as it is recorded in Mark 1:16-20.

The evening session on Wednesday was devoted to Home Missions, and the different brethren brought brief reports of the work which they are carrying on for God. It was a thrilling story. God is richly blessing the preaching of His Word in this Northland, and already many souls have been saved. What persecution has come has served to the strengthening of the children of God, and many have been made bold for Christ thereby. But there are problems to be solved, and we who labour here solicit the prayers of all God's people.

On Thursday afternoon there was a Round Table Conference for ministers and workers. At it we discussed the formation of a Northern Fellowship of Churches, and it was decided that such had been the blessing of God this year that it would be beneficial to our churches to make the gathering an annual event.

There was also much discussion regarding the furthering of the work in the North. For those of you who live in the settled parts of Southern Ontario let me say that this Northland is a rapidly developing country, and on every hand new communities are springing up, and townsites are being opened. One never knows just how large these will be, but there is a possibility that some of them will grow to good sized towns. We must enter upon these fields on the ground floor, as it were. We as Regular Baptists must also expand in this rapidly expanding country. Some very valuable suggestions were offered, and the results of these will be reported upon from time to time as the Lord blesses our labours.

Thursday evening was the special anniversary session. There were at least 250 served at the anniversary supper, and after it was over several speakers recounted something of the history of the Timmins Church. It was a time of praise unto the Lord for what He had done, and it was especially encouraging for those of us who are seeking to do now what was started in Timmins fifteen years ago. God

has blessed His people in Timmins with some remarkable conversions. There was scarcely a speaker who did not say that the blessing which had come to them was due to the fact that they had always been a praying people. God also has blessed them with mighty men as pastors. Under Rev. M. Hall a good foundation was laid, and under the present pastor, Rev. H. C. Slade, a good superstructure has been built to the glory of God.

The main speaker of the public meeting on Thursday evening was Pastor C. S. McGrath of Val D'Or, who was converted in the Timmins Church some thirteen years ago. We have heard many tell of their conversion, but none moved us as did Mr. McGrath. God spoke through him in mighty power, and we who listened said within our hearts, "The God Who did such a miracle of grace there is able to do the same thing over again in each of our fields." It was fitting that we should thus end our three days of conference, and in the days to come we are going to see much blessing come to this whole north country as a result of those days of waiting upon God. God is working mightily in our midst in the north. We are beginning to reap the harvest of the seed that has been sown. God is saving souls on many fields, and is building them up to be mighty men of God. We need your prayers; for though a "great door and effectual is opened unto us, there are many adversaries." But we do rejoice that our God is able.—J.B.C.

FINGAL AND SHEDDEN—*Rev. H. S. Buchner*. While reading of advances made in new areas of the North, we are glad to know that the older and well established churches in the Southern part of the province are not neglecting the King's business. We welcome this brief note from Rev. H. E. Buchner.

"On Sunday, December 5th, the Fingal and Shedden Churches united in an evening service at Shedden, at which some from each church were baptized. We had the joy of leading four from Shedden and one from Fingal to obey their Lord's command. These have been received into membership and we expect more to follow. The Fingal church recently sustained a great loss in the death of Mr. Fred Smith, an honoured Deacon and Sunday School Superintendent. We are experiencing the blessing of the Lord in our midst, and rejoice at the evidences of His presence and power."

THE FORMAL OPENING OF THE TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH, SARNIA—*Pastor H. MacBain*. The Sarnia Church is one of the newest ventures of the Union. It is largely the result of the tent campaign carried on by Pastor J. Watt and others last summer. The building mentioned below was moved from its former location in the country and put on a lot purchased in Sarnia.

Our little band of "faithfuls" in Sarnia had much cause for rejoicing with the formal opening of their new building, last Sunday. The attendances were exceptionally good and a fine spirit was present throughout all the services of the day. In the morning when the pastor preached there was an excellent congregation, in fact, the largest we have had at our morning service. At night all bounds were surpassed when over one hundred Sarnians as well as Courtright and Wilkesport folks about thirty-five strong, thronged the building, taxing it to its capacity. Pastor Jack Watt of Courtright preached at this service and the Holy Spirit's power was evident as he spoke. Some of his people brought inspiring messages in song. It was very fitting that Mr. Watt and the Courtright and Wilkesport people should be present as it was through the foresight and instigation of these two active churches and their busy pastor that this work was ever attempted in Sarnia.

Up until this time we had been meeting in the building, but numerous alterations were being made which rendered it a trifle inconvenient at times for services. However, in spite of that, we have been holding regular prayer services on Friday night, and Children's meetings on Monday, as well as the regular Sunday services. We have great reason to thank God for His abundant blessing, and although we have had a number of set-backs and discouragements yet our God has made us more than conquerors in them all to the glory of His name. We continue to pray that this work from the beginning may be a mighty testimony in the salvation of souls in this needy border city.

A GOOD "PINCH-HITTER". Several weeks ago we printed an appeal for a portable organ for use in the North. This week's mail brings in the following letter from the same

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## "THE PLOT THAT FAILED"

and

## "OTHER LITTLE SHIPS"

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## Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 1 4th Quarter Lesson 51 December 19th, 1937

### THE VISIT OF THE WISE MEN

Lesson Text: Matthew 2:1-15.

Golden Text: "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."—Matt. 2:2.

#### I. The Wise Men in Jerusalem—verses 1-8.

The place and time of the birth of Christ were Divinely ordained. Jerusalem, "the city of the great King," was not chosen to be honoured as the birth-place of the Messiah, but the humble village of Bethlehem. The Saviour came not to the city of commerce, learning and religion, but to the hamlet where men's hearts were prepared to receive Him. Revelations come not to those who are mighty in their own esteem, but to the lowly. Those who humble themselves will be exalted, while those who exalt themselves will be humbled (Luke 14:11).

God used the organization of the Roman Empire to bring about His designs. He providentially ordained that the Emperor Caesar Augustus should command a census to be taken throughout Palestine and the Empire, with a view to future taxation. Each person was to register in his ancestral town or city, and thus we find Mary in Bethlehem, and not in Jerusalem or Nazareth (Luke 2:1-5).

Christ was born in the days of Herod the King, tetrarch or native ruler of Galilee (Luke 3:1). The Incarnation was the pivotal event of all history. Every event and circumstance had been leading up to God's revelation of Himself. In the fulness of time, He sent forth His Son (Gal. 4:4).

The Word tells us little concerning the Magi from the East. They were evidently devout men of faith, for they believed without question the revelation which God had given them, and acted upon their faith, travelling to Jerusalem. They were men of prominence, for Herod took their message seriously.

History confirms the Word that there appeared at this time a star of unusual brilliance. It is significant that a heavenly light was chosen as the sign of the coming of the Light of the World (Isa. 9:2; 60:2; John 1:9; 9:5).

The wise men were actuated by the highest motives. It was no mere curiosity which led them to journey to Jerusalem, seeking for the Christ, but the desire to worship Him in spirit and in truth. God seeketh such to worship Him (John 4:23).

The first intimation which Herod received concerning Christ as the King of the Jews troubled him with jealous fears lest another should supplant him. That secret antagonism did not subside, but rather increased, until the time when Christ stood before him, charged by the Jews with making Himself a King (Luke 23:8-11). Jealousy, that green-eyed monster who is as cruel as the grave, induced Herod to take malicious pleasure in jeering, taunting and mocking the Christ, Who was Saviour as well as King, the Lamb of God, as well as the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

The Magi had expected to find the Christ-child in Jerusalem, but their search was not yet ended. In the meantime, God used as His instruments in bringing them further light, the chief priests and the scribes, the leaders in the Jewish worship and the guardians of the Jewish law. The prophecy regarding Bethlehem had been given in Micah 5:2.

The motives and methods of the wise men form a strong contrast to those of Herod. The desire to worship the newborn King actuated the wise men, while the desire to humiliate Him actuated Herod. The Magi, with candour and humility, requested knowledge; whereas Herod, with secrecy and inquisitiveness, demanded information, that he might use it for his own cruel ends. The Roman Governor's lying hypocrisy must have been hateful in the sight of God.

The men from the East engaged in their holy quest needed not the counsel to "search diligently for the young child." They were such as seek the Lord with their whole heart and soul, who will surely find Him (Jer. 29:13; Luke 11:9).

#### II. The Wise Men in Bethlehem—verses 9-12.

The same Lord Who directed the wise men to Jerusalem, guided them also to Bethlehem, to the place where the infant

Saviour lay. God's guidance is adequate to the one who trusts Him (Prov. 3:6).

"You shall not full direction need,  
Nor miss your providential way."

The wise men rejoiced with exceeding great joy when they realized that the Lord was continuing to lead them. Their joy was the companion of faith; they had confidence that their eyes would soon behold the Saviour.

They recognized Him as God, even though He appeared in lowly guise as a helpless little child. The greatest mystery of the ages was before them, Deity clothed in humanity. They bowed down before Him, and worshipped Him as their King and their God. Mary was honoured, but she was not worshipped, for adoration belongs only to God.

The gifts which the Magi offered were symbolic of the Saviour's nature and ministry. Gold is the royal metal, and stands for Deity (Ex. 25:31; Isa. 60:6). Myrrh, the fragrant herb used in burial (John 19:39), is associated with the suffering and death of Christ, for He was born to die. He took upon Himself a human body that He might die for the sins of men (Heb. 2:14-17). Frankincense speaks of His priestly ministry of sacrifice and intercession (Exod. 30:34-36; Lev. 2:1; Rev. 8:3, 4; Heb. 9:11, 12; 7:25). He was the only one qualified to be a perfect Mediator, for He alone was both Son of God, and Son of man (1 Tim. 2:5, 6).

The wise men obeyed the warning God gave them, refusing to be tools of King Herod. They took another route home than the one which passed through Jerusalem.

#### III. The Holy Family in Egypt—verses 13-15.

The life of Christ was unfolded from day to day in accordance with the Divine plan. No step in His earthly career was without significance. The object of the sojourn in Egypt was twofold: to protect the young child from the cruel massacre which Herod was planning (verses 16-18), and to fulfil the word of prophecy (Hosea 11:1).

Satan opposed the work of redemption at every point. He it was who inspired Herod to slaughter the young children in Bethlehem. This was the Adversary's first move in his game to attempt to keep Christ from the cross.

Christ came as the Truth of God incarnate (John 14:6), and He was born into the world that He might bear witness to the truth (John 18:37). Many prophecies concerning the earthly career of the Messiah awaited fulfilment, and in His advent He attested the truth of these Scriptures.

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(Continued from page 6)

brother, a former student at the Seminary, who is attempting great things for the Lord in a gold-mining camp in North-western Quebec: "I have been somewhat troubled lately, because an elevation in position changed my hours so as to interfere with our Sunday meetings. I was somewhat at a loss as to what to do when the thought of having Dr. Shields 'pinch-hit' for me occurred. The absurdity of Dr. Shields 'pinch-hitting' for me seemed so good I thought I'd share it: We'll have Dr. Shields' sermons read while I am forced to be absent at work.

"We are trying to arrange for a Sunday-School, and we think this will be accomplished without any great difficulty. The building is ours, but the arranging of working hours to enable meetings being held every week presents the unknown quantity."

We would remind our readers of the need of the portable organ for this new work, as no response to the former appeal has been received. The former student who writes the above letter, is working in a mine, and not only maintains himself while doing Christian work, but is giving fifty dollars a month toward the support of a missionary former student, in another northern mining camp.

CHURCH ENVELOPES. We should like to remind the Churches that Duplex or Single Church Envelopes may be obtained through the Union Office at very reasonable prices. Let us have your order early. Prices will be sent upon request.

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