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

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CAN THE BIBLE AND EVOLUTION BOTH BE TRUE?

Suggested by the Recent Report Respecting the Doctrines of the English Church in England.

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, January 16th, 1938

(Stenographically Reported)

Text: Romans 1:19-20; I. Corinthians 2:11-12; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-4.

It would be very easy to select many texts for the enunciation of the principles which I shall discuss with you this evening, but I shall read only two or three verses—and I shall read them backwards. First, the familiar versés at the beginning of Hebrews: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath-appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." These verses tell us that God has actually spoken many times; and that He has delivered His ultimatum in the person of His Son, Who is described as both Creator and Ruler.

Again in the Epistle to the Colossians, the first chapter, it is said of Christ, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Once more, in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, the second chapter: "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they

are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Another suggestive verse is found in the first chapter of Romans: "That which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools"—here is a bit of "evolution" for you, only, apparently, it works backward!—"and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things."

Then let us go back to the beginning of things, the first verse in the Book, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." "In the beginning GOD"!

You have all been interested in reading reports cabled from England, containing extracts from a report of certain leaders of the Established Church recommending some modification of the doctrines of the church, and particularly in the form in which they have been stated hitherto. The report is both interesting and instructive so far as we are able to understand its substance from the cabled extracts, and it is of importance to all of us, whether we are Anglicans or not. As emanating from the English Church, it is interesting because the Church is the Established Church of England; and it affords some indication of theological trends within that great Church. In addition to that, it is symptomatic of religious trends in general.

As representative of at least a part of the English

Church, it is of interest to every true Briton. We may not agree with everything represented by the English Church position, but it is the church of the Motherland "as by law established". The English Church cannot justly claim all the privileges of a legal establishment without recognizing some of the responsibilities which such establishment involves. There is very much to be said on the part of the people who are called Free Churchmen, that is, non-Anglicans, people who belong to non-Episcopal churches, in favour and support of the English Church.

The Thirty-nine Articles, in the main, represent a body of divinity to which Evangelicals in general would, for the most part at least, most cordially subscribe. It has long been a bulwark of Protestantism. If we shut our eyes to the history of the past, we shall be disposed to be critical of some things in the Church of England, toward which perhaps we should be more tolerant were we to read those matters in the light of history, and recognize the circumstantial necessities by which they came to be.

We need not be unduly alarmed at this report. It is only a report so far, and, therefore, is but an expression of the opinion of certain eminent English Churchmen; but as such it is entitled to respectful consideration. It has value even as an expression of opinion. It is representative of what at least some men in the Church of England now profess to believe. The Church of England, of course, is by no means a unit. There are at least three very distinct sections in the Church of England. There are those who are pronounced Evangelicals. There is a very large and influential—and I fear increasing—body known as Anglo-Catholics. Many of these, we have reason to fear, are disguised Romanists; and are at all events, sympathetic toward the Roman Catholic position. These are essentially extreme sacramentarians. The third body we should call Modernists.

Some time ago there was an agitation for the revision of the Book of Common Prayer. It met with very strong opposition, not alone from Evangelicals, but from Modernists as well; for the Prayer Book revision was aimed at a revision favourable to the Roman Catholic position, especially in respect to what we call the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, but which, by Roman Catholics and Anglo-Catholics is called the Eucharist. The revision was vigorously opposed by Bishop Barnes of Birmingham, and strangely enough, not on scriptural grounds. He is a Modernist, holding rather a rationalistic point of view. He objected to the reinclusion in the Book of Common Prayer of the doctrine of transubstantiation, the belief that the wafer is the real body and the wine the real blood of Christ. He objected to it, not on the ground of its unscripturalness, but because he did not believe in such supernaturalism as the doctrine of Transubstantiation implied.

There were some who opposed it on the ground of its unscripturalness. They found an able leader in an Evangelical in the House of Commons, and under his leadership the revision was rejected by Parliament.

In the point of view of many of us the whole question of Establishment is a very difficult one because, as some of us read the Bible, we are not in any sense under the law, but under grace; and cannot conceive of any principle of compulsion being legitimately employed in the cause of religion. But the principle of Establishment is one of the things that needs to be viewed historically in order to be understood. Personally, I am profoundly

grateful for the contribution which the English Church has made to the religious life of the world. I am grateful for the saintly character of many of its leaders. It has produced some of the noblest saints the world has ever known, genuine men of God beyond all possibility of question.

And I am grateful to the English Church also for the contribution it has made to Christian scholarship. My friend Mr. Brown has not yet been to England—and I am almost afraid to let him go. I am not sure it would be safe. If he could see some of those country vicarages in the midst of a quiet country parish, with the ivy-covered church nearby, and the saintly man in the vicarage shut up with his books, and on the Lord's Day and at other times with his people, with leisure to study, enabling him to give the world at last the cream of a lifetime of investigation, I suggest that on the principle of the admonition to "covet earnestly the best gifts," he might covet such opportunity for study; and I do not know whether we should get you back, Mr. Brown. It might almost make an Anglican of this book man!

Furthermore, to this day some of the most pronounced Evangelicals in England are Anglican clergymen, men who stand wholeheartedly for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints. I should have to differ from them ecclesiologically, in their doctrine of the church and its ministry, but I find myself in cordial agreement for the most part with their theological position.

Nor is their loyalty to the truth confined to England. I remember when I was a minister in London, Ontario, before coming to Toronto, I had the finest fellowship with my Anglican brethren. The influence of Bishop Baldwin still prevailed, and so far as I was able to ascertain there was not an Anglican Church clergyman in that diocese who did not stand for the inspiration of the Bible and the great central verities of Evangelical Christianity. For that, we are grateful.

No one will charge me, I think, with religious latitudinarianism. I am as ready to contend for the faith as anyone. Yet I delight to find agreement with those who are one on the great verities of the Christian gospel, even though we should differ on some other matters, which, while not unimportant are only of secondary importance, that is secondary to the essential verities of saving faith.

Furthermore, that you may not think I am throwing stones at someone else's house, I have this confession to make, and I make it with the profoundest regret. I believe that the Church of England as a whole is quite as true to Evangelical Christianity as the Free Churches, by which is meant, of course, the non-Episcopal Churches, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational, and other denominations. Indeed I do not believe any denomination outside the Unitarian—which is native to the far-country—has produced men who have gone farther afield than the Baptist denomination. I do not know of anyone, either the Gloomy Dean or Bishop Barnes, who could outdo the Baptist Dr. T. R. Glover, the Cambridge orator; or the late Professor Peake, among Methodists. The fact is, no denomination can throw stones at another in that matter. This deplorable departure from the faith has affected all.

We in this place have protested against it for years; and if we are in the view of some like a pelican in the wilderness or like a sparrow on the housetop, somewhat different from others, it is because we have determined

we will hold no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. We have separated ourselves from it, and, if possible, are more than ever resolved to abide at all costs by the Evangelical position.

I refer to this report because I think a church ought to be as a lighthouse, warning those who are at sea against the rocks upon which they may make shipwreck. It is surely part of the duty of the Christian minister, in addition to preaching the gospel to the unsaved, and endeavouring to build up God's people in their most holy faith by the constant and systematic exposition of Scripture, to warn people against the perils which he sees. It is proverbially true that to be forewarned is to be forearmed. It is necessary that we should be on our guard against error.

When a community is threatened with an epidemic, those who are expert in discerning such matters usually issue a warning, and officers of health give instruction to the people as to how to take care of themselves, and how to avoid the contagion if it be contagious, or the infection if it be an infectious disease that has become atmospheric. If ministers had exercised a preventive ministry by warning their people against these dangers we should not have had this present widely spread apostasy among professing Christians, and groups of Christians—call them denominations or what you will.

A little while ago we had an epidemic of what we used to call infantile paralysis. Now they call it another interesting name. The concluding syllables were too much for most of us, and it has become simply polio.

What this report tells us is simply an indication that we are in danger of suffering from another kind of infantile paralysis. I think the church generally is suffering from a religious infantile paralysis. You say, "You mean to say that it is something that affects children?" Yes; modernism is a malady that is characteristic of spiritual immaturity. One who has been rooted and grounded in Christ, and built up in Him, growing up into Christ in all things, will find that, by the reception into the very fibre of his being of the essence of Scripture, in the principles of God's Word, he will have acquired a certain immunity. These things will fall off from him. I frankly say that such reports as the papers have contained the last few days do not disturb me in the least. It is what the Word of God, which these men deny, teaches us to expect. Paul, in his address at Antioch in Pisidia, said, "They that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets, which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him." By their very act of condemning Christ they fulfilled the Scriptures. Those who condemn the Bible, by their very condemnation only establish its truth, and prove that they do not know either the voices of the prophets or the One of whom they speak.

I.

The attitude of these Anglican scholars—and they are representative of hundreds of others—THE ATTITUDE OF THESE MEN TOWARD THE BIBLE ALLEGEDLY IS DETERMINED BY THE LARGER KNOWLEDGE OF THESE MODERN TIMES. It was all right for people who were less informed than we! It was well enough for people who lived in a day when the day of science was at the dawn—how many people mouth that word, Science! Some little man who has only the most nebulous idea as to what really is science speaks of "science" as though he were an

academic leviathan. "The scientific attitude!" Poor little midget!—I mean, of course, religiously and spiritually.

Where ought we to begin in determining matters of this sort? It is logically axiomatic that it is impossible that a man should arrive at a correct conclusion, if he argues rationally, should he be mistaken in his premise. If you are wrong in the beginning, you are bound to be wrong in the end. The difficulty of this whole matter is that people begin at the wrong end. The Bible does not begin with the cosmos, with the created order. You, say, "But it does. The opening chapter of Genesis gives us the record of creation." Oh no! Listen with ears and heart: "In the beginning God." That is where the Bible begins. Once postulate God, once believe that God is, and that He is the Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, once assume a personal, transcendent, God, infinite in all the qualities of His being—and He could not be God if He were otherwise—once postulate God, and nothing is impossible. In other words, yield your heart and intellect to the first four words of the Bible and you will have no real difficulty afterward. Problems there will be, but no problems that defy solution: "In the beginning God."

The critics talk about the sources. How they love to guess as to where Moses got his information—if he ever had any, or ever wrote anything. What guesses there are as to where the Evangelists got their information, enabling them to write the Gospels. I like to look at this first verse of Genesis and ask, Where did this writer get his information? Where did he get it? What is he writing about? "In the beginning." Who was there? We hear God say to Job, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Who was there "in the beginning"? Nobody but God. Who is competent to speak about "the beginning?" Nobody but God. Who is speaking in the first verse of Genesis? Either God, or someone who did not know what he was talking about. No one else was there. The first verse of Genesis challenges the submission of heart and intellect in the exercise of faith. We believe the Holy Ghost inspired the writer. If we begin there we shall not have much difficulty.

"What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Nobody can know anything about these things but God Himself.

There is a revelation of God in nature, and there is a revelation of God in the Bible. You young men, think with me a minute. What do you suppose that verse in Romans which I read to you means?—"The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made"—what things are understood? What is the sum of this invisible truth that may be understood by the things which are made?—"even his eternal power and Godhead." In other words, God was first. The things that were made were afterwards. It is easier to conceive of the eternal existence of an Infinite Spirit, of "eternal power and Godhead", than it is to conceive of the eternity of matter. There is a revelation of God in nature, which tells us God must have been first: "Every house is builded by some men; but he that built all things is God." There is also a revelation of God in the Bible; but what I want to make clear is that, whether it be in nature or in the Bible—sometimes men speak of revealed religion as con-

finer to the religion of the Bible: I do not think that is strictly correct. Whatever we know of God is a revelation, whether it be in nature or in the written Word. The "things of God"; whether they be in nature or in the Bible, can be understood only by the Spirit of God. Would you say that a man might understand the Bible by merely studying its grammar, the letter of the Book, investigating its historicity, examining the natural phenomena of which it speaks, through microscope and telescope, saying, "I will know all about it",—could such an one understand, without the illumination of the Spirit of God? You say, "No! No! Since holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, the true significance of the Bible can be discerned only by those who are enlightened by the Holy Ghost." Quite true, and in order to understand what God reveals of Himself in nature, it is just as necessary to be enlightened by the Spirit of God. The carnal mind can never understand God in the Bible. Neither can the carnal mind, reading about God in the things that are made, in creation, understand the things of God. We are dependent upon the ministry of the Divine Spirit if we are to discern the things of God whether in nature or the Bible.

What is the Bible? What does it tell us? Of creation? Yes. The preservation of the created order? Yes. But whether we read Genesis, or Exodus—anywhere in the Pentateuch, or the historical books; or the Psalms, the prophecies, the Gospels the Epistles, right through to the end, what is the distinctive thing about the revelation of God in the Bible? Just this, that He is God, infinite in all the qualities of His being; a divine Personality, Who is, to use that big word, transcendent, over the universe; and although He is present and works in it, He is apart from it. He is God. He has not laid His Sceptre by. The Bible says he created the heaven of the earth by His almighty fiat. What does it say about its preservation? That He upholdeth it by the word of His power. The whole Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is a record of supernaturalism, of divine interposition. We thought of it last Sunday night as we considered the prophet's prayer, "Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens that thou wouldst come down!" In principle, it is a record of God's disclosure of Himself as One Who having made the world, also rules the world, and Who when He wills so to do, can interpose in the affairs of men or of nations. It is a revelation of One Who "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

What is Evolution? I shall not take time to try to discuss it. I do not pretend to know much about it. Someone smiles and says, "I am glad to hear you admit it." But I do not admit that I know less than you, my friend. What is there to know about it? Men who are not scientists in the technical sense of the term, can weigh what the scientists have to say, and determine whether it be reasonable or otherwise. The question is raised whether one can believe the Bible and acknowledge its authority, and at the same time accept the evolutionary hypothesis as true. Some people are jealous of their reputation. There is a difference between reputation and character. It makes little difference if you lose your reputation so long as you keep your character. It makes no difference if you lose your reputation as possessing knowledge if only you keep your knowledge. Some people are afraid to say, "I believe the Bible", for fear

someone will think they are "unlearned and ignorant". It is a good thing to get to the place where you do not care what people think. If anyone finds satisfaction in calling me "unlearned and ignorant", it will not make me any more ignorant than I am—nor will it make him any more learned than he is.

What is Evolution? Once, having quoted Spencer's famous definition of evolution, a man told me that that was the clearest definition ever given. It would be if ordinary minds could understand it! It may be said that atheistic evolution denies the existence of God, and postulates the eternity of matter in some form. Theistic evolution recognizes that a long, long time ago God had something to do with bringing this and other worlds into existence. There was a primordial germ of some sort. I do not know what it was: I was not there; but wrapped up in it were all the potentialities of things as they are now. By forces resident within itself, it developed until the present beautifully ordered universe came to be.

Someone says, "To me, that would be as great a miracle as direct creation, to think that God could wrap this whole universe in that primordial germ, and fling it into space to work out its own salvation"—with fear and trembling! It would be, but the Bible does not say that God did anything of the kind. This Anglican report assumes the Genesis story of creation to be an allegory, legend, myth. They will refer us to Pilgrim's Progress and Aesop's Fables presently, and tell us that though these things are probably not scientifically and historically true, they contain valuable teaching; and the purpose of the Bible is to convey a religious message. When a man makes a very eloquent address on some subject, what if he be wrong in his history, knows nothing about science; and yet assumes to be informed in both; what if in such case he, or another in his behalf, should contend that though the substance of his address was contrary to fact, it should be highly esteemed for its content of moral truth? Could such a contention be sustained to the extent of giving any moral authority to his speech? Surely his words could have no authority with those who were able to discern his errors."

How men of logical minds can ask us to submit to a Book that is only partially true, I cannot understand. Any cosmogony which precludes the theory of divine interposition, would make it useless to pray. God would be far off. It would represent the machine as going on so that nothing could stop it. It is no wonder some churches have no prayer meetings. What is the use of asking God to look after you if you are only a cog in the wheel, a piece of a machine?

I published a book during the war, and had something to say about the philosophy of evolution as exemplified in the German attitude in education, and in the war generally. I had a friend who had a very keen mind in many respects. Before the final manuscript went to the printer I asked him to read it. He said, "You take strong ground." "At what point?" "Where you say that if the doctrine of Evolution were established, so far as you are concerned you would have to abandon the Bible. What if Evolution should yet be proved—what then?" I said, "It cannot be proved." "How do you know?" "Because it is so manifestly contrary to the Bible. I stand by my position." "How do you know that Evolution can never be proved?" he asked. "Because it is contrary to the Bible." "How does that establish it?" "Because the Bible is the word of God, and anything contrary to the

word of God cannot be true. I am therefore positive that evolution can never be demonstrated to be true."

I give you two things to think about, without going to the laboratory at all. Until the living can be produced from non-living, until the principle of spontaneous generation can be established in at least one single instance as a possibility, Evolution, as a universal principle, can be nothing but an hypothesis. Furthermore, until we have one example of the transmutation of species, the evolving of one species into another, Evolution must remain only a theory. Talk about "the missing link" between the man and the monkey! That does not appear to be half as hard to find as some other missing links. The links that are missing are the links between all the species. There is not a man of science in the world who would even dare to say that one species was ever evolved into another. The seed of each is in itself, and they bring forth "after their kind" this day, as Moses said.

The crowning disproof of the theory of Evolution is the coming of Jesus Christ into the world. If he be but the Son of man, if that be true, then nearly two thousand years ago the supreme Man appeared. He has never been equalled, never remotely approximated. He stands apart, having in all things the preeminence. Therefore whence came He? From whom, from what, came that matchless Personality who dominates the thought of the world—whence did He come? If once you assume Him to be what He said He was, that He actually came into human life, intruded if you like upon the course of human history, what then? We read just now the divine challenge to Job when he was asked by the Lord "Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?" But He Who called Himself the Son of God said, "Here I am." Whence came He?

So could we speak of the whole record of miracles, of the atonement, of the resurrection of Christ. They are all contrary to the principle of Evolution. I say, logically, one cannot believe in the divine inspiration and supreme authority of the Bible as being the infallible word of the living God, and at the same time believe in Evolution. Do not deceive yourself. If you try to flirt with these things and endeavour to retain your reputation as being quite abreast of the times, by yielding a mental assent to evolution, you will be driven to discard or at least to discount your Bible: you cannot hold both, even as you cannot serve two masters.

When it is recognized that acceptance of these anti-Scripture views comes of an unillumined mind, you will not be surprised at anything that follows. On the one hand, if you accept the first verse of Genesis, and once assume God to be, His creation of the world by almighty fiat and His successive interpositions down through the ages are to be expected. He is God; this is His world; and He will not allow Himself to be driven out of it. There is a sense in which the coming of His Son might reasonably have been expected. Is it not inconceivable that God would create this world, and people it with human intelligences such as we now know have obtained through the historic centuries as His human children, and fail to give them an authoritative and unmistakable communication so that they might know what He wanted them to do? It is to me the most reasonable thing in the world that He should have spoken. If we had not a Bible, the logical mind ought to go looking for one. There must be some communication from heaven. If there be a God, He will not be silent and leave us to grope in the darkness. If you

believe that, you will have no difficulty with the rest of the Book.

On the other hand, relegate God to the unknown and say, "I do not know whether there be a God. I will begin with the created order and find out who made it. I will dream my dreams", you will never find your way to God. Evolution, in the last analysis, is not a science. It ought not to be called a science. Evolution is a philosophy. Science confines itself to the realm of demonstrable fact, that which can be established. But to push the mind back to prehistoric times, and begin reckoning millions and billions of years—well, the man who does so is safe enough: nobody can contradict him. But they can disagree with his philosophy.

II.

Assume that attitude toward the Bible, or toward natural phenomena, and play fast and loose with the facts of either, and YOU WILL SOON FIND YOURSELF NATURALLY ASSUMING THE SAME ATTITUDE TOWARD EVERYTHING THE BOOK TEACHES.

These gentlemen say that it is not necessary to accept the doctrine of the virgin birth in order to be a Christian, that one can still retain his place in the church, while refusing to believe in the virgin birth of Christ. I suppose it is conceivable if God had so willed it, that the incarnation could have been effected through two human parents instead of one. But the question is, What has God said? What has the Word of God to say about it? His promise was to the woman, that her Seed should bruise the serpent's head. The Bible says that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, that He had a human mother, but no human father. You cannot possibly deny that without denying the record which says so. The man who does not believe in the virgin birth of Christ must of necessity deny the historic accuracy and authority of Matthew's Gospel, and Luke's Gospel. He must indeed deny the truthfulness of the New Testament in general, for where the virgin birth is not specifically stated, it is everywhere implied and assumed. When people have said that Genesis is not true, it is inevitable that they should say that Matthew is not true. If I pick and choose in one part, I may pick and choose in another.

Not only may the virgin birth be denied, but we are told that we can be Christians without believing in the literal resurrection of Jesus Christ. Again you cannot deny the reality of the physical resurrection of Christ without denying the divine authority and accuracy of Holy Scripture, because the Bible does actually say that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, the Gospels are not reliable. If He was not virgin-born, neither the New Testament nor the Old is true. If they be taken from us, we cannot be sure whether He ever came at all. I affirm that there is no fact in history more thoroughly attested than the truth of the resurrection. How any man calling himself a Christian minister can say that one can be a Christian while denying the resurrection of Christ passes my understanding, since it is written "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

I am glad to see that Sir Thomas Inskip has most strongly objected to that position. Sir Thomas is the Minister of Defense in England, and a noted Evangelical. He said that to deny the resurrection of Christ is to deny Christianity. Of course it is, absolutely. If a man deny

these cardinal principles, he cannot hold fast the profession of the faith without wavering.

The view under consideration would reduce the Christian religion to a matter of mere opinion. Whosoever entertains certain opinions may be saved! If it is to be a matter of faith and not of opinion, the question is, Faith in whom, and faith in what? We believe that the Bible is certified by the person of Christ Who is revealed all through its pages to be the very Word of God.

I was interested in looking up the record of the Coronation to find the words of the Archbishop of Canterbury. I was ill at the time, but I wakened early enough to hear every word. I never attended a more spiritual service in my life. I never felt a stronger evangelistic appeal than in the Coronation service where the Lord Jesus, by the ministers of the English Church, was so gloriously magnified. I confess, because I love the Book, I was inexpressibly moved when I heard by radio the Archbishop of Canterbury say to His Majesty the King,

"Our gracious King; we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is wisdom; this is the royal Law; these are the lively oracles of God."

How any minister of that Church, whose highest officer presented the Bible to the King who was sworn to maintain the Protestant religion by law established, having said to the King, "Our gracious King; we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing this world affords. Here is wisdom; this is the royal Law; these are the lively oracles of God,"—how any minister of that Church could proceed to tear that Book to pieces, I do not understand.

Some of us know the Bible to be true because we know the Lord Jesus Christ. I do. Frankly, if it were possible to assemble all the scholars of the world, if they would pay me enough attention, and then if with one voice they were to say to me, "If you believe the Bible to be the word of God, infallible because divinely inspired, and authoritative because so inspired, it follows that you are unlearned and ignorant, and a fool into the bargain", I should simply say, "Thank you, gentlemen; I accept the degree at your hands—and return it to you." The wisdom of God is foolishness with men. I would stand by the Book and the Saviour of Whom it speaks, if I were the only man in the whole world thus standing, because I know Jesus Christ. He has put His imprimatur on the whole Book—and He has saved me.

Will you abide by the Bible? It is our only hope. May the Lord help us that we may put our trust in Him Who died the Just for the unjust to bring us to God. And, knowing Him He will talk with us as He did to those whom He met in the days of His flesh after His resurrection, when "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."

Let Us Pray:

We thank Thee, O Lord, for this sure word of prophecy. We bless Thee that Thy faithfulness has established its truth to us again and again in our own experience. Save us in these days of spiritual declension; amid all the tides of unbelief that are flowing about us, save us from being carried about by these winds of doctrine. We praise Thee for the great Church of which we have been speaking. We thank Thee for the number within her fold in whom God has dwelt, who have made such a great contribution to the world's life. We pray for all in it, who know the Lord Jesus, that they

may stand fast. We pray for our gracious King. We trust he knows by a personal experience that Jesus Christ is Lord. If not, we pray that he may do so; and the Queen and all the royal family; and that we all may be brought back again, our whole Empire and nation, by a world-shaking revival, back to the feet of Christ, to recognize Him as our Saviour and Lord. We ask it in His name? Amen.

"TRUST IN GOD AND KEEP YOUR POWDER DRY."

"Trust in God, and keep your powder dry." Thus runs the famous phrase attributed to that great English soldier and statesman, Oliver Cromwell. It sets forth in terse military idiom the Biblical principle that "faith without works is dead". It was this combination of faith and works, of profound confidence in God and the right expressing itself in practical common sense, that was the main-spring of Cromwell's success. The first campaign in which the future Lord Protector fought as a plain country gentleman was unsuccessful, but it brought home to him the fundamental principle upon which he later led the parliamentary forces to victory. He gave expression to this principle in the following words addressed to his cousin John Hampden:

"Your troops," he said, "are most of them old decayed serving-men, tapsters, and such kind of fellows; do you think that the spirits of such base, mean fellows will ever be able to encounter gentlemen that have honour, and courage, and resolution in them? You must get men of a spirit that is likely to go as far as gentlemen will go, or you will be beaten still."

Cromwell received little encouragement for his idea, most of his fellow Puritans apparently being of the opinion that the right must conquer be it ever so poorly defended. Some may have counted it lack of faith to depend upon the strength and skill of their arms, rather than solely upon the righteousness of their cause and their zeal for it, but it was not thus that Oliver Cromwell understood the meaning of faith. In January of the year 1643 he obtained leave of absence for himself and his troop and went home to "raise such men as had the fear of God before them, and made some conscience of what they did."

Soon his one troop of horse had become the nucleus of a regiment. In March of the same year he had five troops, and by September ten troops. One of his opponents testified as to the thoroughness of the training and discipline that their Colonel gave them:

"Cromwell," says a royalist writer, "used them daily to look after, feed, and dress their horses, and, when it was needful, to lie together on the ground; and besides taught them to clean and keep their arms bright, and to have them ready for service."

Such was the way in which Cromwell understood the meaning of faith in God, and in the day of battle his men—the "Ironsides" as they came to be called—justified their leader's wisdom and foresight.

"That difference," says Clarendon, another Royalist, "was observed shortly from the beginning of the war: that though the King's troops prevailed in the charge, and routed those they charged, they never rallied themselves again in order, nor could be brought to make a second charge again the same day, whereas Cromwell's troops if they prevailed, or though they were beaten and routed, presently rallied again, and stood in good order till they received new orders."

The success of Cromwell's plan was so apparent that soon the whole army was reorganized along similar lines, and it was this "New Model" Army that came to

be the instrument by which the Puritan parliament gained the final victory. Thus was the whole course of English history altered by the determined application by one man of a simple and almost obvious idea.

Since the day of this great English Captain, no general would dare to neglect the simple principle which he rediscovered and made effective. No serious statesman of to-day professes to believe that the zeal of those who defend a righteous cause can overcome well-trained troops equipped with all the modern engines of destruction. Some few noisy pacifists once made loud protestations that looked in this direction, but the Ethiopian campaign of Mussolini's mechanized legions, and the rapid advance of the modern Japanese units in China has given the lie to their fine-spun theories. We are forced to recognize more clearly than ever before the truth of Cromwell's principle that faith, true faith, begets works: trusting God implies having one's powder ready, and keeping it dry for the time of battle. The righteous cause will win only when it produces warriors of zeal sufficient, not only to die for their country, but to live and work for it to the utmost of their best intelligence.

And this principle applies in the warfare that we wage "against principalities and powers, against spiritual wickedness". The cause for which we contend is the Lord's, and we are on the side of truth and right. Our zeal may be, ought to be, fervent. But withal, the man of God must be, in the words of Scripture itself, *thoroughly furnished* unto all good works. So far from showing lack of faith this preparation is an exhibition of true faith. It is the task for which the Toronto Baptist Seminary was organized, and already its graduates have demonstrated the value of its work. From time to time these pages tell of what our former students are doing in various parts of the world. We have not space to tell here of their record, but have sought to use the striking example of Cromwell to bring home this necessary principle of Christian warfare to men and women who are eager to see a great army of men raised up to wage the battle of the Lord in our day. And especially do we direct our appeal to young men whose hearts have been opened by the Lord, men whom God is calling to His service, men who are not afraid of hard work and who want the best training for the greatest task in the world; to such we appeal. We are confident that in the next few years if we have men who are truly chosen of God, men of real ability and thorough training, we can use an almost unlimited number. The greatest problem of Christian work is always the problem of finding the right man. To-day the cry goes forth as of old, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"—W. S. W.

FRUITS THAT REMAIN—IN FRANCE

We give the following brief sketch of the Baptist Church at Croix-Lille, in the north of France, as a concrete example of the kind of work that has been going on and is still going on among our Baptist brethren in France. It demonstrates the spirit and devotion of our French brethren in the face of determined opposition, and will be to all those who love the gospel a call to prayer for this heroic work.

The founder of this church was Monsieur Auguste Mafille whose parents were converted from Roman Catholicism. As a young man Auguste Mafille preached the gospel and did colportage work in the central part of France. At the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war in 1870 he was called to arms. After the war he was stationed in garrison at Lille,

and on his discharge he remained in that important industrial centre to take up a responsible position in one of the large factories. He remained with the same company for forty-six years.

Shortly after returning to civil life, a little booklet on "True Scriptural Baptism" fell into his hands. Brought face to face with the teaching of Scripture regarding baptism and the church, this young man thirty-two years of age was not disobedient and shortly after became associated with the Baptist movement in France. Twelve years later when a church was formed at Croix he was chosen as pastor. In addition to working hard to provide for his family of nine children, he consecrated his Sundays and his evenings to the work of the pastorate, a double labour which he carried on for forty-one years in this difficult region under the domination of Rome. Four years later this small band of resolute Christians found their work grown to such degree that it was necessary to erect a chapel. The purchase of the land and the construction of the building was made with no other help than the free will offerings of the new converts, out of their small wages earned in the factories.

This faithful labourer continued the work of the pastorate, in spite of his increased age and heavy burdens, through the horrors of the days of German occupation until about thirteen years ago, when his son Monsieur Maurice Mafille took up the heavy burden that his father was finally forced to lay down. The following account is written by the son who is the present pastor, in which he gives one example out of many of how the gospel works in this strongly Roman Catholic centre.

"Among a number of very interesting cases I will mention only one example, the conversion of two brothers, the one of whom brought the other to a knowledge of salvation. Robert D. and Paul D. come from a family very much attached to the Roman Church in which another brother is a precentor, and still another an editor of the most strongly clerical journal of the region. Their widowed mother is a member of the Catholic Women's organization of the parish, and all are very devout Catholics. I tell you these details to give you some idea of how the priests were at once on the alert, and how the new converts were not spared immediate assaults on their new-found faith.

"Our two friends have been witnesses of the power of the gospel since the beginning. Both have given much attention to the reading of the Bible, and in their controversy with their relatives and with the Roman priests, Robert and Paul used the Word of God to confound their adversaries and to confirm their own faith. Neither argument, nor mockery of parents or of priests, nor the influence of godmothers and godfathers, could move them. The saddest part of this was the supplications of their mother, a fine, sincere and pious woman, who gave her whole heart to the task of bringing back these two boys whose conversion from their childhood's teaching, had caused her great sorrow; but both stood unshaken in their conviction that nothing, not even their natural affection for a loving mother, could possibly separate them from the love of God which they had found in Jesus Christ their Lord. Several years ago Robert was appointed deacon of the church, while Paul gives himself to the task of taking care of the church building. Both these brethren are married; their wives are Christian women, and they are bringing up their children in the fear of the Lord, praying for the conversion of their family. These are indeed some of the fruits which remain."

"We should like to be in a position to answer the appeals which come to us from Belgium, as well as from the region of Armentières, where we have a number of Christian friends, but the distance, or rather lack of means of transportation, makes it impossible for us to make regular visits to these regions. From Lille to Dunkerque (on the coast) little or nothing has been attempted for the cause of the Lord. We believe, however, that it is our first duty to establish the work at Croix-Lille, using this strategic point as a base for further attacks on the stronghold of the enemy."

REMEMBER !

THE GOSPEL WITNESS FUND
THE SEMINARY FUND

Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 2 · First Quarter Lesson 5 January 30th, 1938

THE IMPOTENT MAN HEALED

Lesson Text: John 5.

Golden Text: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life"—John 5:24.

I. THE POWER OF CHRIST MANIFESTED—verses 1-16.

The pool with its five porches or cloisters was situated by the sheep gate which lay near the temple on the east side of the city of Jerusalem.

For thirty-eight years this man had suffered an infirmity. This fact is mentioned that we may see how great is the power of God. He could heal the sick instantly, though the disease was of long standing. Though sins be as scarlet, they may be washed white as snow (Isa. 1:18); Christ can save to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25).

In tender sympathy, the Master questioned him: "Wilt thou be made whole?" Christ was ever ready to heal, but He exercised His power only when men believed on Him. The tragedy of sin is that many who are steeped in iniquity have no desire to be made whole.

The sick man explained that it was not the lack of will, but the lack of means which prevented him from being healed. Man's extremity is God's opportunity (2 Cor. 12:9). Christ perceived that the man had faith, in spite of his many discouragements (Prov. 13:12). The word of sovereign power was spoken, and the response was immediate; the man was cured completely and miraculously.

The Jews were on hand to challenge what they considered as an infringement of their law. By carrying his bed, the man had broken the injunction of the law that no burdens must be carried on the Sabbath (Jer. 17:21). But he was obeying a higher law, the commandment of the Saviour Who had shown His right of authority by healing him.

Filled with the new joy of walking, the man made his way to the temple to praise God. There Christ found him, and revealed Himself as Jesus, the Saviour (Matt. 1:21). We may wonder why Christ did not tell Him who He was at the very first, but possibly the reason was that the deliverance from the power of disease might prepare him for freedom from the servitude of sin. Christ pronounced him whole, and the fact that spiritual wholeness or salvation was included may be inferred from the fact that our Lord pointed out the lesson to be derived from his former infirmity. Sin, unchecked, would make more havoc in his spiritual life than the disease had made in his body.

II. THE SONSHIP OF CHRIST PROCLAIMED—verses 17-47.

On this occasion, Christ did not use a human argument in answer to His critics (Luke 14:5), but made a clear pronouncement of the ground of His authority—His identification with the Father.

1. The Witness of the Father—verses 17-30,37.

The Father bore witness to the Sonship of Christ by permitting Him to perform Divine works. The miracles of Christ were works such as God alone could perform, hence they were signs that Jesus was in truth the Son of God.

The Father also acknowledged the Son in giving Him the power to bestow life, both physical and spiritual. Christ raised men from physical death (Luke 7:15; 8:55; John 11:44). Those who hear His word (Rom. 10:17; Rev. 3:20), and believe (John 3:16; Rom. 10:9,10), immediately receive the gift of everlasting life (John 3:36). They shall never come into condemnation (John 3:18; 1 Pet. 2:6). Though spiritually dead in trespasses and sins, they pass from the condition of death to the condition of life (Eph. 2:5); they are transported from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son (Col. 1:13). The period of Christ's sojourn upon earth was marked by the resurrection of some, but He will show forth that power in greater degree at His

Second Coming (1 Cor. 15:52; 1 Thess. 4:16; Rom. 4:17; 8:11).

Again, the Father declared His pleasure in the Son by giving to Him the authority to execute judgment. Two reasons are mentioned. First, it is the will of God that men should honour Christ. Modernists who refuse to reverence and esteem Christ plainly prove that they are none of His (1 John 2:23). That religion is false which does not have the Lord Jesus Christ in the centre. Secondly, the authority of judge was given to Christ because He was the Son of man, as well as the Son of God. He is an appropriate Judge of their motives and actions (Acts 10:42; 17:31). He is a righteous Judge (Isa. 11:3,4), and competent, since He performs the will of the Father.

2. The Witness of John the Baptist—verses 30-35.

The statement of verse 31 does not contradict John 8:14. Christ was voicing the opinion of the Jews. The full thought would be: "If I bear witness of myself, ye will say that my witness is not true." Christ made a concession to them, agreeing to give them not merely His own word as to His Deity, but also the word of others. The word of two or three witnesses was regarded as sufficient evidence in those times (John 8:17; 1 Tim. 5:19).

John the Baptist gave testimony to the fact that Christ was the Son of God. Strictly speaking, no human person can vindicate the Lord, but He condescends to receive praise from men, and to give them the privilege of testifying to others, that these may be saved (Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8).

3. The Witness of the Work of Christ—verses 36-38.

Understanding the word "work" in its widest sense, it is true that all the works of Christ—His teachings, His healings, His life, death, resurrection, ascension and session at God's right hand—clearly declare that He was sent by God (10:25,38; 14:11), with Divine prerogatives. He performed His mission completely (John 17:4). When His earthly ministry commenced, and again, when it neared its consummation, Christ received the commendation of His Father (Matt. 8:17; Luke 9:35; John 12:28).

The unbelieving Jews were not of God, and hence they would not or could not receive His testimony (John 8:47; 1 John 4:14,15; 5:9-11).

4. The Witness of the Scriptures—verses 39-47.

The Scriptures testify of Christ (Luke 24:27,44), and men should accept their message. The Jews were not ready to take the humble place, and give glory to God. Their pride prevented them from believing in Christ.

The Word of God is a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death. Those who receive its record will be saved, but those who reject it will be judged on that account. To reject any part of the Word is equivalent to rejecting the whole. The Gospel of Christ is declared in the writings of the Old Testament prophets, and the Jews who spurned that testimony were incapable of receiving Christ Himself (Luke 16:31).

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