

# The Gospel Witness

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AND IN DEFENCE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.  
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"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."—Romans 1:16.

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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

READY! AYE, READY!

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

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Thursday Evening, January 13th, 1938  
(Stenographically Reported)

Lesson Text. Acts 21:7-14; Rom. 1:18-17; 2 Cor. 12:8-15; 2 Tim. 4:6-8

You may have noticed that in all these Scriptures there is one phrase, to the effect that Paul is "ready"; "I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus"; "As much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also"; "The third time I am ready to come to you"; "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." In another scripture he admonishes us to be ready to give an answer to those who ask us. And yet again, he exhorts Titus to be ready to every good work.

It is of that principle of Christian readiness I shall speak to you this evening.

### I.

This phrase that was so often on Paul's lips I think was AN INDICATION OF HIS GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARD CERTAIN PERSONS, AND CERTAIN THINGS. It was, first of all, an indication of *his settled attitude toward his Lord*. Whenever his Lord called, whenever He commanded, in whatsoever direction He willed him to go, no matter what He said, or whither He pointed, Paul was always able to answer, "I am ready." I think we may learn something of that settled attitude if we recall a scripture in Luke's Gospel where certain men came to the Lord Jesus and said: "Lord (we) will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." They said, in effect, "Here we are, ready for Thy service." To the first one the Lord said, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Apparently that disciple, though he had tried to persuade himself that he was ready to be a disciple indeed, thereafter faced conditions with which he was not ready to comply, and there is no indication that he followed the Lord. To another He said, "Follow Me", and he said, "Suffer me first to go and bury my father. Just wait a little while, and I shall be ready. I have something to attend to be-

fore I can come." To him Jesus answered, "Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." To another He said, "Follow me!" and he said, "Let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. I shall not be very long, but I am not ready at the moment."

Such was not Paul's attitude for the reason that he was so completely given up to his Master, that there was no other interest in life which took precedence of that of his Master's kingdom. All other matters had to be subordinated to the supreme requirement of life, namely, the will and command of his Lord.

That ought to be true of every one of us, and I submit that the standard is not an unreasonable one. You remember how Paul elsewhere admonished the Romans "by the mercies of God . . . present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service". God has a right to demand that of you. There is nothing extraordinary, fanatical, out of the way, in that. That, and nothing less, is what He may reasonably require of you. You see that in many walks of life. A man may have his home duties. He may have his wife and family. He may have certain tastes and desires in a recreational direction. He may find himself drawn here or there, legitimately, for the exercise of certain of his powers. But if he is occupied with a particular interest, if he is engaged to serve a certain firm, he is under a master who expects him to report at a given hour in the morning for duty. And he must, of necessity, relegate all these personal interests to some subordinate position, and even though he feels disposed to remain at home—if he were to consult his feelings he might be more disposed to play than work—because he has taken up a certain relation to a person as his employer and to whom he is therefore obligated, and whom he must serve, all these other things are put aside; and when the hour comes for him to report for duty at his

place of business, and at an appointed time, he is there, and he is ready for duty.

It ought to be possible for us as disciples of Christ so to relate ourselves to Him that we shall be able to answer just as Isaiah did, "Here am I; send me."

I suppose the secret of it all in Paul's case was that *he allowed nothing to preoccupy him*. He allowed nothing in life to take precedence of what he knew to be his bounden duty in respect to his service to Him Whom he had called his Lord.

I am sure there is not one of us who does not need that exhortation. There is not one of us here who at times has not allowed other things so to occupy our thoughts and to dominate our affections that when the expressed will of God was faced, we had to say; "Yes, presently, but for the moment I am otherwise engaged."

The same attitude was true in respect to Paul *in his relation to those whom he loved best*. Paul was not only a great lover of the Lord: he was a lover of the Lord's people. It is quite evident that he lived for those who were washed in the blood, and that he cherished the deepest affection for those who were the disciples of Christ. There are indications in his letters that he had learned somehow or another, profoundly to love those whose faces he had never seen. He loved them because they were Christians, and how much more must he have loved those with whom he had consorted, with whom he had wrought, such an one as Luke, for instance. And I have no doubt that in many instances Paul was quite willing to defer to their judgment. Only when he was consciously under the special inspiration of the divine Spirit, and was speaking as the mouthpiece of God, was he oracular. He was not implacable; he was easy to be entreated. I can well imagine that Paul had conferred often with those with whom he wrought, about minor matters, seeking their opinion and judgment. But he is now going up to Jerusalem; and the disciples beg him not to go; they all tried to dissuade Paul from his purpose, and they were so intent upon it that they wept, entreating him with tears. In this even Luke, and the rest who were "of Paul's company" earnestly joined.

There was no question about their downright earnestness and sincerity. It was not merely a matter of policy with them. But he said to them: "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?" As though he would say, "I am sorry to have to say no to you, but I am obliged to do so. I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." On another occasion, after Paul had met his Master, after He had introduced Himself to him, and He had uttered that word, "What wilt Thou have me to do", and he had received his commission, he later explained: "I conferred not with flesh and blood." From the beginning he refused to allow the judgment or influence of men to intervene between him and his Lord, lest he should not always be ready.

A great many of us, when the Lord lays His hand upon us, and we have been directly commissioned of the Master Himself to do a certain thing, some duty which has been enjoined upon us, persuade ourselves that perhaps it might be wise for us to get someone else's opinion on that. And sometimes these minds of ours are so treacherous, they may even persuade us that in seeking some human corroboration of what we believe to be the divine will, we are only taking steps to make sure that we are not mistaken, whereas if we analyzed our feelings we might find we were looking for an excuse. We are

hoping that someone will say, "If I were you, I would not do that. I am afraid that journey to Jerusalem will be a little too costly for you. I do not think that can reasonably be expected of you. What do you think, Luke?" Luke was somewhat of an authority. I imagine he was a wise counsellor. He certainly was a devoted disciple, and I dare say that when these friends found their judgment reinforced by that of such a man as Luke, they would say to themselves, "Paul will listen to Luke, though he will not listen to us."

But Paul's attitude toward his Master was such that no one could dissuade him from the doing of his Master's will, therefore, he answered, "No; I am ready no matter whither He sends me."

## II.

Then there was a certain readiness which Paul exemplified **IN HIS RELATION TO THE WORD OF GOD**. How many people are described in the Old Testament as being unwilling to hear the Word of God. You read of some in the New Testament who actually stopped their ears, would not listen. And there are some of the Lord's children who are not always ready to hear. They become dull of hearing.

I remember once when I was ministering in London, Ontario, preaching on this text: "Gray hairs are here and there upon him; yet he knoweth it not." I preached two sermons, one to those who were not Christians, and then again to the Lord's people, and I pointed out that sometimes in the life of the believer, the old man is allowed to gain the ascendancy, and when the old man is uppermost all the characteristics of the old man appear. And it is one of the characteristics of age that an old man cannot hear quite as acutely as when he was younger. And when the "old man" is on top in the believer's life, he is dull of hearing; he cannot hear, and he cannot remember as he did. As we grow older our memory slips sometimes.

After that morning service I went with some friends to dinner, and it was raining. I had carried an umbrella, and as I went into the house I dropped it in the stand. When dinner was over, early in the afternoon I said, "I shall go now, if you will let me—like the tramps." And so I went out, and walked off the verandah to the sidewalk. I was accustomed always to carrying a stick, and as there was nothing in my hand, I remembered that I had left my umbrella behind. I went back to the door, and a little girl, the youngest in the family answered. I said to her, "Did I leave my umbrella here?" She looked and said, "Yes"; and she gave it to me. She had just closed the door, and I was leaving the verandah when the door opened again, and she said, "Mr. Shields!" I said, "Yes." "Old man!" And with a laugh she was gone. I had forgotten my umbrella, and a very little girl remembered the lesson.

Some of the Lord's people allow the "old man" to have his way, and they do not remember so readily; nor do they hear so readily. They have to be called several times. They are not wide awake. But Paul was always "ready"; and as soon as the word of the Lord was uttered, he immediately responded.

Wednesday nights I call the printer very often when **WITNESS** copy is ready. I know the shop. It is a long one. At one end there are desks and the telephone. At the other end the linotype machines where the men are setting type. When I call that number I do not expect an immediate answer. I wait for a few seconds because

I know the man has to come from his machine away at the far end of the shop to answer the telephone. He is not at the telephone: he is not ready. If you call the same telephone during the day time, the moment you call somebody answers. They are ready. Some of us are like the man who is busy at his machine, but we are not always, as he is, legitimately busy; we are not always waiting to hear the word of God, and that is why the Lord has to call us a good many times before we hear.

Then there was another characteristic of Paul. He was always "ready" to preach. He said: "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." I do not think that Paul meant that he was ready merely to go to Rome, for you will find in the same epistle, toward the close of it, he tells them how often he had tried to go, and had been hindered, but he hopes to go now. He said: "I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. My basket is already packed. I am laden with good things from the Divine treasury. I am thoroughly equipped to come to you. I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are at Rome also."

Why is it that some of us are not ready to preach or to witness? It is not always that we are indisposed to do so; not always that we are unwilling to do so; not always that we are without desire to do so: we are just not ready. We say, "I do not know how to approach that man. I do not know what to say to him. There he is. I would go and speak to him, but I am not ready. I do not know what to say." Why? Why do you not get ready?

I have had men come with their sales talk all ready, and they pour it out like an auctioneer. They know all the fine points of the thing they are selling, and very often it is recitation. Why? Where did they learn that? They were given instruction, and they were told before they went out to sell, that they must be ready to answer all questions, and present the excellencies of the article they were trying to sell.

My dear friends, it is one thing to get ready to preach a sermon—if we have to minister publicly we ought to get ready. But there is a sense in which we do not know when we shall be called upon, and therefore we ought to be always ready; ready, as Paul said to Titus, "to every good work".

Would it not be well sometimes, to sit down alone, and picture a number of people. Imagine a procession of people whom you meet at work, and to whom you have never spoken of Christ. There is a man, and you have some idea of his general, his broad attitude toward these matters. Say to yourself: "Suppose I have an opportunity to witness to that man, what should I say?" As nearly as possible, get ready. Sit down with your Bible. Fortify your mind. Store it with particular scriptures that will answer that man's case, so that when your opportunity comes, you will be ready.

We must study how properly to present the gospel. I remember hearing Dr. Dixon some years ago telling about some man's distributing tracts—I think it was in Oxford. He met a man coming down the street with two crutches and only one leg, and he handed him a tract. The man took it. He was quite respectful until he looked at it, and then he burst into laughter. Why? It was a tract on the evils of dancing! It was very good, but that man did not need that particular tract.

We ought to study the people whom we would win for Christ, so that we may be ready. And particularly you Sunday School teachers. I trust you bear your class up before the Lord every day in prayer. They are all difficult; perhaps, one is serious, another rather frivolous, and you want to reach them all. But you have to approach them in different ways, and unless you have a particularly ready mind, you will have to get ready in advance. There are people very witty, and able to answer anybody. I can—the next day! I remember once—I have never forgiven myself for my dulness—years ago when I was but a young man, a letter from the church which I served had been read in an Association. I do not know whether it was the "old man" or the "new man" in me, but I deliberately put something into that letter to waken up the brethren. I said to the Clerk, "When you write that letter put in certain things, and in addition put in this sentence." I was detained so that I was not present at the opening of that particular session, and when this letter from my church was read, there was one man on his feet in an instant. He said, "What church is doing that?" Immediately the fat was in the fire, and there was a warm discussion as to my irregularity. One of the wise brethren said, "Mr. Shields is not here. I think we had better postpone this discussion until he comes." His suggestion was approved. In due time I came in, and this item of business was called up, and again the fireworks began. No one was asleep. I sat back and let them talk. I said nothing. At last the Moderator called on me, and said that really I should say something. I said, "The brethren seem to be enjoying themselves so much I do not want to spoil it. I have nothing to say", and I sat down. Then this one very reverend brother, the one who had raised the question, rose and said I was treating the assembly with contempt in refusing to speak, and I was requested to speak. I said, "I should not like to do that. If you want me to say something I shall be glad to do so." And I went on to tell a story. I said, "I was in the country only a few days ago, and I stopped to talk to a farmer who was working in his garden. He said, 'You will never guess what I am doing.' I said, 'No.' He had a trowel and a hammer, and a flat stone. I saw him dig up something. He said, 'These are peach stones. I plant them in the fall, and in the spring I dig them up and crack them very gently, and that assists germination, and hastens the growth of the tree by about a year, instead of leaving it to be cracked as the seed inside germinates'. I said, 'Thanks for your story'. Now, there are some hard-shelled Baptists who will have to be dug up and cracked before they will grow." The subject of discussion was something I had done, that I was as sure then, as I am now, was scriptural, although it was not according to "Baptist practice". Again this brother was on his feet and was almost angry. He said, "I demand an apology. Mr. Shields says I need to be cracked." I ought to have been ready to say, "You don't!"

Well, sometimes even in the Lord's work it is well to have a ready answer, but there are only a few people who come from Ireland whose minds are sharp, and who are ready to answer anyone, able to engage them in conversation, and in the meanwhile to turn something over in their minds so that they are ready to answer. But most of us are too slow for that. So if we are to be effective workmen, we need to be always getting ready in advance.

I remember a certain case where someone was sick, and the doctor came in, and someone waiting on the

patient said, "Doctor, we have had recommended to us a certain medicine that we were assured would be of great help to the patient, but we thought we should not like to use it until we had your opinion." "Well, what is it?" "Here it is: Liquid Ozone." He said, "Take it out of a bottle if you like. I like mine fresh. Open the window, and you will get all the ozone you can take."

Similarly I like to study psychology at first hand, not out of a book. I like to study people, walking on two feet, to see how they think, and how they behave, and how they respond when you approach them. Now, without spending any money on a book illustrative of all the people you might possibly meet, sit down, and recall to your mind certain people. I do not mean merely their faces, and their physical deportment, but their type of mind—and we all have our peculiarities. Study the people whom you would win for Christ, and be ready to meet them.

So Paul fortified his mind. His mind was full of the gospel. I recall a lady I used to visit in London. I used to go and sit down with her, and talk about the things of God for a little while. She had been bedridden for a number of years. She had a very retentive memory and could remember what I said. When visitors came in she would retail what she got from me. And thus she would give my little message perhaps in the course of a month, to a hundred people. Then she would send me a message by somebody to say that Mrs. Golding asked them to tell me that her luncheon basket was just about empty, and she would be glad to see me again, to have it refilled. Then I would make another call, and open up to her another passage of Scripture. She would say, "That is good. I will pass that on".

When Joseph's brethren returned from Egypt they came back with wagons full of good things from Egypt. When you go to visit, it is well to take a train of wagons with you packed full of good things. The pastor of a large church said to me once, "One day I got a call to visit a certain lady who had had a fall. She had broken her leg". He called, and he said he talked with her for a little while, and then said, "Now we shall read a portion from the Word of God". He turned to one of the Psalms, allowed himself to stumble upon it. He had not prepared himself. As he read he came to this verse: "He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken". Relating the incident to me he said, "I could not have chosen one less appropriate to that particular case." He was not prepared. There are men in the market place, men who till the soil, others who work at a desk, men of many types of mind, and I believe the Word of God is sufficient to meet every such case, and we ought to be ready. Paul was always ready: "As I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." Paul was able on that occasion in Athens to begin with them on their own ground. I have never been able to share the view of some who said Paul thought he had made a mistake, that when he went to Corinth he changed his tactics from those he used at Athens. I believe when he went to Athens he saw a door open to the minds of those philosophers, and he was ready. Now we may not be able to meet the Stoics, or the Epicureans, at Areopagus; but it is our business to study: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

And the Scriptures will not come readily to our minds, they will not be classified in our minds so that we shall be able to call up whatever we want, without study. There is no other way but to make ourselves ready, if we would, like Paul, be able to say, in respect to the preaching of the gospel, "I am ready."

Then I think he was ready to preach in this respect that *he was ready to take advantage of every opportunity*, always on the lookout for opportunities to preach the gospel, always looking for an open door, and if the door was not open I think Paul was looking for someone who could open it. He was always on the alert, looking for an opportunity to preach the gospel. And I am sure that is what we ought to be doing.

Mr. Spurgeon in one of his lectures spoke of the difficulty of introducing religious conversation. Sometimes you meet people and they begin miles away from the thing you want to talk about, and the problem is how to turn the conversation in the right direction. Mr. Spurgeon said, he was walking on a hill one day in London. It was paved with cobblestones, and there was a man pushing a cart with big wheels, and he was zigzagging from side to side, to break the ascent of the hill. And on the handcart there was just a little paper parcel. Mr. Spurgeon watched him for a little while, and he said it seemed so ridiculous to see the man pushing that big cart to carry so small a parcel, that as he came near to him he said, "Do you know, my friend, you cut rather a comical figure pushing that big cart to carry that little parcel." The man stopped and leaned on the handle bars, and said, "Well now, gov'nor, you think I look comical?" "Yes." "Well, I can tell you something stranger than that. I have been pushing this yere blessed cart all day, and you are the first gov'nor that I have seen who looked as though he wanted to give me a pint of ale." Mr. Spurgeon said to the students: "You see, young gentlemen, that man had no difficulty in coming to his 'pint'."

So if you thirst for duty in the service of the Lord, and are just as anxious to come to your point as that man to his "pint", it will not make much difference where the conversation begins. You will find a short cut, and find yourself ready.

### III.

Paul was always on the lookout for opportunities to preach the Word. That was his attitude to the Lord, and to His Word, and to THE WORK OF THE LORD.

Some years ago a friend visited me from England, and he said he heard an oracular gentleman speaking in a certain church not very far from here. This friend said, "He was my countryman, so I went to hear him. He was said to be a very eloquent lecturer. After a brief introduction he said that he had three propositions to discuss. First: the man who has a vision without a task is a dreamer. The man with a task and no vision is a drudge. But the man with a vision and a task is a hero." That was not so bad after all. Paul had a vision, and a task, and he was a hero. He was rightly related to his Master, always attentive to the Master's word, and therefore always ready for his Master's work. That was his job. That was the thing in which he lived, and for which he lived. He had nothing else in life to supersede it. It was his paramount interest. If we are Christians, and if we are rightly related to God, to His Word, and to His work, as we ought to be, we shall be ready when the circumstances require our attention.

Those of us who have had experience in the work of the Lord have learned to appreciate that spirit of readiness. Mr. Hutchinson said to me last night, "I have to telephone to Oakville." I said, "Why?" "Because" he said, "we have a man from Oakville in the Choir. He is present every Wednesday night, and he is a man of this sort that if I do not tell him not to come, he will come even through this wild storm. And if no one else is here, he will be present." He told me of another man in the choir. He said, "He is the joy of my life. He is always present. You can depend on him. He is always ready." And when I returned to the office last night after dinner, sure enough I saw that one man, who had not been told not to come. Everyone else had been, but in spite of the storm that man was there. He was ready.

If you were a workman and had an assortment of tools, each fashioned for a particular task, fitted for the job, and sharpened and polished, and if, by some means, they were removed from the place where you were working, and instead of that fine sharp tool there was nothing but a crooked old screw driver, what would you do? You would take that poor, crooked old thing, and say, "I will see what I can do with this, because it is ready." Do you know why the Lord does not use some of us? Because we are somewhere else. A man may be expert, but he is not here. He is not ready. What is the use of a tool that is not ready to the workman's hand?

A man told me of a noted surgeon, and of a number of other surgeons who watched him operate. He said it was a very difficult operation. When the patient was put under the anaesthetic, and he began to operate, he never lifted his eyes for a moment. He just put out his hand, and there was a nurse there putting into his hand the instrument he wanted. He got through an operation in a few minutes that would have taken an ordinary surgeon half an hour. The doctors said to him: "Where did you get that nurse?" "Trained her myself", he said. She was his eyes, his judgment. He had not to look over his instruments. She had been with him so long; she knew every movement he would make, and knew exactly the delicate instruments he would require, and so instead of having to look up and say, "Give me that", he just glued himself to his task until the thing was done. The patient might have been sacrificed if he had not had as a helper a nurse who was ready.

Sometimes the Lord has a very delicate thing to do, and He needs somebody to be on hand who is ready instantly, like Titus, again I say, "ready to every good work." But oh, so often we are not there. And if we are not there, dear friends, the Lord will go on without us. He will find some other instrument to do His work, and we shall miss the blessing of it.

I am jealous, I think I can say, with a godly jealousy that we in Jarvis St. should not miss "God's occasions passing by," that when He has a revival to give, a blessing to bestow, some great work to accomplish, and He puts out His hand for an instrument to lay hold of someone, He may use us. Oh, what a tragedy if we should not be ready,

#### IV.

And then the readiness of Paul is AN INDICATION OF HIS GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARD LIFE ITSELF, toward the

world, and all that is in the world. I have heard people talk about the temptation to worldly amusements, and all that sort of thing, and to explain the unreadiness of a great many professing Christian people on the ground that the world is so attractive, and so seductive, so alluring that it is hard for people to stand against it. Yes, it is; but do you remember a friend, a loved one, perhaps, or just an acquaintance, to whose counsel you were once accustomed to listen, to whose invitations you were once accustomed to respond, whose company you delighted to keep?—but you do not walk in his counsel to-day, nor respond to his invitation, nor keep his company. He has nothing to do with you to-day. Why? "He is dead, Pastor", or "She is dead." "No; they do not call me any more. I do not keep their company; I cannot. They passed out of my life—they are dead." You ask Paul: "How is it you are always ready; that the world does not call you?" Paul would reply, "The world, as far as I am concerned, is dead. The world is crucified to me, and I am crucified to the world. Between us there is a great gulf fixed. It has no charms for me." That ought to be our attitude. It is not too high a standard. It is only the standard of the Bible. And let me tell you this, long before the professing church abandoned the doctrines of the gospel, it abandoned the practice of the doctrines of the gospel. Long before they avowed their unbelief, they became practical unbelievers. I do not believe there is anything more important to the modern Christian than a proper apprehension of the scriptural doctrine of separation. We cannot possibly live as Christian men and women, and grow up into Christ, and do His work, unless we are divorced from the world. It is impossible. It will take us away so that we shall never be ready for God's work, if we are always at home to answer the telephone when the world calls. No, no; we must be dead to that. Paul was; and therefore he was ready. Paul had set his affections on things above, his investments were above. Everything he had of value was above—he had nothing below. He had nothing to leave behind.

And that accounted for his—how shall I put it—*his steadfastness of purpose, his settled attitude in all these matters*. In Ephesus he said, "I am ready". What for? "Not to be bound only, but to die"—Where, Paul? "At Jerusalem, where you are afraid to have me go. But I am ready to die there for the name of the Lord Jesus." Some might have said, "That is easy to say at Ephesus. It is easy to say you are ready to be bound. But he is not at Jerusalem yet. He may change his mind when he gets to Jerusalem." But later he goes, not only to Jerusalem, but to Rome, and he is in his second imprisonment, and Nero, the bloody Nero will have his life. Paul is in chains. "What about it now, Paul? Are you still ready to be bound, and even to die?" He says, I think with a smile, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I am just as ready to suffer the will of God as I have ever been to do it, for I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

May we all hear the Master's call, and be able always to answer, "Ready! aye, ready!"

### THE DIFFICULTY OF ADMINISTERING FOREIGN MISSIONS

In our issue of December 2nd last we published an editorial entitled, "New Testament Home and Foreign Missions". In this article we pursue the subject a little farther, with special reference to Foreign Missions. In the article in question we said:

"We believe it is just as much a Christian duty to expose Alexander the coppersmith, and Demas the worldling, and Elymas the sorcerer, and Hymenaeus and Philetus, the false teachers, as it is to commend those who worthily adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. We are frankly weary of the sensational, blatant appeals to missionary sentimentality made through the press and over the air in some directions; and it may be our duty soon to expose the true character of some of these missionary orgies."

It is never pleasant to speak or write things for purposes of correction. Notwithstanding, it is frequently necessary. We believe the inconsistencies, the loose living, and the general influence exerted by many professing Christians, do more to retard the progress of the gospel than all the attacks upon it from without. Similarly we are convinced that the mal-administration of many religious organizations, to say nothing of the too frequent frauds perpetrated in the name of religion, goes far to dampen the ardour of many intelligent people who, but for their knowledge of such things, would be enthusiastic supporters of religious enterprises.

There was a time in our youth when foreign missions to us were sacrosanct. We assumed that every foreign missionary was a super-saint, and a hero into the bargain. We still believe that many, perhaps the majority, are; but we have been sadly disillusioned by that ruthless spoiler of dreams, Experience. We believe that, as a class, a given number of ministers would be found superior in quality to the same number of men in any of the professions; but honesty compels us to acknowledge that we have met some unworthy men in the ministry, and some whose conduct could be truthfully described only by the use of a much stronger adjective. But even among ministers against whom no complaint could justly be made, who would ordinarily be regarded as good men, it must be admitted there are degrees of goodness. We have known some who appeared to be devoted to the Lord and His work, and who, with all sincerity, did their utmost to promote its interests, but who seemed utterly devoid of common sense; and who, by their unwisdom, could effect such wreckage in a year as would require many years of wise and patient labour to repair.

We have known some others who suffered from an indisposition to work, or who, in plain language, were downright lazy. But a wise Providence has provided means for the correction or restraint of such defects. A minister is only a man among equals, and in the majority of cases is dependent upon the good will and support of his people so that if a man acts foolishly sooner or later—and usually sooner—he reaps the fruit of his folly. If a Pastor of a church is lazy, and allows his church to become like the field of the slothful or the vineyard of the man void of understanding, until it is all grown over with thorns, and nettles cover the face thereof, and the stone wall is broken down, it will soon correct itself; for his poverty will come as one that travelleth, and his want as an armed man.

But if the minister who is void of understanding, or the one who is slothful, should elect to become a foreign

missionary, what will follow? In the majority of instances, his support will come from people who are thousands of miles away, and who cannot see what work is being done for their money. He will be independent of the people to whom he is sent to minister, and in many instances, as in Africa for example, his lot will be cast among inferior people. Suppose such men should be selected to start a new missionary work? Who is to know what is being accomplished? How is it possible for one to judge by written reports? The people at home know nothing of the geographical conditions. They are unable to say what ought to be done, or to judge of what has been done.

The Wise Man, writing of the field of the slothful to which we have referred, said, "Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction." This writer has but recently emerged from a foreign mission situation which he has had occasion to "consider well" for a period of ten years, and we also can say, "I looked upon it, and received instruction."

We had to do with a group of eight or ten missionaries who found it difficult to get along with each other, whose judgment of methods was generally at variance, and who were given to much faultfinding. This latter tendency was corrected so far as letters reaching the administrative office were concerned; but in the meantime great damage was done, and if the confidence of the people in the work was not shaken, their enthusiasm was certainly cooled. After nearly ten years of operation there was not a missionary who could preach in the language of the people: they continued to do their work through interpreters. As they returned on furlough by turn, it seemed to be impossible for the administrators to get any correct idea of conditions on the field. The administrative Board indeed was cautioned by a missionary on furlough, not to pay too much attention to the opinions of missionaries on furlough; until we were forced to ask ourselves, If there be little agreement between written reports received from the field, and an equal divergence between opinions expressed orally by missionaries on furlough, how is it possible for men to administer such a work from a place more than six thousand miles removed from the sphere of operation? It was ultimately decided to withdraw entirely from the field.

Someone will ask, If such difficulties are inherent in and inseparable from the task of administering missionary work in remote fields, is there any remedy, or must such fields be abandoned? The answer to that question is obvious, and is this: Care must be taken in the selection of the first missionaries. They must be people who have been thoroughly tried and proved. They must be people who are sufficiently strong to administer themselves. Many a minister at home does not need any committee or board to tell him what to do: he is competent to be his own committee of management and board of directors. He is equipped with a self-starter and a good steering-wheel, and plenty of energy to keep his enterprise in operation. If such an one as that is selected to begin a foreign mission work, one may be sure that as the work enlarges and other missionaries are added, while it will still need constant supervision, there will be someone on hand competent to direct it. Such were Carey, Marshman, Moffat, McKay, Paton, Hudson Taylor, and many others.

Therefore, before supporting a foreign mission enterprise, conscientious people should assure themselves that the administration of the work on the foreign mission



field itself is in competent hands. A mere profession of allegiance to evangelical principles is not enough. Some of the laziest and most good-for-nothing people we have ever known, as well as some of the most inept and unwise, have been thoroughly orthodox in their profession. One needs to know how the work is being administered on the field, and that never can be assured by printed circulars or booklets giving a list of names of men of some prominence advertised as a Council of Reference.

When we had less experience, this Editor's name found its way to several such Councils of Reference or Advisory Boards, but nobody ever referred to us or sought our advice. It is not expected that they will: it is assumed when a long list of names is thus published that the persons named must have thoroughly investigated the matter before allowing the use of their names, and such printed lists become nothing more than rubber stamps of approval.

For ourselves, we have given the last dollar we shall ever give to such work. It at least can be said in favour of the much-derided denominational Boards that they are made up of men who are responsible to someone, and who must give an account of their stewardship. Furthermore, such Boards are clothed with certain authority, and if and when they find they have been on the wrong track, they at least can so inform the people who appointed them, and seek their approval for withdrawing from the field.

One reason the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec has adopted the work of the Evangelical Association of French-speaking Baptists in France, Switzerland, and Belgium, as their Foreign Missionary enterprise is that it presents no administrative problems. It is a work which has behind it a record of seventeen years of successful operation. The Association is absolutely loyal to the Bible as the inspired, infallible, and supremely authoritative word of God. They are not only loyal to evangelical principles, but to Evangelical Christianity as understood by Baptists. They are nothing more nor less than old-fashioned Baptists of the type of Carey, and Fuller, and Spurgeon, and others in England; and of the same sort as the Baptist worthies of the United States such as Thomas Armitage, A. J. Gordon, Justine D. Fulton, and others of the North; and B. H. Carroll and men of his type in the South.

The body of Baptists in these three French-speaking countries have had but one President since they separated from that part of the Northern Convention's Foreign Missionary Work on account of its modernistic drift. Rev. Robert Dubarry has been President for seventeen years, and a wiser and more economical administrator could not be found. But we are happy to know that Mr. Dubarry is not the only wise man among them. It may reasonably be expected that Mr. Dubarry has still very many years of service before him, but even the healthiest and youngest man alive cannot be sure of life. But it seems to us that the whole French work partakes of Mr. Dubarry's spirit; and he has many able coadjutors, such as Pastors Guedj, Georges Guyot, of Paris; Pastor Gross of Brussels; indeed the same may be said of every one of the Pastors of the French Bible Mission.

With this record of service and rich achievement behind it, the French Bible Mission commands our utmost confidence. Furthermore, that the value of the franc is so low, it is probable a dollar will go farther in France than in any other place in the world, certainly much farther than it will go in Canada.

### THE VISIT OF REV. ROBERT DUBARRY

We are happy to be able to report that in response to the invitation of the Executive Committee of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec, Mr. Dubarry will visit Canada and the United States at a very early date. He is expected to arrive in New York by the S.S. *Normandie*, February 3rd.

A very large number of churches in the United States have taken the French work to their hearts, even as we have. An itinerary of these churches is being arranged for Mr. Dubarry for the months of February and March. Beginning in April, we hope to arrange to have Mr. Dubarry, together with some representative of the Executive Board, to visit every one of our Union churches, or at least every church which can conveniently receive them. It is planned that at every such meeting the whole work of the Union shall be presented.

At the last Convention, by resolution, it was decided that, in view of the prevalence of modernistic teaching in this country, and the dearth of sound, sane, evangelical testimony of any sort, a special obligation rests upon our body to prosecute the work of missions in Canada; giving attention to English-speaking Home Mission work in Ontario and Quebec, and also to English-speaking mission work in Western Canada, including of course British Columbia; and in view also of the fact that we have a population of nearly three million French-speaking people in Canada, the vast majority of whom are Roman Catholics, the Union recognizes a special responsibility in respect to French evangelization.

We are happy to say that we already have two former students of Toronto Baptist Seminary who have become sufficiently proficient in the French language to be able to preach and teach in French. We hope in the course of the years to graduate many more French-speaking preachers.

Having this threefold obligation to our homeland in mind, we cannot allow ourselves to be diverted from that primary task. On the other hand, we believe every church, and every individual, should be a supporter of foreign missions; and therefore we hope that every church in the Union will be led to take the French Bible Mission to its heart, and to support it to the utmost of its ability.

We have made a very careful estimate of the Union's requirements for this year. Every church will know from its own records what its contribution was to Union funds. We find that, with our enlarging Home Mission enterprises—our apportionment for this purpose is approximately double what it was last year—it will be necessary for every church to endeavour to add eight per cent. to its total givings to the Union for last year, for Home Missions alone. And it is then our earnest hope that to begin, we may all be able to raise an addition of at least twenty-five per cent. of that total for the French Bible Mission.

Every church will have to determine its own method, of course. No two churches are exactly alike in their make-up or in their circumstances. Each church, under the direction of its officers, will have to devise its own plan of co-operation. This Editor, who happens this year to be President of the Union, believes in the absolute independence of the local church, and as he would resent any attempt on the part of people

outside the membership of Jarvis Street Church to direct its affairs, so he has ever steadfastly refused to have any part in seeking to influence any other church. On a few occasions where there have been difficulties, churches have sought his advice, and he has felt free to give it when it was asked for, but it has never once been volunteered.

The only way by which Baptist churches can work together is on a basis of absolutely free and voluntary co-operation toward the support of objects in which they all have confidence. We believe the churches of the Union not only have confidence, but are full of enthusiasm for our Home Mission work. We believe that they will be found equally enthusiastic in their support of our Foreign Mission work.

In due course the Executive Committee, to whose hands the matter was committed by the Executive Board, will communicate with all the Union churches to ascertain at what time it would suit their convenience from April forward to have a visit from Mr. Dubarry. All our churches will understand that when one is absent from home for an extended period, as Mr. Dubarry will be, such absence will involve expense; and it will therefore be necessary to compress Mr. Dubarry's itinerary within the smallest reasonable time limits. Mr. Dubarry is a hard worker, and will be willing to speak night after night; and we are sure that we shall all be ready to accommodate ourselves to circumstances and do the best possible to make his visit to Canada and the United States a success.

### THE BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH

By REV. JOHN SHEARER, M.A.

President of the Baptist Union of Scotland 1936-7

(We publish with great pleasure this article, to let our readers know we are by no means alone in our view of what constitutes Baptist orthodoxy. Mr. Shearer is a true Baptist, such as we at least are trying to be. Our Baptist brethren in Scotland and Ireland are still true to the faith. For this we praise God.—Ed. G.W.)

#### WHAT IS THE BAPTIST CHURCH?

Our young people should make an earnest study of Baptist origins. They would find this a most exhilarating task and some popular misunderstandings would quickly disappear. For example, how many place the Baptists among the Protestant Churches of Christendom and think they grant us a great longevity when they say we emerged, like the others, from the Church of Rome at the Reformation. But this is quite false. The Baptists never came out of Rome, for the best of reasons—they never were in it! History shows them *before* the Reformation, then known by the name of Anabaptists, as a large and virile body protesting against the Papacy, in fact, occupying that heroic position on which, later, Luther himself took his stand. This is a startling and to us, naturally, a delightful fact.

It must never be forgotten that the history of the true Church of Christ has yet to be written. Its glorious beginnings are faithfully recorded in the Acts and the Church which came into being at Pentecost is manifestly a Baptist Church for every member of it was baptised by immersion. But the Papal night soon descended upon the Church, a night which continued for a thousand years. During that black millennium, while Rome held sway, Church History became the dreary and sordid story of the Popes, the most unedifying theme that ever engaged the human pen. In that thick darkness every doctrine and rite of the Church, its whole faith and order, were debased and perverted, and the beautiful Pilgrim Church of the New Testament was displaced by that gaudy Harlot whose seat is on the seven hills of Rome.

But the true Church did not perish. The patient searcher for truth discovers signs of her presence even in the darkest

days of the Papacy. We get only glimpses of her, for she is a fugitive, bitterly persecuted, but always she is dressed in the same simple garb of the Primitive Church. When her story is finally told we believe it will be found that there has never ceased to be a genuine Baptist testimony, a true Baptist Church.

In this connection the story of the Continental Baptists should be pondered earnestly, for it is to-day our finest apologetic. Again and again it has been found that in sequestered valleys; in remote mountain regions cut off from the world, the Spirit of God has touched men's hearts and led them to take up the Bible and study it eagerly. Without the help of a missionary they have found Christ and have formed themselves into Christian churches. And the remarkable fact is that these pure converts of the Word have been led to organise themselves after the pattern of the Baptist Church, practising Believers' Immersion and observing the Lord's Supper as a simple Memorial Feast, exactly like ourselves! Here is clear proof that the Christian mind, if left unprejudiced and guided solely by the Spirit in the Word of God, inevitably conforms to the Baptist standard in faith and practice.

For us, then, the Baptist Church is the Church of the New Testament and it should thrill us to know that our Church is not a sect. It is the Church which began with the Apostles and has continued to bear an unbroken testimony to Christ from Pentecost to the present time.

What is the Faith of this Church?

#### THE CREED OF THE BAPTISTS

The remark is often heard that Baptists have no creed. This is one of those mischievous half-truths that are more harmful than a lie. It is true that Baptists do not ask their ministers to subscribe a creed with pen and ink. But we have a creed that is our strength and our glory. The Baptist Creed is plainly written in the Bible; it is deeply written in the heart of every loyal Baptist, and it is written on many a moving page of history in the blood of our fathers. In contending for that creed we contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, for that abiding Evangelical Truth which has been the very life-blood of the Church from Pentecost to the present day. The Church has now existed on earth for nigh two millenniums. In every age she has had to fight for her faith and for her life, for every age has its own modernism. Her deadliest foes have ever arisen within her own household; men who have tried to corrupt the pure stream of the Gospel with the vain philosophy of the day. She was never assailed with more craft and never with a fiercer determination than in this present hour. It is high time, therefore, to make a plain statement of that Faith for which Baptists stand.

First, we believe *the Bible is the Word of God*. Loyal Baptists are Bible Baptists, and may yet have to be known by that name. In the Holy Scriptures the will of our Great Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, is revealed, and to that Divine will we shall be obedient, whatever the cost. Baptists hold no mechanical view of verbal inspiration. God does not use men as we use a typewriter. No message is worth anything that does not come *through* a man. We believe that God so inspired the holy men who wrote the Bible that His truth moved their inmost being and came forth from them with the impress of their own noble personality. There is thus a wonderful and most beautiful diversity in the Bible; but all is pure—all is Divine.

We believe in *the Fall of Man*, in the terrible fact of Sin which the Bible plainly declares in its opening pages. We hold that man was created in God's Image but Sin has defaced that Image and our nature is now so depraved that we are utterly incapable of saving ourselves and but for the Sovereign Grace of God must eternally perish.

We strongly affirm *the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ*. Modernists will glibly tell us they believe in the Divinity of Christ, but this means nothing distinctive, for they believe in the divinity of all men. They teach that Christ was a creature, not the Creator as the Bible plainly declares. Here is the inmost citadel of the Evangelical Faith, and as such it has been the main objective of the enemy in every century. The first Unitarian of note was Arius, who rose in the fourth century, and whose views were condemned by the great Council of Nicæa. Unitarianism has never ceased to assail this supreme Fundamental of the Christian Faith, and the attack has often been led by very good men, but the Church has never surrendered it. She will not surrender it



now. Clear, ringing, and decisive must be our witness to this great article of our creed. We Baptists believe that our Blessed Lord is very God. In view of our Lord's own constant assertion of His Deity, there is no escape from these alternatives. Either Christ is God or He is the greatest blasphemer the world has known.

We believe in *the Atonement*. We believe that in his death our Lord bore the judgment of sin, that His death was sacrificial and expiatory, a real substitution of the Sinless One for the guilty sons of men. This is derided by modernists as a "theory," but it is no theory at all in the popular sense of that much abused word. It is a plain statement of the greatest fact of time and Eternity, the fact on which our whole hope of salvation rests, that Christ took our place on the Cross and died our death.

We believe in *the Resurrection of Christ*, that on the third day He rose from the dead in the body. We utterly reject the fantastic notion held by so many modernists, that the Resurrection simply signifies the renewal of life experienced by His disciples after His death.

*The Return of our Lord*, His real personal coming again is also an article of our creed. This was the universal faith of the early Church, and Baptists have held it tenaciously in all ages.

To-day it is contemptuously set aside as a childish dream and in its place we are asked to accept the slow age-long coming of the Kingdom; the gradual betterment of the world; a vain hope which is strongly refuted by the Bible and by the grim facts of History.

We believe in *the Holy Spirit*, in His deity, in His real personality. We believe that the abiding works of the Church, like the Acts of the Apostles, are the acts of the Divine Spirit, energising the Body of Christ.

We hold the doctrine of *the New Birth*, that the corruption of evil is so radical and complete that a new creation is necessary in the soul of man. We entirely reject all theories drawn from the New Psychology that resolve the miracle of regeneration into a natural process. The New Birth is a supernatural work wrought by the Spirit of God.

We believe in common with all Evangelical bodies, in the great doctrine of *Justification by Faith*. This finally separates us from Rome, banishing the multitude of intermediaries that the Romish Church puts between Christ and the soul of man—the Virgin, the saints and the priests. We believe that a man must have first-hand dealing with Christ, that we are saved by faith in Him alone.

*Believers' Baptism by Immersion* is a distinctive article of our faith. This is the only Baptism the Scriptures know, and we are Baptists simply because this is the will of Christ. Infant Baptism is an invention of man and arose about the third century. The Church should have discarded it with all the other fictions of Rome at the Reformation. Baptists alone, who were never part of the Church of Rome, have preserved through all the centuries from Pentecost, the pure doctrine and rite of Baptism. The fact that we differ here from all other Churches has thrust this article of our creed into a false prominence in the eyes of men. We really make far less of Baptism than other Churches. They give it the first place, preceding conversion. We give it the second, the place it has in the New Testament, following conversion.

We believe in *the Freedom of the Church*. It is free from the State. The union of Church and State we repudiate as an unholy thing, fruitful of much evil. "My kingdom is not of this world." It is free from the coercion of Bishop and Presbytery. Baptist Unions have no coercive power over an individual church. Here we agree with the Congregational body.

But we carry this principle of Liberty still further. Not only is the Baptist Church as a whole free from the State, and not only is the individual Baptist Church free from the control of her sister churches, the individual Baptist himself is free in the deepest sense. Christ alone is Lord of the Conscience and we hold that every believer has the right to go directly to the Scriptures and learn his Lord's will from his Lord's lips, wholly unrestricted and unbiassed by the opinions of other men. This great principle of Freedom is based on that personal and immediate relation of the soul to Christ which Grace has established and our jealous insistence on this liberty of a Christian man is really jealousy for the honour of our Lord. He alone shall rule us. No

man or body of men, however wise, however powerful, however saintly, must infringe Christ's right of absolute sovereignty over us.

It is this principle of Freedom that forbids Baptists to impose a Creed on their fellows. It is entirely opposed to the spirit that animates our Church to demand that other men shall believe what we believe. How then, it may be asked, can we speak of a Baptist Creed? For the best of reasons. The Will of Christ, the Truth of God, as revealed in the Bible, is one consistent whole, and it is so plainly expressed there, that in all ages Baptists have found themselves in agreement in relation to the great fundamentals of our Faith. Thus a body of Truth has emerged which can be clearly formulated, which no Baptist desires to impose on his fellows, but which as a Church we freely accept. This is our Creed and we have here outlined some of its salient points. To-day it is assailed by Modernism and this we must now more closely consider.

### THE NEW RATIONALISM

Modernism, or as it may be called, the New Rationalism, is the corruption of the Christian Faith. It is anything but modern for it is really a mixture of ancient heresies, long since exploded. It has, however, been dressed up in modern garb, and coming to us tricked out in the finery of the popular evolutionary philosophy, it has the appearance of something new and original. This commends it to the young and Modernists would fain have us believe that they alone are abreast of the times and that the faith of our fathers is old-fashioned and effete. The very reverse is true. It is the Evangelical Faith that is ever fresh and radiant for in it are the springs of eternal life. Error and Evil, on the contrary, are old and hoary, and can only flourish by a parasitic attachment to goodness and truth. Modernism is really a parasitic growth that has coiled itself, like a poisonous vine, about the Tree of Life. It has no power to stand upright in itself, and this is why, when Revival comes, the evil thing is at once shaken off, and, falling to the ground, it speedily perishes. For two thousand years the true Faith has lived and borne its precious fruit. In every age the Evil Vine has crept up into its branches and tried to envelope and strangle it, but always God has revived His Work and the Faith that is old yet ever new has delivered itself from the insidious foe.

If our young Baptists would read the story of the Church they would find that the strength of youth has always been with the faith once for all delivered to the saints. When God would save England and the Church in the Eighteenth Century, He sent a young man, John Wesley, to accomplish the glorious task. When He would save Europe from the foul dominion of the Papacy, it was a young man, Martin Luther, whose voice awakened the Church to its peril. When He would deliver His people from the first terrible onslaught of the Unitarians, in the fourth century, it was a young man, Athanasius, who led the van and established that mighty bulwark of the Christian Faith, the Nicene Creed. These are but a few of many instances that could be cited and all these young men held firmly that faith which Modernism now derides. And well might they, for that faith is embodied, has its very being in a Young Man; that Blessed One, who died for our sins on Calvary. Ours is pre-eminently the young man's Faith and we believe that in these days, God will raise up a band of devoted young people who shall bravely stand for the defence and confirmation of the Gospel.

But if we are to overcome this foe we must know him and this is no easy thing for he is constantly disguising himself. While denying all its articles, the Modernist adopts all the language of the Evangelical Faith. There is thus no standard expression of the New Rationalism, but enough has been said to enable us to detect its true features.

Modernism is rooted in a great negation. It denies the Fall of man with all its terrible implications. The true Faith asserts that God created man upright and that in his original state he was indeed a son of God, in fellowship with the Heavenly Father. Sin broke this bond, entirely destroyed this filial relation, so that man is no longer by nature a child of God. Our Lord and his Apostles speak of the natural man as dead, and solemnly affirm that he must experience a new creation if he is to become a child of God. The great doctrine of the New Birth is in itself sufficient to shatter the popular figment of the Universal Fatherhood of God. So far is sonship from being a natural right of humanity that

the Scriptures speak of it as an astounding miracle of grace. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." The ruin of sin is thus complete and irretrievable.

Now the New Rationalism vehemently denies this. Its basic doctrine is that man is still the child of God and in place of a Fall which has plunged man into hopeless ruin, it puts an ascent from the brute. It is manifest that here is a complete antithesis. Man as revealed in the Bible and man as depicted by the New Rationalism are totally different beings. In the Bible he is utterly impotent, bereft of all true life and hope, deserving only wrath and judgment. In the Modernist view he has much to commend him. He has climbed the steep ascent of life; he has achieved his humanity. His sin, it is true, is an unfortunate lapse, but it is by no means irremediable. It does not make an utter breach with his Creator, producing a gulf between him and God which he can never bridge. These two, God and man, are still on the same unbroken plane of being and though man has wandered from the Father he may still retrace his steps.

As the Biblical and the Rationalist views of man are entirely at variance, their gospels are also utterly opposed. In the Bible, Redemption is a movement of Divine Sovereign Grace, a movement that man could never have conceived or anticipated. Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh, taking man's place upon the Cross, as an expiatory sacrifice for sin, and the Divine Forgiveness of sin is inseparable from the atoning Blood of Christ. All the blessings of our salvation are bound up with the Atoning Death. Redemption in the Bible is inconceivable apart from Christ Crucified. But if, as the New Rationalism teaches, man is the erring child of God, if his sin has made no fatal breach between him and God, there is no need of Atonement and the death of Christ becomes a most offensive enigma. Were it not that our Lord's Death is so terribly prominent in Scripture and so vitally related to every part of it, the Modernist would gladly ignore it. According to him, all that man needs is a right view of God, for his sin has obscured his vision of the Father. Christ, he teaches, came with a message of love from God, to assure us that a welcome awaits us if we return. He saw that men, in their blindness, would put Him to death, but He continued His ministry, even to the Cross, convinced that His love would finally melt the enmity of man's heart. This is the theory of the Atonement that underlies almost all Modernist preaching and from beginning to end it is a specious lie, for it denies the guilt of sin, it denies the Holiness of God that demands the judgment of sin, and it denies the expiatory sacrifice in which Christ was made sin for us. It is a bloodless gospel for in it the Death of Christ is but an accident without eternal significance. This gospel, indeed, is that "other gospel" concerning which Paul has spoken so solemnly. "If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." These are awful words and their justification is that the new gospel of Modernism does not save but destroy souls, for it cuts us off from the only hope of sinful man, the blood of our Redeemer's Cross.

It is a platitude of Modernism that the new time needs a new message. Man is regarded as an evolving being and naturally the gospel he needs will vary with his advance. But according to the Bible, man is a fallen creature and sin is degeneracy not evolution. "Evil men wax worse and worse." The evil world is moving steadily downward not upward. Our present civilization is simply a veneer; a thin crust covering an abyss of seething wickedness and the Great War has shown us how swiftly and dreadfully that crust can be broken and Hell let loose. To meet the need of such a being, a need which is exactly the same in every age, the true Evangelist brings a gospel of salvation whose terms can never vary. A drowning man is a perishing man in every age and in every clime. The one thing he needs is a strong arm outstretched to save him. In Christ Crucified, bearing our sins, suffering our doom, now risen from the dead, mighty to save, is the one hope of our perishing race.

Modernism distorts or denies every verity of the Evangelical Faith and it would require a volume to refute all its fallacies. We have here brought it into the searchlight of the Cross and that is sufficient to expose its real character. The message that is not true to the Cross is false in its every part.

Fifty years ago the New Rationalism had already made its way into the Baptist Church. At that time Charles Haddon Spurgeon sounded an alarm and by his articles in *The Sword and Trowel* initiated what is known as the Down-Grade Controversy. All his solemn warnings have proved to be absolutely true. Modernism has stealthily crept into our life like a poison gas and for long we have been breathing it unconsciously. In no small degree it is the cause of our present spiritual lethargy. It mingles freely with the ease-loving spirit of our time, and though many among us are secretly uneasy and feel that the foundations are being removed, they give ready ear to those who say, "peace, peace," when there is no peace. Our young Baptists must learn therefore that there is a peace which is infinitely worse than war and that our integrity, our honour, our manhood are bound up with our Faith. It is our firm conviction that the great days of the Baptist Church lies in the immediate future, and that our high destiny is about to be fulfilled. It was a deep-cutting Baptist Testimony that prepared for our Lord's First Coming. An unflinching Baptist testimony will prepare for His Return. The time has come therefore emphatically for the clear statement of our Baptist Faith. We must have a Baptist Confession of Faith for a faith that cannot be confessed is a faith not worth confessing.

The heroic days of the Scottish Church were the days of the Covenant, when men gladly suffered death for a written Confession because in that Confession was enshrined the dearest and the noblest thing in life, the Truth and Honour of the Heavenly King. We too in these last great days of the Church must become Covenanters. We must confess our Faith, stand by it, and be ready to suffer and die for it. Thus our last chapter contains a plain expression of our beliefs, of that Faith by which the Baptist Church has lived and conquered for nigh two thousand years. If you can honestly say it is your faith, you should root yourself deeply in it by constant and methodical study of the Word of God and you should do all in your power to spread it to the ends of the earth that everywhere the Lord may find a people ready for Him when He comes. "Behold the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him."

#### THE BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH

1. We believe in God: The Father, The Son, and The Holy Ghost, Three in One.
2. We believe the Bible is the Word of God, the Infallible Rule of faith and practice, and that every Christian has the right to learn his Lord's Will directly from the Scriptures.
3. We believe that Man is the distinct creation of God, made in His Image.
4. We believe in the Fall; that, through the temptation of Satan, Man became a sinner, and that he is now born in sin, with a corrupt nature, in a state of spiritual death.
5. We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ in His Deity and His Humanity; that He is the Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary; true God and true Man.
6. We believe in The Atonement; that, on the Cross, Christ died for our sins as an Expiatory Sacrifice, bearing the judgment of sin, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.
7. We believe in the Bodily Resurrection of Christ.
8. We believe in the Holy Ghost in His Deity and His Personality.
9. We believe in the New Birth; that, by the Holy Spirit, through the Word of God, we are made new creatures in Christ Jesus.
10. We believe in Salvation by Faith that we are saved from the Guilt and Power of sin by personal faith in Christ alone.
11. We believe the Church is the Body of Christ; that it is composed of all who have real faith in Him and that it is our highest joy to obey Him who is our Head in all things.
12. We believe that Baptism is the Immersion of Believers in water, in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and that this is the symbol of

our identification with Christ by faith, in His Death and in His Resurrection.

13. We believe the Lord's Supper is a Memorial Feast in which we show forth the Lord's Death and signify our communion with Him in His Risen Life, until He come.
14. We believe in the Independency of the Church; that every Church, being ruled directly by Christ through the Holy Spirit, is free to manage its own affairs.
15. We believe the Church should be free from the State; that establishment and endowment of the Church by the State is contrary to the will of Christ.
16. We believe that every Christian should be a Missionary; that he is sent by Christ with the message of salvation to his fellow-men and that by a holy life and faithful testimony he should be Christ's constant witness to men.
17. We believe the Church is commissioned by Christ to bear the Gospel to the whole world.
18. We believe in the Personal Return of our Lord Jesus Christ.
19. We believe in the resurrection of the Dead and in the Final Judgment with its eternal issues in Heaven and in Hell.

## Bible School Lesson Outline

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Vol. 2 First Quarter Lesson 6 February 6th, 1938

### CHRIST THE BREAD OF LIFE

Lesson Text: John 6.

Golden Text: "Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."—John 6:35.

#### 1. Christ Feeding the Five Thousand—verses 1-14.

Compare Matt. 14:13-21; Mark 6:32-44; Luke 9:10-17.

This outstanding miracle was recorded by all four evangelists. The Sea of Galilee was also called the Sea of Tiberias and the Sea or Lake of Gennesaret (Luke 5:1).

As the crowds were gathering, even before they had reached the place where Christ was, He perceived that they were weary and hungry, but above all He detected their spiritual poverty (Mark 6:34). No aspect of human suffering could escape the eye of the loving Saviour. It is the same to-day: His compassions fail not (Lam. 3:22).

God frequently tests His people as He did Philip, not to embarrass them, or to cause them to stumble, but that He may strengthen their faith by giving them an opportunity to exercise it (Job 23:10; Deut. 8:2).

The things of sense loomed too large in the mind of Philip (John 14:9); not yet had he learned to look beyond human resources for the solution of a difficulty. Andrew was willing to make a suggestion, even though he considered it all but useless. If we trust God, and do our part, He will be faithful, and do His part.

"Little is much if God is in it." By divine power He multiplied the small offering given Him, and fed the hungry ones. The disciples had the joy of distributing the blessing. How gracious that God permits us to be co-labourers with Him! Sunday School teachers have the privilege of distributing to scholars the bread of life which God has provided.

All things should be done in order (I. Cor. 14:40); there should be no carelessness or waste in administering the affairs of the Lord.

#### II. Christ Walking on the Sea—verses 15-21.

Compare Matt. 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-51.

Though born a King (Matt. 2:2), Christ withdrew from the multitudes who were trying to compel Him to assume His sovereign power. His hour had not yet come. During His

sojourn upon the earth, He exercised sway over the hearts of men, a King in the spiritual sense (John 18:36):

The presence of Christ can calm every storm. He has power over the world of men, and over the forces of nature.

The boat of which He is the Pilot will reach shore safely.

#### III. The Discourse on the Bread of Life—verses 22-71.

##### (a) The People Seeking for Bread—verses 22-29.

The people could not understand how Christ had reached the other side of the lake without their knowledge. He did not answer their question, but probed their motives, exposing their superficiality. On the previous day the crowds followed Him because they saw His miracles (verse 2), but this multitude sought Him because they looked merely for the satisfaction of the physical appetite for food. He counselled them to devote their energies to the pursuit of that which was worth while; namely, eternal life. Teachers will do well to stress the importance of the quest for the highest things. Some seek for power, others for riches or pleasure, forgetting the Divine command (Matt. 6:33).

The only acceptable work an unsaved person can do is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation is not by works but by grace (Titus 3:5; Isa. 64:6; Rom. 3:24).

##### (b) Christ the Bread from Heaven—verses 30-46.

It was characteristic of the Jews that they refrained from believing the word of Christ unless it were supplemented by supernatural tokens (Matt. 12:38; 16:1; John 4:48). They revered Moses as a prophet because of the manna (Exod. 16:15; Psa. 78, 24, 25); Christ showed them that God, not Moses, had given the manna. Manna was but a type of the true bread. Manna was mysterious, supernaturally bestowed, sufficient for their needs, and suitable to each individual. However, it was subject to corruption, whereas Christ brought life.

Only after they had expressed a desire for the bread of life (compare 4:15) did the Saviour reveal the hidden meaning of His words, which had reference to His own person and ministry. Satisfaction can be found only in Him (compare verses 35 with 4:14).

They would not receive Christ, although they claimed to desire the bread from heaven. They sought the blessings without the Blessor. Many would like to enjoy the benefits of Christianity without receiving Christ, but all blessings are in Him.

The doctrine of salvation by the sovereign grace of God (17:2; 18:9) assures the believer of eternal security in Christ. Those who come to Him will never be lost. Christ came from heaven to do His Father's will, which was to save lost men (Luke 19:10).

The Jews were angered at the mention of Christ's heavenly origin. They considered Him to be merely a man. Christ then enlarged upon His claims as the Son of God. He had formerly stated that all whom the Father had given Him would come to Him. This was the inclusive aspect of the truth. Now He emphasizes the exclusive aspect of the same truth: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." He quotes Old Testament authority (Isa. 54:13). Teachers should realize that persuasive words will not avail to save a soul; God Himself by His Spirit must awaken the dead to new life.

##### (c) Christ the Bread of Life—verses 47-58.

To receive Christ is to receive eternal life (3:16, 36). The manna gave temporary life only, but Christ gives eternal life.

The life He gives to us is made possible by His death. This fact is symbolized in the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper. By partaking of the bread and wine we proclaim the Lord's death, for the bread represents the body of Christ which was given for us on the cross, and the wine represents His blood, shed for our sins. Only those who partake of His flesh and of His blood in the sense of appropriating His expiratory work on the cross, are saved.

Again, food and drink are essential to sustain physical life. Christ is the living Word of God, and the Bible is the written Word of God. We eat the flesh of the Son of God when we feed upon His Word (Jer. 15:16; 1 Peter 2:2), and by so doing, we nourish our lives, spiritually. His words are spirit and

they are life. They must be received, appropriated and meditated upon, just as food must be taken, eaten and digested.

(d) Christ the Rock of Offence or the Precious Stone—verses 59-71.

The word 'disciple' as used in verses 61 and 66 refers, not to the twelve, but to some of the so-called 'learners' or followers. The teaching of the bread of life presented a difficult test to their allegiance, and they failed to rise to it, but turned away. They had no desire for spiritual enlightenment or quickening.

While the pretended followers of Christ stumbled at His word through disobedience and unbelief, the true disciples were strengthened by His discourse (1 Pet. 2:7, 8), and Peter, at least, realized that Christ was speaking the words of life. Would that all our scholars could have the assurance which Peter had, and that they would make his noble confession their own (Rom. 10:9, 10)!

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

**BROWNSBURG AND DALESVILLE—Rev. Chas. Hardie.** Although New Year's Eve was a very cold night, a good number from Brownsburg, Dalesville, and Lachute, gathered in the Dalesville Baptist Church for a Watchnight service. Miss Leila Boyd who was home during the Christmas holidays, told us briefly of her work in the North. It was also our privilege to have with us Mr. F. M. Buhler, who brought us a very timely message from Philippians 3:13, 14: "This one thing I do." As the hands of the clock drew near twelve, all heads were bowed in silent prayer and during the opening moments of the New Year, the church was led in prayer by Rev. Roy Hisey of Lachute, asking for the Lord's directing hand upon us.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, January 4th and 5th, Mr. F. M. Buhler, who was on an itinerary among the Union Churches in the interest of the French Bible Mission, brought a very instructive lantern lecture to Brownsburg and Dalesville churches, showing the need of the spread of the gospel in France. We pray the Lord's blessing upon him as he visits the churches and as he returns to his native land.

**SCOTCH LINE—Pastor J. Greening.** On Sunday, January 16th, the Scotch Line Baptist Church had the happy experience of witnessing three of their own young people follow the Lord in baptism. The service was held in Bobcaygeon with Rev. M. B. Gillion. All hearts were deeply touched as we watched this solemn and beautiful ordinance, and rejoiced in the testimony of those who thus obeyed their Lord. The whole evening was one of true and lasting spiritual value. Rev. P. B. Loney of Toronto brought a stirring message which found its results in open response.

Seminary Week at Long Branch

The week of January 16th to January 23rd was observed as Seminary week at Long Branch Baptist Church, by a series of evangelistic meetings carried on by Seminary students and members of the faculty. The pastor, Rev. Bernard Jeffery, is a graduate of Toronto Baptist Seminary, and appreciates the blessing which his training in the Seminary meant to his own life and ministry. Students and instructors brought messages at each of the services, and for that week we laboured together in the work of the Lord.

The attendance was excellent, and it was gratifying to see the number of young people present at the services. A number of unsaved were deeply touched, and the Lord's people were blessed. Offerings were received for the work of the Seminary. It was a week of glorious fellowship in the gospel.

Mr. Buhler Visits Ottawa Valley Churches

For a period of two weeks I was privileged to tour the Union Churches of the Ottawa Valley. I should like to express my gratitude to the pastors for their hearty co-operation in arranging an itinerary. I started in Lachute on the first Sunday morning of the year. Through the kindness of Brother Roy Hisey, who drove me to Hawkesbury, I was able to reach Immanuel Baptist Church, Verdun, where I spoke the same night. Monday night I gave a lantern slide lecture on the work in France. Tuesday night I was able to show my slides in Brownsburg, and Wednesday night in Dalesville. It was a real tonic to both body and soul to be able to enjoy the

scenery and the quietness of the Laurentians. Thursday night I was privileged to speak at a union meeting in the United Church of Buckingham where I endeavoured less to speak of France than to preach the glorious gospel of our Christ. Friday night a good number of boys and girls came to listen to the story of the French Bible Mission told in the Baptist Church of Buckingham. The tremendous need of the French population was borne upon my mind as I talked the situation over with Brother Doherty. Saturday was a day off. I used it to go to Ottawa where I spoke to the membership of Calvary Baptist Church on Sunday morning, and to the Westboro Church at night. Monday night in the Calvary Church a good number of young and older people had come to see the slides on the work in France. Tuesday night at a very informal meeting in the home of Mr. Thompson, I was privileged to tell the story of the trials and encouragements of the French Baptists. Brother Lorne Hisey had succeeded in persuading me to give my lantern lecture on Friday night, and again he asked me to preach for him on Sunday morning, as well as take his Bible Class. After the evening service I took the train and arrived, after a most enjoyable trip, in Toronto, my adopted Canadian home.

Though not sent out by the Union, yet it was my joy to be able to speak for the Union and for its Home Mission enterprise and more particularly for its Foreign Mission enterprise. Would to God that our churches might realize their wonderful vocation in these two provinces, in the Dominion, and in this world at large. We humbly but rightly believe, as Baptists, that we have a distinctive testimony to give, inasmuch as we preach Christ crucified and do the work of God according to the methods laid down in His Word. We endeavour to be faithful not only in matters of salvation, but in matters of church policy and administration.

Reliable and tried Baptist enterprises should, therefore, have priority over agencies which may be neither reliable, nor thoroughly Baptist, and it was our pleasure and joy to be able to point out that the French Bible Mission is worthy of our utmost confidence and of our wholehearted support.

I avail myself of this opportunity for thanking all the pastors and church members who have so graciously entertained me while visiting their churches; I trust that the news of the French Baptist work brought fresh encouragement to all and I venture to hope that the work will be remembered in prayer before God and supported by His stewards.

The Week-End in Jarvis Street

The Pastor was indisposed on Sunday and Rev. W. S. Whitcombe preached in the morning and Rev. W. Gordon Brown in the evening. At the evening service Mr. Whitcombe baptized three candidates, and a good number responded to the invitation during the day. We have heard expressions of enthusiastic appreciation of both sermons, and of the services in general. The Pastor counts himself most fortunate in having two such able lieutenants in the Seminary and in the church.

A Thursday evening address is published this week in place of the usual Sunday sermon.

BOOKS BY DR. SHIELDS

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Other Little Ships . . . . .	1.00
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