

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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EPAPHRODITUS

Some of the surest indications of character are the incidental, involuntary manifestations of the disposition and temper of the inner man. Even the most selfish, self-centred person may appear unselfish when on parade. That is why people instinctively are far more desirous of obtaining knowledge of how a man of prominence deports himself in housecoat and slippers, than in observing his speech and conduct on public occasions.

Many homely touches may be observed in Paul's Epistles when he quite incidentally extols the virtues of some of his little-known associates. A snapshot often presents a more natural picture than what is sometimes called a "camera study" taken in a studio. One of Paul's snapshots, with which his Epistles abound, is of EPAPHRODITUS. He tells his story in the second chapter of PHILIPPIANS from the twenty-fifth to the thirtieth verses.

EPAPHRODITUS must have been an unusual character. Apparently he had been so ill as to be "nigh unto death"; and his illness had been due to some special exertion, for we are told that it was "for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life." And this special service which he had rendered was evidently not his own proper duty. He had been brought low by doing his own share, and the share of a number of other people besides. Paul attributes his nearness to death, as he informed the PHILIPPIANS, to such effort as he had made "to supply your lack of service toward me".

The PHILIPPIANS evidently had failed in their duty. They had done less than might reasonably have been expected of them. They had proceeded on the principle of "letting George do it", and EPAPHRODITUS had allowed himself to become "George". So the hero of our tale was one who carried his own full share of the load, and then voluntarily took on extra burdens to supply someone else's "lack of service".

But that is not the complete story. By some means or another, news of his illness had reached the PHILIPPIANS, and EPAPHRODITUS feared that his friends in PHILIPPI would be disturbed, and made anxious by news of his illness; and because of the depression which he feared knowledge of his indisposition would bring to his distant friends, he was himself "full of heaviness", and longed after them all, apparently eager to see them, that he

might show them he was on his feet again, and that they need no longer be anxious on his account.

It is possible that they correctly interpreted the facts of the case, and blamed themselves for having left EPAPHRODITUS to carry too heavy a load. But that any of them should have anxiety on his account troubled him so much as to fill him with heaviness: How smoothly and frictionlessly life could be lived if in every heart the love of God was so shed abroad as to make everyone as unselfish as EPAPHRODITUS! Then indeed should we all taste of millennial—or, perhaps, even of pure and unadulterated heavenly joys.

But what are the facts of the case? In this present state of existence the Philippian spirit is likely to linger somewhere about the corridors of life. It will recognize that certain work must be done, and will surreptitiously look around the corner to see if there is some willing drudge to do it. The Epaphroditus spirit will never want for an opportunity.

The Philippian attitude manifests itself sometimes in family life, where those who are willing to work are allowed to do their own share, and the share of someone else besides. It is often conspicuously present in church life. There are people who will accept no responsibility. They do not believe in letting their left hand know what their right hand is *not* doing; and therefore they assume no responsibility for a share in the church's financial burdens. They take it for granted that Epaphroditus will be glad to give twice as much because they give little or nothing.

The Philippian spirit will not teach in Sunday School. That would necessitate regular and punctual attendance—and they like to be free to go or not as their mood at the time may dictate. They are unwilling to visit those who need care—the mother who is kept a prisoner by her children, the sick and aged who are deprived of the privileges of the sanctuary. Someone of course ought to visit them, but this Philippian spirit is disposed to furnish EPAPHRODITUS with a few extra names, so that because they will make no calls he may make fifty or more.

Some PHILIPPIANS have good voices, but to accept responsibility for attendance at choir practice and punctual arrival at church would be rather too much to expect of

them. EPAPHRODITUS may sing neither tenor nor base, but he can make a joyful noise unto the Lord; therefore give him a gown that he may spread it over two or three seats. Or, perhaps, some PHILIPPIAN has qualities which would make him very useful as an usher if only he could get up early enough in the morning to arrive well in advance of service time, and be ready for duty. But he is sorry that he needs a little more sleep! EPAPHRODITUS is more wakeful, he can do with fewer hours; therefore let him do it.

So could we continue the tale—but is there any justification for the Philippian spirit? It is often excused, though we doubt whether it can ever be justified on Christian grounds. It is true that the willing horse will always be allowed to pull more than half the load. It is true that those who are willing to work, to do their own duty and supply for someone else into the bargain, will always be allowed to do it. That may be; but what if he fails to do it? Will that make the slacker any more willing? Not at all. The work will be left undone. So then it will always remain the privilege of EPAPHRODITUS to do his own job, and someone else's day's work beside.

What made EPAPHRODITUS willing thus to do more than his share? Why did he "more than others"? Paul explains it. The special labour which brought him nigh to death because of others' dereliction of duty was done "for the work of Christ". Doubtless the Apostle Paul was greatly beloved by this worthy man, but he did not find the motive for his vicarious service in his love for Paul. Whatever he did was to him "the work of Christ", something which must be done for Christ's sake. Should we withhold our gifts, and refuse to render a sacrificial service, if we always recognized the work that was calling for our help was "the work of Christ"?

Did He, the Holy One, please Himself? Was He content to do only His own task? Had He been so, we never had known Him; He had never been made "a little lower than the angels", but must have remained in the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. He wrapped Himself with our nature as one clothing himself for work, that He might be fitted for our task; and He did not only one man's work, but every man's work. In our behalf He rendered to God all that was wanting by reason of our "lack of service." And in the doing of that great task, bearing "our sins in his own body on the tree", effecting our redemption, He came not only "nigh unto death," but to death itself, as is inevitable to every one who will follow in His footsteps, and become "obedient unto death".

What is the Christian's duty? Merely to do "his bit" as we used to say during the war? But what is our "bit"? Every Christian's "bit" is his best. Nothing short of the Christian's all can in any sense be his "bit."

Well done, EPAPHRODITUS! May we learn thy spirit, that the distress of others may fill us with heaviness to the exclusion of all thought of ourselves.

REV. ROBERT DUBARRY ARRIVES

By the time this reaches our readers Rev. Robert Dubarry, of Nimes, France, President of the Evangelical Association of French-speaking Baptists, will have arrived in New York. On page 7 of this issue will be found a group photograph of the last Annual Convention of this body, held in Paris. Mr. Dubarry and his associates may be identified by the key printed underneath the picture.

THE GOSPEL WITNESS heartily welcomes Mr. Dubarry to this Continent. He is not only a hero, but a saint. Fellowship with him will prove a spiritual benediction to all who meet him. As we go to press we have a wire from Dr. Norris requesting that Mr. Dubarry preach in Detroit on Sunday, and in Fort Worth the Sunday following. Mr. Dubarry will spend February and March, we expect, in the United States; and we hope to have him in Canada for April and May. We shall hope to report Mr. Dubarry's services in the United States in THE GOSPEL WITNESS from time to time.

THE YEAR'S END, MARCH 31st

The financial year of THE GOSPEL WITNESS ends March 31st. Our annual letter to all our friends is being mailed this week, but before we could get it out we received a letter from one of our loyal and appreciative subscribers anticipating our request, and containing a gift of \$25.00. For this, we are most grateful.

Once again we remind our readers that this paper carries no advertisements, and cannot be maintained by the subscription price which is insufficient to cover printing and postage. But we have continued into the sixteenth year of publication because God has given us in THE GOSPEL WITNESS family a company of people who love the Word of God, and who year by year, over and above their subscription, send us a contribution to make the continuance of publication possible.

This may catch the eye of some of God's stewards of substantial means. We shall need a great deal, as usual, to balance our books; and to that end we invite our friends to send us what they can. No amount would be too large, and even the smallest amount will be gratefully received. We confess we were a little envious when we read of the probate of a certain will which left \$50,000.00 to a religious paper! We hope that some of God's stewards will some day send THE GOSPEL WITNESS substantial sums. We could easily double or treble its circulation if we had a little capital with which to make it more widely known.

We were cheered also this last week by a letter from a friend in England, sending us £20 for the Seminary. This came unsolicited from one who appreciates what the Seminary is doing. Already fifty of our students are holding pastorates in Canada, and they are doing many times as much as this Editor could ever have hoped to do of himself.

An educational institution, of course, never has enough money. We need, as we always do about this time of year, some thousands of dollars to balance our books. But we hope no one will be frightened by our saying "thousands". Again we say, the largest gift cannot be too large: the smallest will be most gratefully received. Perhaps you are planning to do something for the Seminary later. IT WOULD GREATLY HELP US IF YOU COULD DO IT NOW. It would relieve this Editor of a great burden of anxiety if only we had the promise of the balancing of our books in these various funds. Our gracious God will help us. He has always done so hitherto, and—

"Each sweet Ebenezer we have in review
Confirms His good pleasure to see us quite through."

But if, as many pray, He puts it into your heart to send a gift to the SEMINARY or THE GOSPEL WITNESS, or to both, please help us by doing it as soon as you can.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

IS FUTURE PUNISHMENT CONSISTENT WITH THE BIBLE OR SCIENCE?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, January 30th, 1938

(Stenographically Reported)

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."—Hebrews 2:9.

In certain quarters the practice of quoting texts of Scripture in support of a religious view is very much at a discount. I should be the last to justify that critical attitude. Surely the word of the living God must be an end of all argument; but we may learn something of how we should quote Scripture by observing how Scripture is quoted by the Scripture itself. For example, the first two chapters of Hebrews; the one we had this morning, and the one we read together this evening, are full of quotations from the Old Testament. But they are related one to the other as links in a logical chain.

I have always objected to the assumption that the mind of the believer, by the fact that he is a believer, is proved to be what the critics call "static," stagnant, unexercised; that those of us who believe, believe because we do not think. That is not true. Said the Apostle Paul, "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." We ought always as Christians to be able to give a reason for the hope that is in us. Scripture bids men come and "reason" with God. The Bible puts no premium upon mental indolence. The Word of God makes salvation so simple that little children may receive Christ, and be saved. Yet there are always to be found in the Word of God such depths as the keenest intellect can never fathom, such heights as the greatest minds can never scale.

Truth never contradicts itself. That is axiomatic. That underlies the principle and practice of cross-examination. If a man is speaking the truth, and has only the truth in view, he is not likely to contradict himself; whereas the liar must have a good memory, and be very astute.

It is common in respect to the subject which I announced for this evening—the relation of this life to the next, and the possibility or probability of future retribution—to rest the case upon certain texts of Scripture. And that is an effective way of dealing with the subject. I do not discount that method. Yet I would remind you that there is always a reason for what God does.

Every word of God, and every revelation or self-disclosure of God, whether it be in nature or in the Bible, is founded in the nature of things. There is a profound reason for it. There is no element of arbitrariness in the divine law, nor in any divine dictum. God says what He says because He is God, and because He cannot be other than God, and therefore cannot say other than He says.

Do not be carried away by superficial criticisms of Evangelical Christianity. It has ever commanded the

respect of the greatest thinkers when their mental powers have been enlightened by the Holy Ghost.

It is common in our day to mock at the principle of retribution. Very often a smile is provoked by reference to preachers who are old-fashioned enough to believe it. Sometimes they are spoken of as "brimstone preachers". Many absurd and irreverent epithets are applied to them. Notwithstanding, it is a solemn subject we have to think of this evening; for unless the principle of future retribution be true, the whole postulate of revealed religion is a false one. There is no necessity for atonement, and no necessity for faith in an atoning Saviour.

Is the idea of punishment inconsistent with the idea of love? What do we mean by love? Is it a mere sentiment, a kind of emotional tenderness that is divorced from intelligence, and from every moral principle? Surely in any true love there must be elements of intelligence and wisdom, of righteousness and truth; and that cannot possibly be love in the truest sense that does not seek the highest and most lasting good of its object. We are admonished not to love "in word". It is useless to call one "beloved", while rendering only lip-service to love: "Love not in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."

What do we mean when we speak of the love of God? Do we mean merely divine tenderness or patience? Or is it an essential attribute of His wholeness or holiness, and therefore related to every other divine quality? Punishment is a legal term both in its origin and its use. It belongs to a realm of law. When we speak of punishment either here or hereafter, we postulate the reign of law. Therefore I ask, Is the idea of law inconsistent with that higher conception of love? Can there be any true love which will tolerate lawlessness? Can there indeed be any good in the truest sense in a realm of—that would be paradoxical—in a *realm* of lawlessness? It would not be a realm. Can you conceive of a state of lawlessness where real love obtains? When God made man He set him in a world of law, and said to him in the beginning, "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." What did He mean? There was a law of life in the seed; there were certain laws operating in the soil; there was a certain relation between the seed and the soil, and between the soil and the atmospheric elements, and the sun above. The provision of man's food was absolutely dependent upon the operation of the laws which God had set in motion. There could be no food, and no good for any of us, were there no law. This is a world of law—the heavens above and the earth beneath.

We are born, we live, we mature, we work: "Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening." Then we rest; we sleep; we wake again; and continue in life by the operation of law. The fact is, the whole universe is built upon the postulate of the inexorability of law. Were it not for that it could not be a *universe*: it would be a *multiverse*, chaotic, full of confusion.

Law belongs not only to the natural realm: it obtains beyond. Even in the restricted view of a lawfully constituted human community, law is indispensable to good. Shall we abolish our traffic signals? Shall we set aside every law of sanitation and quarantine? Shall we abolish the civil code and criminal code, and say, "Let us love one another; let everybody do that which is right in his own eyes"? There must be order or there cannot be any ultimate good—not only in nature, but in Providence.

You have only to think for a moment of the realm of Providence—we do not hear much about it nowadays. Evolution has all but crowded out of human conception the assumption that there is a divine Power overruling the affairs of man. Consider a text like this for instance: "All things work together for good"—I am speaking to some who are not Christians so I leave out the next clause, "to them that love God." Use your gray matter. "All things work together for good." What good? What is good? Do you not see that that "good" must be a composite, made up of many elements? Here is a mother whose son is far away, a woman whose husband is journeying in another land; and I talk to her about "good". She says, "It cannot be 'good' for me if you survey only the little sphere in which I live." "What do you mean?" "You must project your influence and control far beyond the boundaries of the locality and time in which I live until you reach that son yonder, and then someone else who reaches him, and all that may befall him in the years that are to come." There are a thousand elements bound up in that thing we call "good"; and unless "all things work together" there can be no good. And there can be no working together unless there be some principle, some law, by which they operate; and unless there be a sovereign Power that can make them work. That is self-evident.

Let us think a little while, with that for a suggestive background, of the question of the future. You and I are here to-night, but we shall not always be here. The place that now knoweth us shall shortly know us again no more for ever. Whither are we bound? It seems to me that there is a conspiracy of the enemies of the souls of men to lead them to forget that they have to die, to shut their eyes entirely to the future; as though the whole problem of life were to get enough to eat and drink and wear: "What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" There is something vastly more important than the question of economics. Have you not read in the Bible, "The rich man"—the rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day—"the rich man died, and was buried." He had to go somewhere. We may be poorer than Job, or richer than Croesus: it makes no difference. There is a future—what about it?

I.

Our text implies that **EVERY MAN OF NECESSITY MUST TASTE OF DEATH.** That is the lot of all men. We know that is true *physically*. The very earth sounds hollow to

our tread, so many graves have we dug. Death has all seasons for its own. "The living know that they must die." That is true of all of us. One does not need to go to college to learn that. And it is as true of the Christian as of the one who is not a Christian—unless the Lord should come while we are "alive and remain." But, if He come not, we must all die physically.

Even the most cursory glance at the affairs of life will convince the observer that there is a very close connection between physical and moral law. Let a man violate the law of his physical being and what will follow? There is an Episcopalian minister in Memphis whose strange course has attracted a good deal of attention. I have no doubt he is a very good man, and a very devoted man, but one who had not understood the Word of God. He thought to etherealize, to spiritualize himself, and show that a man could live without bread. The Lord Jesus never said that. He did cite the Scripture, "Man shall not live by bread alone", but He never said that a man could live without bread. Let any man violate the law of his physical nature and he must pay the penalty. We all must: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

No argument is necessary to prove that in the physical realm. Sow wakefulness, and you will reap sleeplessness. I know that. You can keep yourself awake and be proud you can do it, while other people sleep—until other people sleep while you stay awake. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." You do not need a jury or judge or prosecuting attorney to prove that. We have all incurred the death penalty so far as this life is concerned. Whatever the explanation of it, men are born to die. And they die!

Let me point out to you that the principle of law is no respecter of persons in any realm. It makes no provision for exemption. Whoever breaks it, must pay the penalty. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." You may quarrel with the fifth chapter of Romans as much as you like, and with the opening chapters of Genesis—and then take a walk out to the cemetery and see if your objections have settled the question. A man is seven-eighths of a fool who denies that. There is not a page of human history—of an individual, of a family, or a community, or a nation, or a generation, or of any age, that does not put its stamp of approval on the teaching of the Word of God in respect to that matter.

We hear much about science. But talk to your man of science, no matter of what branch, be he a physicist, an astronomer, a biologist, a bacteriologist, a botanist—any branch of science—and he will tell you that law automatically exacts the penalty for transgression. There is no exception, no exemption, no procurable immunity, there is no escape. Jesus Christ said also, "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." You have read that, and I suppose you have thought that He meant that rather than He would suffer His word to be broken, heaven and earth should pass away. It means far more than that: it means that heaven and earth are subject to law. "All things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist," or hold together. He is the Centre and Source of law. The heavens and the earth are what they are because He is what He is. If it were possible for His law to fail, the very universe

would disintegrate. It is impossible that He should permit it. It would mean chaos, the end of all good to every human being, the end of all order among principalities and powers; and, may I reverently say it, God (I think it is Mrs. Browning who puts it so) would have to "separate from His own essence." God would have to cease to be because in Him all things hold together by the operation of inexorable law. Even God Himself—because law everywhere is part of Himself, of His very nature and essence—must insist upon its operation, and upon the exaction of its penalties, or otherwise He Himself would cease to be God.

If you want to do some thinking, turn your mind upon the Book of the Infinite. It is psychologically, philosophically, profoundly and unalterably true that "the soul that sinneth it shall die". There is no way out of it. There is nothing arbitrary about it; it is the outcome of divine necessity, and is of the very nature of Deity.

We live, Mr. Whitcombe and I, for example, as two individuals; we are before you on this platform, separate human entities. We live; we die. What becomes of us? Let me, before I answer that question, show you the persistency of law's operation. We could multiply illustrations, but here is a simple one. We have a proverb to the effect that the child is father to the man. What do we mean? We mean that that which is sown in childhood is reaped in manhood. We mean that there is a law of continuity, of persistency, running all through human life.

Have you not seen men who were mere wrecks of humanity, fragments, broken? You have said, "How did that man come to be like that?" You must not say that God made him like that: He did not. The drunkard; the man who is caught by the police and is sent to jail. He serves a sentence and comes out of prison. He comes out and goes in, and comes out and goes in, until at last he commits murder—and then he goes out. You say, "He had a mother; he had a father—why? Why this culmination?" It is merely harvest time, my friend. He began in youth to sow: then he began to reap. He sowed again; and reaped again; he sowed again, and reaped again. As he walks up the gallows steps he says to himself, "I am reaping to-day what I have sown." Inevitably, at the end of the season a harvest of some kind must be reaped.

On the other hand, consider the man who is a prince among his fellows, with a fine mental equipment, a splendid physical frame doing the bidding of a cultivated mind; a man of wide and varied correspondences, a man who labours here but touches the ends of the earth. You look at him and say, "What a man! How did he come to be what he is? Whence came this princely character, this worldwide influence?" Just the same principle. He is reaping what he sowed. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption."

That does not mean the man who is addicted to appetite, a mere sensualist: it means the man who has no vision beyond this life, a man who lives an essentially carnal life. He may be a Prime Minister, a King, a commander of men; he may have had a view of all the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them, and in order to obtain them, he has fallen down to worship the devil

and has lived for time, an essentially carnal, temporal life—and of the flesh he reaps corruption. "But he that soweth to the Spirit"—he who liveth for another world, on a higher plane of existence, for superior joys—"shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

Here we are, I say, and we pass from this plane of existence; we die—what follows? Just as surely as law persists in the physical and moral being of the man, and the man reaps what was sown when he was a boy, so if we postulate the immortality of the soul, and its corollary, the survival of personality, the carrying forward into another life of the personality developed here; and if, at the same time, we recognize what I am sure any scientist will compel you to recognize, namely, the universality of law, that just as a law is operative among terrestrial things and is projected into the infinite spaces, until it touches planets millions of miles away, and is operative through all the intervening spaces, so the laws of being that begin here project themselves into the life beyond, and as surely as we sow here we shall reap yonder. Therefore is it true that every man, because every man has sinned, must taste death, whatever that may mean—not mere physical death, but all that is implied in that undefinable word, death. Man tastes it.

That is the legal side of it. Yet here is a distinctive characteristic of the gospel. "Thou crownedst him with glory and honour; and didst set him over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." What irony, is it not, to say that of man to-day, when the very things which his genius has created are strangling him to death, when the very civilization of which we have boasted is crushing us into the depths! And yet here is the original purpose—read the eighth Psalm again when you go home: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour: Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." Now stand up! What a man! Hitler? Mussolini? Napoleon? Oh no! "Thou hast put all things under his foot." Did you ever see such a man?

Then this writer says—and I do not think he would need to revise this saying were he here to read to-morrow's newspaper—"But now we see not yet all things put under him!" Alas! alas! "All things" are certainly not yet "put under him." On the contrary man is all but crushed under the "all things". "But we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels, because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour"—what for?—"that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." That He might bring victory out of defeat, triumph out of disaster, that He might wrest glory from the grave.

II.

Look at it for a moment, will you? "BY THE GRACE OF GOD" HE CAME TO TASTE DEATH FOR EVERY MAN.

"The grace of God" made no provision for the remission of sin's penalty. The grace of God did not set aside the reign of law; but it interposed by sending Jesus Christ, in order that He might taste, in our behalf, that death which we have earned.

I did not go to Niagara Falls, to see the fallen bridge, but I wanted to go. I thought of those thousands of tons of ice piling up, and of its pressure against that human creation. There is law. Ask the engineer who built the bridge and he would say, "We measured the distance, and knew something about steel and the laws which obtain in the matter of stress and strain. We estimated the kind of girders that we should have to fashion in order to suspend a bridge with a span of a thousand feet. We built it, and it stood for nearly forty years, vindicating our confidence in law." But what the engineers did was not to make laws, but to study them. They proceeded upon the assumption that they must conform to law, or the bridge could not stand. They fashioned the bridge so that it would bear a certain weight, and stand the strain. Now I go to him and say, "Mr. Engineer, your bridge has fallen. I thought you built it to stand." "I did not build it to withstand the pressure of hundreds of thousands of tons of ice. I did not reckon on that." "What would have saved your bridge?" "I do not know. I suppose if we could have opened an enormous cavity and let the ice go through it would have relieved the pressure. Or if the sun could have come out and dissolved it. But I do not know how human skill could have saved it."

No! When you have done the very best that your skill can devise, and have utilized all your moral resources to build a bridge from earth to heaven, there is still something of which you have taken no account. There is the awful pressure of the world's sin. How can you remove it? You cannot remove it. But He Who was not only man but God, Who had an infinite capacity—do not forget that: I revised this past week for republication some addresses delivered a few years ago on Russellism, in which Russell and Rutherford represent Jesus Christ as being a fleshly being who suffered in the flesh, but who was not God. It seemed to me that the pages burned as I read it again. I said, "What an infamous lie that is! If Jesus was not God, He could never have tasted death for every man. His soul was made an offering for sin, and into His infinitely capacious soul the sorrows of a world were poured. Only thus could the pressure of man's sin be removed."

Or another figure from the Old Testament, but just as true as of the New Testament, for the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world. It was Hezekiah who said, "Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." What a figure! God taking hold of a man's sin and lifting it, and throwing it behind His back! I wonder where that is? I know it is somewhere where I never intend to be, somewhere where I shall never find them—and somewhere where the devil can never find them—Behind God's back!—He "tasted death for every man."

How did He do it? "He by the grace of God." What did the grace of God do? The grace of God did not violate the law of God's universe, but consistently with His own perfect holiness, without in any way infringing upon His prerogatives or doing violence to His holy nature, God in the infinitude of His wisdom, reinforced by His righteousness, His love, His truth, by all there was of Him, found a way whereby He could receive into Himself our sufferings: "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows . . . the chastisement of

our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Is it not true, dear friends, that the grace of God as manifested in Christ Jesus our Lord is the supreme revelation of the love of God? It is because of that terrible background, because of that tremendous reality that it is written, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself."

Let me ask this one question and I have done: *What if a man deliberately sets himself against that divine provision?* What if he refuses to allow his sins to be cast into that infinite chasm, the immeasurable soul of Jesus Christ? What if he rejects His cross, His suffering, His death, and tramples under foot the BLOOD? What if he unbelievably puts his foot upon God and says, "I will not have him"? I can tell you the answer in one word: HELL! I do not know what it means. I have never felt called upon to expatiate upon it. I have never felt any disposition to discuss the question of the literalness of those dreadful symbols in Scripture—the lake of fire, the fire that is not quenched, the smoke of their torment that ascendeth up for ever and ever. I would rather so preach the gospel that men may never know what it means. I do not know what it means, and I have resolved by the grace of God never to know. I would rather know what Heaven is; and that knowledge is open to every one of us.

But I cannot see what answer we can give to that question in the opening verses of the chapter which I read, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" If this earth could by some means slip from its orbit and begin a journey through space, is it within the scope of human imagination to conceive how it could be recalled from its wild career? If it should slip out! If a man therefore should finally say, "I will not have this man to reign over me. I will cling to my sins; I will have my own way; I will finish my earthly course, and, without Christ, take my chances beyond the grave,"—oh, if you will, you must! But God forbid that any of us should do it! I will not for myself leave my soul's destiny to chance. I want it settled here and now—and forevermore. And though a poor sinner and nothing at all, I dare to say that I know that Jesus Christ is my all in all. I am on the way to heaven—are you? Are you?

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KEY TO THE ABOVE—The fourth row from the bottom of the photograph, counting from the reader's right towards the left:

(See DUBARRY ARTICLE, page 2.)

- 2. **REV. FERNAND GUYOT**, associated with his brother Rev. Georges Guyot, as pastor of the churches at Garenne-Colombes and Rue de Naples.
- 3. **REV. ROBERT DUBARRY**, President of the Association, and pastor of the church at Nimes.
- 4. **REV. GEORGES GUYOT**, Editor of the monthly "Lien Fraternel", treasurer of the Association, and co-pastor of two churches in Paris.

- 5. **REV. AUGUSTE GROSS**, Pastor of the Brussels Church.
- 6. **REV. MAURICE MAFILLE**, Pastor of the church at Croix-Lille.
- 7. **REV. ROBERT EMERY**, Pastor of Tramelan, Switzerland.
- 8. **REV. EMILE GUEDJ**, Pastor of two churches in Paris, at Colombes and rue de Sèvres.
- 9. **REV. FREDERIC JALAGUIER**, Associate Pastor of Nimes, with Mr. Dubarry.

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

HESPELER—On Thursday evening, January 27th, the members and adherents of the Hespeler Church gathered for a farewell supper held in honour of Rev. and Mrs. W. N. Charlton, who are leaving this week to take up the pastorate of the Lindsay Church. After supper, there was a short programme, over which Rev. H. H. Chipchase of Guelph presided. During the programme, Mr. John Reeve, Sr., the only remaining charter member of the church, speaking on behalf of the Deacons' Board, expressed the appreciation of the Hespeler people for the labour of love of the pastor and his wife during the past six years in the Hespeler Church. He also paid personal tribute to the pastor, stating that during the sixty years he had been saved, he had never received more blessing than from Mr. Charlton's ministry. Many were the expressions of love and appreciation, showing the esteem in which Mr. and Mrs. Charlton are held.

Another feature of the programme was the presentation of a substantial purse to Mr. and Mrs. Charlton, as a tangible token of appreciation. Another presentation was also made to them in recognition of their efforts in establishing a Sunday-school some three miles from Hespeler, in the Ellis Church. Mr. and Mrs. Charlton leave us with our prayers and best wishes for a successful ministry in Lindsay.

SPECIAL MEETINGS—Several of our churches are holding special meetings at the present time, and we commend these efforts to the prayers of all our people.

Pastor J. H. Watt is assisting Pastor M. B. Gillion at Bobcaygeon. Pastor J. Scott of Belleville is preaching for one week in Verdun, P.Q. We learn that eighteen hundred homes have already been visited, and invitations extended to the meetings in this latter city.

We rejoice in the zeal our churches show in these special efforts and it is a good sign for the future of our Union that we have a number of pastors who are able and willing to assist other churches in this way.

Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 2 First Quarter Lesson 7 February 13th, 1938

CHRIST AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

Lesson Text: John 7.

Golden Text: "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."—John 7:37.

I. Christ Journeys Alone to the Feast—verses 1-13.

The Feast of Tabernacles was one of the major memorial feasts at which all the male members of the tribes of Israel were required to appear before the Lord. It was held after the ingathering of the fruits of the field, and would correspond to our Harvest Home Festival. For seven days the people lived in booths near the temple, and worshipped God with joy and thanksgiving for His blessing upon their labours (Exod. 23:16; Deut. 16:13-16; Lev. 23:34-36). The eighth day was also observed as a holy day of convocation.

Christ was misunderstood by His brethren, the very ones who were closest to Him by the ties of nature. They wanted Him to show Himself to the people in a spectacular way, that all might proclaim Him as the Messiah. Proximity in the realm of the flesh does not always signify affinity in spirit. They failed to trust Him; they did not comprehend the true character of His mission. Many attend the services of the churches constantly, whose hearts are closed to the message of the Gospel.

To frustrate the efforts of His brothers after the flesh, to give Him publicity which was inopportune, Christ did not join the procession of worshippers who journeyed from Galilee to Jerusalem, but went "as it were in secret".

II. Christ Teaching During the Feast—verses 14-36.

Notice the three groups of people spoken of in this chapter, and notice their several motives; the Jews, whose desire was to arrest Christ, His brothers who wished to have Him acclaimed, and the people whose aim was to watch Him. He dealt differently with all these groups. He answered the

Jews by emphasizing His claims as Son of God; He answered His brethren by teaching instead of performing miracles, and He answered the people by instructing them further as to His Person.

Christ addressed His audience directly and strongly, saying that the message He gave did not originate merely with Himself, but had been delivered to Him by His Father. He gave them a test whereby they might prove the authenticity of His words. Only those whose minds, heart and will were in harmony with God could recognize the source of His authority. The principle He enunciated is true in a wider sphere. Spiritual discernment is more than mere intellectual perception of truth (I. Cor. 2:14); it requires the submission of the will as well as the assent of the mind. Obedience is the first step toward the knowledge of Divine things, for God reveals Himself only to those who are ready to act upon the truth when they know it (John 14:21; Acts 5:32).

The Jews, although they acknowledged Moses as their leader, did not even obey the laws which God had given them through him. They all were sinners, yet they attempted to lay hands upon Christ, the sinless One. He exposed their insincerity, pointing out that they had no scruple about performing circumcision, a work of the law, on the Sabbath Day, yet they objected when Christ performed miracles of grace on that day.

According to the law, the penalty for uttering blasphemy was death by stoning (Lev. 24:16), hence the Scriptures frequently record that when Christ spoke of His relationship to the Father, the Jews made a move to put Him to death. They were prevented from doing so, however. The hour had not yet come when He should lay down His life (John 10:18). Had Christ not been what He claimed to be, He would indeed have been speaking blasphemy. But He was in very truth the Son of God.

To the unbelieving, Christ said, "Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me", but to His own He said "Seek and ye shall find" (Matt. 7:7). To the unbelieving, He said, "Where I am, thither ye cannot come", while to His own He said, "That where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3). The promises of God are conditional, because they are all in Christ (2 Cor. 1:20).

III. Christ Teaching on the Last Day of the Feast—verses 37-53.

On the eighth day of the feast, Christ rose up among the people and uttered a sublime promise and a glorious prophecy. He invited every one who thirsted to come to Him, and partake of the water of life (John 4:14; Isa. 55:1; Rev. 22:17). It seems that on each of the first seven days of this feast, and possibly on the last day also, water brought in a golden vessel from Siloam was poured out, commemorating the Lord's provision of water during the wilderness journey (I Cor. 10:4). In view of this ceremony, the Master's words would be especially significant. He is sufficient for our every need.

The believer would not only receive the blessing of the water of life for himself, but he would be able also to distribute it to others (Isa. 58:11). His heart would become a fountain of perennial freshness. The Holy Spirit, received by faith (Acts 2:38, 39), would become resident within the heart of the believer (John 14:17), empowering him for service (Acts 1:8). This prophecy has been gloriously fulfilled. The Holy Spirit, the Promise of the Father, was bestowed after Christ ascended into heaven (John 16:7; 20:17; Acts 1:4; 2:4).

As might be expected, the people were divided in their opinions concerning the Saviour. It is ever so. Neutrality is impossible, so far as the attitude of the soul to Him is concerned (Matt. 12:30). In your teaching, constantly emphasize the vital importance of a proper relationship existing between each individual and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Even the officers sent to arrest the Christ were impressed with the manner in which He spoke. They found a supporter in the Sanhedrin Council, Nicodemus, the one who had gone to Christ by night (John 3:1). Nicodemus urged the principles of justice and fairness, counselling the chief priests and Pharisees to withhold judgment till they should have an opportunity to become acquainted with Christ and with His work.

Thus they separated, each man to his own house (Acts 4:23), divided from one another, not merely by distance, but also by the divergence of their views concerning the Christ, the Son of God.