

# 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 DECLINE OF PUBLIC MORALS

We had long supposed that no person of moral sense, by which we mean, no person whose conscience is still active, would attempt to justify the practice of gambling. The gambler is a potential thief. He wants something for nothing, and if he thinks at all, must know that he profits by other people's loss.

The evils of gambling are as self-evident as the evils of intemperance. The suicides of Monte Carlo, and of a thousand other less notorious gambling resorts, the multitude of men who have spent weary years behind prison bars, and the many who have ended their lives in such institutions, together with the thousands of families which have been brought to destitution by gambling practices all proclaim the fact that gambling of any sort is essentially immoral.

Canada for the last year or so has been cursed with a gambling mania. We needed no inducements from beyond the sea to stimulate the gambling propensities of many Canadians who were already supplied with sufficiently numerous temptations at home. But the invasion of this country with the Irish sweepstakes propaganda, and the success of a few who are reported to have drawn large prizes of money, seem to have heightened the gambling fever. Now it is seriously proposed that such sweepstakes should be licensed in Ontario for the purpose of raising money for hospitals, and perhaps other charities. It is almost unbelievable that men in public positions could ever countenance such a proposal.

The scheme is as economically stupid as it is morally debasing. Ontario people are taxed heavily enough, it is true; but if more money is needed for hospitals, then our sick should be taken care of. And no right-thinking man or woman in the country would object to paying his or her share of a specific hospital tax.

But the proposal to license sweepstakes in Ontario meets with the cordial approval of Premier Hepburn, and is supported by Mr. Leopold Macaulay, the House Leader of the Conservative party in the Legislature. We are not surprised at Mr. Hepburn, for he never opens his lips on any subject without proving to a demonstration that he is always on the side of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and opposed to anyone who does not approve of this vile trinity. We recog-

nized in the incipient stages of Hepburnism that it was a morally malignant political plague, a thousand times worse than any cancer. We had hoped that, notwithstanding his enforced contact with the infected political group, Mr. Leopold Macaulay would prove to be immune to its virus. Apparently, however, he has fallen a victim to its ravages. We have never read anything, even from Mr. Hepburn, more indefensible, from a moral standpoint, than Mr. Macaulay's apology for supporting the proposal. If everybody will agree to uproot the evil of gambling, he will support such a measure; but as the evil is here, it had better be licensed! It would be just as logical to license every offence prohibited by the criminal code; for while the law prohibits, it can never absolutely prevent the commission of crime.

There has been a general outcry against the proposal from all over the Province, from ministers of all denominations. We felt rather complimented that no newspaper asked our opinion—for the reason that they all knew in advance.

Mr. Hepburn replies to the ministerial protests by saying that clergymen are "hypocrites." It may be that a few ministers and churches have dishonoured the name they bear by the use of lotteries and other such schemes in their churches for the purpose of raising money. Any church or minister—and in this the Roman Catholics are the chief offenders—who has resorted to gambling methods, cannot complain of what Mr. Hepburn has said; for no individual or institution permitting gambling, can consistently protest against the present proposal. However, not more than a small fraction of one per cent. of the ministers and churches of this Province ever countenanced such practices, and ministers and churches that have protested against these things are absolutely sincere in their protest.

Unless ministers and public men of every description awake to a recognition of the steady moral declension of our public life in this Dominion, we shall be exposed to conditions that will be little better than those obtaining in Germany, Italy, or Russia. We have not troubled to make any protest to Mr. Hepburn because he has shown himself on every occasion to be wholly impervious to any moral appeal.

# The Jarvis Street Pulpit

## THE SURETY OF THE BETTER COVENANT

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

Preached in Cooke's Presbyterian Church, at a United Service of the Congregations of Cooke's Presbyterian and Jarvis Street Baptist Churches, Toronto, Sunday Evening, March 27th, 1938

(Stenographically Reported)

"By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better covenant."—Hebrews 7:22.

On the first occasion on which I have had the opportunity to speak generally to the congregation of Cooke's Church I should like, on behalf of Jarvis Street, to express our profound sense of gratitude to you for your great kindness in opening your doors to us in our hour of need. It is one thing to inconvenience one's self, and receive someone just for a night, but to take in a family like ours, to live in your building, week-nights at least, is rather a large order.

When Mr. Thomas first so generously offered it, I said to him, "If a fire should consume your neighbour's house, and the family are happily saved, and you bring them into your house, wrap the children in blankets, perhaps give them something hot to drink—that is just what any of us would do; but to say next morning, "Do not be in a hurry; you may stay as long as you like", is another matter. We were fearful that, while we appraised the generous invitation at its face value, and knew that it was sincerely offered, we were half afraid that we might outstay our welcome, especially as we have three services a week: Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. But Mr. Thomas insisted that that could not be so, and his assurance solved our problem. We have been most happy here as we have been privileged to meet three times a week, and last evening we had a most delightful union Saturday evening prayer service.

I think I should not transgress the bounds of propriety if I were to say to you Cooke's people that about seventeen years ago God brought us to a place where we had no human help: we had to cast ourselves upon God. We began to pray more earnestly perhaps than we had ever done before. Instead of having one prayer meeting weekly, we started a meeting on Monday, and later another on Saturday, then changed the Monday evening to Tuesday. That Saturday evening prayer meeting has been an institution with us for now over seventeen years. There was a time when, as a minister, I supposed I could not possibly surrender the quiet and complete seclusion of that evening in my study; but we all have long since learned the value of coming together to ask God's blessing on the teaching and preaching of the Word on His day. Last evening we had a happy fellowship in our prayer service. Our Jarvis Street people feel now that they have two churches to pray for especially, instead of one; and two ministers to pray for also. We have been having a very happy time together. I said the other night that I should like to have another fire—a fire of a different sort, that these two congregations might be set on fire in a new way, with the fire of the Spirit of God, that so we might be used of God in the proclamation of His glorious gospel.

When we engaged Masséy Hall for our services the manager told us that it was engaged for the evening of March twenty-seventh, but that he thought he could arrange its release. However, the organization that had the

Hall booked for this evening had issued their notices, and found it impossible to change. We were looking about, a congregation of homeless waifs, wondering where we could find shelter for a Sunday evening. Somehow, Mr. Thomas found out about it, and said, "Why not worship with us? Let us have a union service." We had a little battle about the sermon. He insisted he was still master of his own house—and I had to do what this Irishman from across the sea commanded. We are most happy to be here, and I feel that we have much in common; and I pray that as we meditate together on the things of God, the presence and power of the Holy Ghost may be experienced by everyone present.

And now to the sermon. "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better covenant." In one particular the Bible, as the word of God, warns His human creatures against a course of conduct which its divine Author Himself pursues. At one point the Book of truth literally says to us, Do as I say, but not as I do.

The Bible warns us against the danger of becoming surety, even for a friend, against the folly of accepting responsibility for another's conduct; and if one has been snared into such an engagement, it admonishes him to do his utmost to deliver himself as a roe from the hand of the hunter, or a bird from the hand of the fowler. Then it goes further, and tells us that dangerous as it is to become surety for a friend it is even more hazardous to become surety for a stranger: "He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it: and he that hateth suretyship is sure." And yet the Lord Himself has become surety for others—and He has smarted for it! Notwithstanding, He does not hate His suretyship, but rather glories in it as His supreme achievement.

We live in a day when the gospel, by some allegedly superior minds, is assumed to belong to the category of antiquated and even obsolete curiosities. A certain historic interest attaches to crude weapons of primitive warfare, to primitive implements of agriculture, and to other things that were fashioned by human hands in days gone by; and we are disposed sometimes to boast that we have left all these things far behind us. A few weeks ago I visited Mr. Ford's museum, and was intensely interested in the assembly of specimens of different methods of transportation, from the oxcart to the aeroplane. I saw, too, the reproduction of Mr. Edison's laboratory, brought entire from the place where it had formerly been, with all the furnishings and instruments employed by that wizard of the science of electricity, in his many inventions, and particularly in his production of the light which now we enjoy. All these things are assembled in a great museum in Detroit.

There are some people who assume that the gospel ought to be put in a museum too. But these things to which I have referred belong to the realm of human effort; they have to do with the progress of human

science, with the development of human knowledge and achievement in a great variety of directions. But there is a realm which is fixed, even in its mutability. The German chemists are going to make Germany independent, or measurably independent, of the operation of Nature's laws. They propose to produce all that may be necessary for the sustenance of seventy or eighty millions of people by various synthetic processes. But all their productions will be but poor imitations of the direct work of Nature—which is another name for God.

It is true that we have outgrown the kerosene lamp and the dip candle, and that electricity has superseded all these things. And yet never forget that men turn out the brightest of their lights when God's sun comes up. The gospel belongs to the domain of divine things, and said a wise man, "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever." And though your Pastor and his congregation, and the Jarvis Street Pastor and his congregation, may be voted by some people to be somewhat laggard in their progress, and unable to keep abreast of the times, yet in the glorious gospel of the blessed God we are sure that we have a provision of His grace that is even more abiding than the sun, and as unalterable as any of the works of His hand.

I want to try to show you this evening if I can that the finality of the revelation of God in Christ Jesus, is proclaimed by the very fact of its perfection. We have in the gospel the finality of perfection and the perfection of finality; a way of salvation that abides. Some would relegate to the limbo of outworn superstition the gospel, and assume that its light, like that of the dip candle, must give place to brighter luminaries; they speak as though the sword of the Spirit were little better than a blunderbuss.

Let us look at some of the features of this "better covenant", examine the principle of divine suretyship upon which it is made to depend, and then admire and adore the Person of the divine Surety Himself by whom its provisions are eternally guaranteed.

#### I.

Let us then observe SOME OF THE FEATURES OF THE COVENANT DESCRIBED AS "BETTER".

What are we to understand by this "better covenant"? It is named in Holy Writ in juxtaposition and contrast with what is called "old": "In that He said a new covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." Here is the "new" testament in contrast with the "old". There are two very distinct covenants, that of Sinai, and of Calvary; that of law, and that of grace. The new covenant is said to be "better", better than the old; and that new covenant embraces the whole scheme of divine redemption.

Why is it "better?" Because *it is exclusively divine*. There is no human element in it. It is a covenant the parties to which are the Persons of the glorious Trinity. Its provisions spring from the divine engagement from the foundation of the world, to effect the redemption of fallen man. There is no human condition in it. I proclaim a doctrine which is all but forgotten among a great many people who call themselves evangelically orthodox. The fact is that as God was the solitary Worker in the original creation, and so secured to Himself the exclusive glory of it, so is He the exclusive Worker in the new creation, and the entire glory of it must be His alone. Oh that men could understand that God Himself has undertaken to redeem a ruined world! That He did not

wait for the wisdom of some modern professor! That He was not dependent upon the evolution of someone's religious consciousness! Before He laid the foundations of the earth and provided for all human need, He anticipated our utmost moral and spiritual requirements, and provided, by the covenant which He Himself made with Himself, a way whereby His banished should not be expelled from Him.

They know nothing of the gospel who do not clearly apprehend that it is entirely of grace, absolutely exclusive of human works or human merit; even through "the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was so ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by Him do believe in God". Thus salvation is wholly of grace; which means that it is of God, not of man.

The covenant was "better" in that it was "established", as Mr. Thomas read to you this evening, "upon better promises." Surely we have learned that we need some better promise than men are able to make! I say, the promises of the new covenant are without condition: "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." God does not change His mind. Who would be so sanguine, so incorrigibly optimistic, so superlatively credulous, as to believe anything Adolf Hitler says? He said the other day that God helps those who help themselves, and "God has helped us." It is evidently a case of mistaken identity: the one that Hitler calls God is the devil, not the God of this covenant. Who would depend upon the engagements of Germany or of Italy—or of some other highly-placed officials nearer home? Who would believe them? We need, for the full assurance of hope, if we are to have any comfort in our own spirits, if indeed we are to look into the future and reckon ourselves as even now possessing something that is promised—we need a better promise than any man can make to us; for however sincere, however well intentioned, however noble his aim, at the best a man is a man, subject to all human limitations, and even though he intends to implement his promises, he may find himself unable to do so. But the promises of the "better" covenant are the promises of the "God that cannot lie"; they are promises that can never be broken.

It is a "better" covenant in that *it substitutes, by promise, subjective grace for objective righteousness*. The law was given amidst smoke and flame, and all the thunders of Sinai; and Moses, who had been in the immediate presence of God, returning to the people brought with him such a radiance from afar that the people could not look upon him, and he had to veil his face. Even the law, a transcript of the divine righteousness, wrapping up in itself the truth, the justice, and the faithfulness of God, filled the people with terror. So fearful was the sight that even Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." The law, I say, was a transcript of the divine nature, "This do, and thou shalt live." Failing it, what terrible penalties were prescribed! But saith the Lord, "I will make a new covenant". What shall be the terms of that new covenant? "I will not write my law on tables of stone, objectively and in the abstract; but I will write it in their minds, and put it in their hearts. I will change their natures; I will bring them into harmony with my law, and make them want to do what they ought to do; and enable them to do, by divine impulsion what they were unable to do by legal compulsion."

Being a Christian is vastly more and better than laborously striving toward the attainment of some ideal. It means that, by the promise of the better covenant, God undertakes, not to stand apart and say, "This do", but to come into our hearts, changing our natures, putting His Spirit within us, and realizing in us that which was conceived in the divine mind when in the beginning He said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

The promise of the better covenant provides grace and mercy instead of justice. Justice? Yes, but mixed with mercy, and all other divine qualities as represented by the immeasurable word, grace. A better covenant, a better way, because perfect and final; there can be no change from this. Whatever the gospel be, my dear friends, in the plan and purpose of God, it is the divine ultimatum. God has nothing more to say in grace to this sinful world than He has already said in the person of His Son: "God . . . in these last days has spoken unto us by his Son." When He instituted the feast of remembrance He said, "This do" until clever men shall find a better salvation for you? "This do" until by the increase of learning, and the rapid advance of science, you shall discover that men do not need salvation? No! No! "This do . . . till he come." To the last syllable of recorded time, we shall never need another gospel than the one He has given us, never need another covenant than that which He has established with us. It is "better" because the old, having failed through the weakness of the flesh, is superseded by the finality of Christ Jesus. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

What a glorious thing it is to have something that does not change! The old Book abides. Let nobody imagine that we are on the losing side when we abide by the gospel, for if all the critics should succeed in persuading present-day believers that their faith is vain, if all the Bibles could be gathered together and burned, and there should not be left in all the world in any pulpit or in any museum a single copy of the Word—what then? "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." There is a copy of the Book on file up there. It is the "better" covenant. Hallelujah for such a gospel!

## II.

Let us think for a few minutes on the principle of suretyship. Here Someone is said to be made the surety of the better covenant. Granting that the scheme of things is satisfactory, assuming that the covenant as it stands, as revealed to us, needs no amendment, the question is, How are its provisions to be executed? It is well enough in the abstract, but how are the provisions of the covenant to be fulfilled? In order that they might be fulfilled, God made Someone the surety of the better covenant, commissioned Someone to fulfil its terms, and to see that nothing of all that He has spoken should fall to the ground.

What were those terms? If you read the context—the sixth to the eighth chapters, in fact, the whole Epistle to the Hebrews—you will find that this covenant is grounded in *the righteousness of God*. God could not forgive you and me, and leave a deficit perpetually inscribed in His book. God is a God of order. He must maintain the moral balance. He cannot acquit the wicked.

And in order that we may have right dealings with God, He has established this better covenant upon foundations of righteousness. He does not propose to save us at the sacrifice of righteousness. He does not propose to lower His standard, and admit to His presence one who is short measure, below the pattern of the divine ideal. If God yielded anything in His domain, He would cease to be God.

Playfully Mr. Thomas and I talked about this service when he intimated that in Cooke's Church he was going to have his way. Properly so. If a man cannot be master in his own house, where can he be master? I hope all you Elders know that!

We have not learned the alphabet of truth, we have not found a place at which to begin to think accurately, until we have enthroned God as over all, blessed for ever, sovereign of all realms, Whom no one can defeat. When He makes a promise to men, He can do no violence to His own nature; and He could not forgive us, He could not receive us, had we a righteousness less perfect than His own. So He sent One to be the Surety of the new covenant, to provide that righteousness. I will take second place to no man in magnifying the importance of the death of Christ, but the death of Christ would have had no value apart from the life of Christ.

Why did He come? "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Jesus Christ came to do your day's work for you, to fulfil the utmost requirement of the holy law of God. He wrought out a flawless righteousness. He failed in nothing; and with the cross in prospect He said, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." And ere He bowed His head, He thrilled the universe with His triumphant cry, "It is finished." At last a Man had been born, had lived, had died, who never at any point transgressed the commandment of God. A righteousness perfect and complete was His, and that was indispensable to the fulfilment of the covenant.

Moreover, He provided a surety to pay the penalty of all the infractions of that righteousness. Why did He die? What was the significance of His death? The significance of His death was just this: His death was the payment of a penalty. In a discussion some years ago a certain professor said, "I admit that He suffered for us, but not that He endured our punishment. I will not have that." Of what value would be a perfect righteousness provided, and its imputation to us made possible, if the debt our sins have incurred were not paid? The cross could have no significance, no value, did it not provide for meeting the requirements of God's holy law. This provision was made by the laying down of the "endless life" of the Surety. Man's debt to the holy law of God must be paid.

"Complete atonement Thou hast made,  
And to the utmost farthing paid,  
Whate'er Thy people owed:  
Nor can His wrath on me take place  
While covered by His righteousness  
And sprinkled by His blood.

"Since Thou hast my discharge procured  
And freely in my room endured,  
The whole of wrath divine;  
Payment God cannot twice demand,  
First at my bleeding Surety's hand,  
And then again at mine."

He died to pay the utmost farthing of your indebtedness, because He was the Surety of the covenant. Did

you ever endorse anyone's note? I have known some people who have done so. One set his signature to the note, and the other man did not pay—therefore the surety had to pay. Jesus Christ endorsed your note, and when you could not pay, He paid. In order that the blessing of the covenant might be yours, He guaranteed that there should be no default; it should be paid to the utmost.

He was surety also in this, that *He exemplified the effects of the execution of the provisions of that covenant.* He died, and He was buried. I know that He was our Substitute, our Representative, in His atoning death; but He came to be the second Adam, the Lord from heaven; and when He died He went into the grave as a poor sinner upon whom the law had wrought its will, and from whom the holy law of God could exact no more. And on the third day, as a man, your representative and mine, He emerged from the grave—

"Death cannot keep his prey—  
Jesus, my Saviour!  
He tore the bars away—  
Jesus, my Lord!

"Up from the grave He arose,  
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes;  
He arose a victor from the dark domain,  
And He lives forever with His Saints to reign;  
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!"

Why did He come? To "destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage". As though one should say, "I am afraid to go into the grave; I am afraid to go into the prisonhouse," therefore the Surety of the covenant said, "I will go for you." And when the women came expecting to find the prison-door sealed, it was open. "He is not here: he is risen."

Later He ascended to the Father's right hand, into the Father's presence, the "first-fruits of them that slept"; the Guarantor that all the provisions of the better covenant would be fulfilled to the letter, and that the sinner receiving Him should have a righteousness not his own, by virtue of a death that was not his own; and should share in those powers released by the resurrection of Another—and at last His sovereign grace would present poor sinful men without fault before the throne of God. Is not that a marvellous salvation?

### III.

And now this word before I send you away. "By so much was Jesus made the surety of a better covenant." "BY SO MUCH"! What does that mean? The answer is found in THE PERSON OF THE SURETY. How did it come to pass that Jesus was made the Surety of the covenant? And how is the covenant guaranteed by the fact that He is its Surety? Other priests, the priests of what is called in the context, the Levitical priesthood, "were not suffered to continue by reason of death." They died. They were not even able to continuously mediate the advantages of the old covenant, nor perpetually to exercise the symbolic ministries which foreshadowed the blessings of the "new" covenant. They died! But this Man! Oh this Man! He was made "not after the power of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless (an indissoluble) life." He was made after the power, the quality, of a life upon which Death had no power, an everlasting Surety, One Who would live forever. He was such an one whom God appointed.

A man draws his will—I was in a banker's office in California one day, and the manager had under the glass

of his desk the question, "Have you made your will?" Then there was a word of advice, on the wisdom of making some bank or trust company his executor, for the reason that individuals die, but corporations continue. A man makes his will, and names someone as executor—and it may be the executor will die before the man does, who then will execute his will? The Lord made a covenant, a testament, a will, if you like. He had to appoint someone as surety who would execute its provisions—and He selected One who could never die. You say, "But He did die." "No man taketh it (my life) from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." On Him Death had no power. Over Him, it exercised no authority. He gave His life; but He took it again. And he lives as the High Priest and Apostle of our profession, our Substitute, the Surety and Executor of the better covenant.

The economy of which the Levitical priesthood was representative was temporary in its character; it waxed old and vanished away. But *this Surety was made the surety of a covenant that should continue in force for ever.* What is the meaning of that, "By so much"? Just this. The priests of the old order were made priests without an oath, but this with an oath by Him Who swear unto Him, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." You know the meaning of that? "First being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem which is, King of Peace." There can be no peace without righteousness. This Surety of the "better covenant" is appointed by the oath of the Eternal Who "willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things"—what does that mean? The word of God was enough, but to leave us without excuse for unbelief, He sealed it "by an oath: that by two immutable things—His word and His oath—in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."

He "confirmed it with an oath" by appointing Jesus Christ as the Executor of the new testament. So to speak, He swore Him in to His office. The great God, because He could swear by none greater, swear by Himself; and said to Christ, "Thou art, a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec; Thou shalt never have a successor; forevermore thou shalt live to fulfil the provisions of this covenant." "BY SO MUCH" was Jesus Christ made the Surety of a "better covenant".

Can you suggest any substitute for Jesus Christ? Do you dare to propose any improvement upon the divine programme?

There is a story in the Old Testament which I think will gather up in itself all that I have said to you. Genesis is as full of Jesus as Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. The Old Testament is just as full of the gospel as the New; everything is foreshadowed there.

There was a time when an old man, who had lived through prosperous days, came to a day of great dearth and destitution. People were everywhere perishing for want of bread. He said to his sons, "I have heard that there is corn in Egypt; get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die." They went down, ten of them. You know the story of how they met with a stranger, the governor of the land, who

spoke to them through an interpreter, looking them through and through as he said to them, "Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land ye are come." "We are all one man's sons. Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not." I have imagined the governor's looking with a still deeper penetration, saying to them, "Repeat that again." "Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not." The governor said, "If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses: but bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die."

They went back and told their father all they had seen in Egypt. After a while the corn was used up, and Jacob said, "Go again, buy us a little food." But Judah said, "The man did solemnly protest unto us saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you." But Jacob answered, "Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me. No! No! Benjamin shall not go." But the supply of corn diminished until at last they were on the verge of starvation, and the father said, "You must go into Egypt." But, said they, "The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother? and we told him according to the tenor of these words: could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down?" At last one stood forth. Did you notice as Mr. Thomas read this evening: "It is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood"? It was Judah who stepped forward and said to his father, "Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, and also our little ones. I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever."

At last the old man said, in effect, "All right! I will hold you responsible, Judah, for bringing Benjamin back." You know how, when they reached Egypt, they got into trouble; the cup was found in Benjamin's sack, and they were all brought back again; and the stern governor said, "The man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father." But Judah said, "I cannot go home without him. When I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life; it shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die; and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave. For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame for ever."

When he had finished there were tears in the governor's eyes as he said, "Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren, saying, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt." Another, a Greater, said respecting you and me, when He saw the terms of the covenant into which He had entered, "I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before

thee, then let me bear the blame for ever." The Lord Jesus is solemnly bound to present you and me faultless in the presence of His glory if we trust in Him. There is not power in earth or in hell sufficient to take us out of His hand.

"He bore on the tree the sentence for me,  
And now both the Surety and sinner are free.  
"And though here below, 'mid sorrow and woe,  
My place is in heaven with Jesus, I know.  
"And this I shall find, for such is His mind,  
He'll not be in glory, and leave me behind."

Our Surety is there, and we too if we trust in Him shall appear before the Father's presence.

Is there an unconverted man or woman here this evening, a man or woman without the full assurance of faith? Is anyone here who cannot say, "I know I have eternal life"? Whether you are a church member or not, are you as sure of heaven as if you were walking the golden streets? I give it as my testimony to the inviolability, the dependability, of the word of God: I am myself as certain of heaven as ever I shall be when I have been a million years in glory. Why? Because "by so much" is Jesus Christ made the surety of this better covenant. We can rest upon His word; we can believe His promise. I came to Him and asked Him for salvation, and He challenged me. He seemed to say, "And why should you be saved?" I answered Him, "Thou has promised."

"And heaven came down my soul to greet,  
And glory crowned the mercy seat."

I have been saved ever since. Trust Him! Trust Him!  
Trust Him now and forever.

Prayer by Rev. Wm. Thomas:

Spirit of God, may no one leave this church to-night until Jesus Christ has been received as Saviour and Lord, until all present are within the covenant of Thy grace, and the enjoyment of the peace of God that passeth all understanding. O Father, we thank Thee for this irresistible presentation of the gospel of Thy sovereign grace, of its majesty, its completeness, and its power, for time and for eternity. Amen.

### THE JARVIS STREET BUILDING

For the information of our friends we may say that the appraisers are still at work estimating the extent of the loss to our building, so that we are unable to touch anything; but must wait until this is completed, and the insurance matter adjusted.

### THE WEEK-END IN JARVIS STREET

Last Sunday was a good day for the Jarvis Street Church family. Notwithstanding we were away from home, we had approximately a thousand in the School Sunday morning, and a good congregation at the morning service. As we were unable to obtain Massey Hall for this one Sunday evening, we had been generously invited by the minister and congregation of Cooke's Presbyterian Church to hold a union service in that church. We had a most happy time. There was a great congregation. The singing was led by the joint choirs, and the Jarvis Street orchestra, with Mr. Penney and Mr. Hutchinson of Jarvis Street at the organ and piano respectively, and Mr. Brown of Cooke's Church as conductor. The service was conducted by Rev. Wm. Thomas, M.A., minister of Cooke's Church; the sermon published in this issue was preached by the Pastor of Jarvis Street.

We are most grateful, once again we say, for the abundant hospitality of the friends of Cooke's Church in general, and of Rev. Wm. Thomas in particular.

Next Sunday all services will be held in Massey Hall, and thereafter; all week-night services, as usual, in Cooke's Church. The Saturday evening meeting hereafter will be regarded as a united prayer meeting of the two congregations.

**ANOTHER TORONTO CHURCH FIRE**

We print below a report which had first place in the evening papers of Toronto on Saturday, March 26th. There is no shadow of doubt that the fire, which might easily have destroyed the Bond Street Church, was of incendiary origin. We suggest no explanation of the fact. It would appear that some enemy of religion was bent upon destruction.

For the information of our friends we may say that the Fire Marshal's Department of the Ontario Government have searched as diligently as possible into the cause of the Jarvis Street fire, and have reached the very definite conclusion that there is absolutely no evidence that the fire was caused by defective wiring. The requirements of both the Underwriters' Association and the Government had been complied with to the letter, and all wiring officially approved. That the fire did not originate in the organ—for the reason that it was impossible in this case—is equally certain. That it was not caused by spontaneous combustion, or by any carelessness on the part of the janitors of the church, is equally certain. How it originated, we do not know. And whether the report below of the attempt to burn Evangel Temple, throws any light upon the problem, we will not presume to say, but leave it to our readers to judge.

**"SIMULTANEOUS FIRES IN BOND ST. CHURCH DECLARED INCENDIARY"**

**"Rev. H. E. Winburn Warned by 'Phone as Dr. Shields' Church Burned**

**"DELIBERATELY SET"**

*(From The Toronto Daily Star, Saturday, March 26, 1938).*

"At the time Jarvis Street Baptist Church was burning a few weeks ago, Rev. H. E. Winburn, Pastor of the Evangel Temple, Bond and Dundas Sts., received an anonymous telephone call warning him that 'Evangel Temple will be the next'."

"Shortly after one o'clock to-day fire broke out simultaneously in both ends of the Temple and by the time fire reels arrived was blazing in both the choir room at the northeast end of the ground floor, and along the wall of the balcony at the southwest end of the building.

"The arson squad, called to investigate, pronounced the fires incendiary. The blaze was extinguished in about 15 minutes. Damage totalled about \$1,000 and was all covered by insurance, Mr. Winburn said.

"Asked if he had any enemies who might have been responsible for the blaze, the pastor answered: 'I don't know, we have been fighting against sin. I had been watching the fire at Jarvis St. Church for about an hour,' the pastor said. 'I no sooner got back to my own office than the telephone rang and a voice said, "T. T. Shields" church is burning down now; Evangel Temple will probably be next.'"

"James Coyle, Shuter St.; E. S. B. Pennington, Shuter St.; and Trevor Wright, Dundas St. W., were gathered in the prayer room, where one of the fires broke out. 'A few minutes before the fire—just long enough for it to get a start—a stranger walked into the room where we were praying,' said Mr. Pennington. 'He said in a harsh voice, Tell me where I can see the janitor. When the smoke started to come up, I ran to the back stairway, but I saw it was too hot to go down that way, so we made our way down the other stairs,' said Mr. Wright. 'We followed the smoke in toward the choir room and when saw the flames we ran to the office and pounded on the door, the janitor was there and turned in the alarm.'

**Find Trace of Wine**

"In the choir room where flames completely destroyed a row of wooden lockers, police found three bottles in the bottom of a charred locker. Originally catsup bottles, they contained wine, according to police officers.

"All kinds of people come into this building," said Det. Sgt. Walter Trinnell. "The church gives them refuge during

the day. Anyone of them might have brought a bottle of wine in."

"Rev. Mr. Winburn examining the bottles, stated the wine was not the type used at communion services.

"There is no doubt about this being a set fire," said Sergt. Trinnell. "Everything points to it."

"Other officers taking part in the investigation included Special Agent N. Mousley of the city arson squad and Det. Sergt. W. R. McConnell."

**FURTHER LETTERS OF SYMPATHY**

We are still receiving messages from more distant points, expressing sympathy with us in the loss of our building by fire. We shall wait a week or so, and then publish a further list.

**NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES**

**ESSEX—Rev. J. Fullard.** We are glad at this time to report progress and blessing. Our Happy Hour is growing each week. Last Friday the attendance reached 61. In the Sunday School we have been striving for some time to reach the 100 mark and last Sunday there were 108 in attendance. When it is considered that in Essex there are nine churches in a population of about 1,700 we feel we have much cause to rejoice in the Lord. Last Sunday evening we were happy to see a young woman receive Christ as her Saviour.

When our pastor walked out of the Sunday School room into the church after the last Happy Hour, he was surprised to find a large company of people gathered to celebrate the beginning of his seventh year as pastor of the Essex church. A happy spiritual programme and a time of fellowship were enjoyed, during which a large number of the Lord's people testified of the blessing received during Mr. Fullard's ministry. Mr. and Mrs. Fullard were showered with presents as a token of esteem.

**SEMINARY NOTES.** Rev. J. B. Daggett of Kingston, Nova Scotia, was a welcome visitor to the Seminary last week. Mr. Daggett spoke to the students at the chapel service and brought greetings from the Kingston Bible College, of which he is the founder. This brother has served for forty years in the Baptist ministry in the Maritime Provinces, and it was a source of inspiration to our student body to hear of this splendid work set for the defense of the gospel in a part of Canada that is suffering a famine of the Word.

**SARNIA—Pastor W. H. MacBain.** On Tuesday, March 22nd, Temple Baptist Church, Sarnia, held its first baptismal service in the Courtright Baptist Church. Mr. MacBain, the pastor of Temple Baptist Church, brought the message, and

*(Continued on page 8)*

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## Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 2. First Quarter. Lesson 15. April 10th, 1938.

### CHRIST THE TRUE VINE

Lesson Text: John 15.

Golden Text: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."—John 15:7.

#### I. The Union of the Believer with Christ—verses 1-17.

The Parable of the Vine and the Branches set forth the truth concerning the vital union which exists between Christ and His own. He is the true vine, the genuine, essential vine, the reality of which a vine is but the symbol. He is the source from which the believers derive their life and spiritual nourishment. The union of vine and branches is not an artificial one, but is an organic unity of life and destiny (1 Cor. 6:17; 12:13). God Himself is the owner of the vineyard, responsible for its welfare and concerned as to its success. He is glorified when much fruit is produced.

The Greek word translated "taketh away" (verse 2) means primarily 'lift' or 'raise up', as well as 'lift and remove'. The reference may be to the treatment of an unfruitful branch which is trailing along the ground, easily bruised and injured. The vinedresser will lift it up, away from the dangers of its position to a place where it is exposed to light and sunshine. Many a Christian clings too fondly to the associations of earth, and God desires to raise him to the sphere of perfect fellowship with Himself (Col. 3:5).

The fruitful branch is already clean because of its association with the vine (John 13:1; Eph. 5:26), but it must be purged or pruned. Many outgrowths and unnecessary shoots must be cut away with a sharp instrument (Heb. 4:12). So would our Father assist us to rid our lives of all that hinders our fruitfulness—the jealousy, the doubt, the pride, the unforgetting spirit. Let us judge ourselves, lest the Father be compelled to send disciplinary judgments of trial or trouble to bring us to Himself (1 Cor. 11:31, 32).

Fruit itself is the spontaneous natural result of life (Gal. 5:22), not of effort, but strenuous endeavour is necessary that conditions favourable to growth and productiveness be maintained. We are to abide in Him, as He abides in us. Teachers might find an illustration useful just here. The blacksmith puts the iron into the fire, but presently the fire enters into the iron. A child dips his pail into the lake; the water is in the pail, and the pail is in the water. Christ Himself is our life (Col. 3:4), and in the person of His Holy Spirit dwells within our hearts (John 14:17).

The branches which did not abide in the vine may represent apostates, who, having received an intellectual knowledge of the truth of Christ, turn away from Him (2 Peter 2:20, 21). They are professors, not possessors. They are like branches which do not have their dwelling in the vine, but are severed from the parent stem, and though they may look green for a time, will soon wither, die, and be burned (Matt. 13:40-42).

The Christian who has his dwelling-place in the secret place of the Most High, and who hides the Word of God in his heart (Psa. 91:1; 119:11), will find that his will becomes conformed to his Master's will, and he will pray for that which is the line of his Father's holy purposes. Such prayer will be heard (John 14:13).

To abide in the love of God is to be at home with Him. It is to remain in the sphere of His love (Jude 21) by constant obedience to His commands.

In the Old Testament, the grapevine, the grape and the juice are symbolic of natural joy (Psa. 104:15). Hence the Nazarite was forbidden to partake of anything pertaining to the vine (Num. 6:3, 4). Christ is the true vine, the possessor and giver of supernatural joy which is holy and heavenly, and is not inconsistent with tribulation and affliction (John 16:24; 17:13; Acts 13:50-52; 1 Thess. 1:6).

Fruitfulness, joy and love toward God and toward his fellows will characterize the true disciple of our Lord. God's love toward men will be shed abroad in his heart through the Spirit of God (Rom. 5:5), that love which was made

manifest at the cross, when Christ died, not for His friends, but for His enemies (Rom. 5:10; John 3:16; 1 John 3:16).

Under ordinary conditions of life, a servant is expected to obey his master's commands, even though he knows nothing of that master's purposes. The Christian, though a bond-slave of Christ, is honoured by being admitted into the confidence of the Lord, receiving a revelation as to His secret counsels (Psa. 25:14).

#### II. The Separation of the Believer From the World—verses 18-27.

Union with Christ involves separation from the world. The world-system is ever at enmity with Christ and with His people (1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4). The world which crucified Christ will also persecute those who belong to Him. The servant must expect to be treated as the Master was treated (Matt. 10:24, 25; John 13:16).

And yet, the world has no excuse for its hatred of Christ (Psa. 69:4; Rom. 1:20; 3:19). He came as the light to reveal to men their sin, but they rejected the light, preferring the darkness (John 3:19). Now they can find no disguising cloak to conceal their iniquity (John 9:41). Christ performed miracles to demonstrate that He was God, but they refused to accept the evidence, and in spurning the Son, spurned the Father also (John 5:23; 1 John 2:23).

Even though living in the midst of an unbelieving world, the disciples would be encouraged by the testimony of the Holy Spirit of truth, sent from the Father to show them the things of Christ (John 14:26). They, too, would be witnesses of His grace, and of His glory (Acts 1:8; 5:32; Luke 24:48; 1 Pet. 5:1; 2 Pet. 1:16).

#### NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

(Continued from page 6)

baptized six upon profession of faith in Jesus Christ, one of whom had professed faith in Christ on Sunday. Pastor J. H. Watt of Courtright presided at the meeting, and special music was brought by the Sarnia Church.

The Lord continues to bless the work in Temple Baptist Church in the salvation of souls, and in increased attendance at all services. They covet the prayers of all WITNESS readers.

#### REV. ROBERT DUBARRY IN CANADA

Dr. Dubarry, the president of the Evangelical Association of French speaking Baptist Churches, has received the heartiest welcome on every hand in the course of his itinerary in United States. In the last number of THE GOSPEL WITNESS we told something of his visit to Detroit and to the Pacific Coast. Brother Dubarry is now in Texas, and will shortly leave for the Eastern States. Dr. H. G. Hamilton, the genial pastor of the First Baptist Church, Buffalo, is arranging the itinerary in Western New York State.

The week of April 10th will, God willing, see Mr. Dubarry begin his visitation of the Canadian Baptist Churches. Thanks to the whole-hearted co-operation of our pastors and churches, every evening of the first three weeks, with one or two exceptions, has been arranged for. The arrangements for the rest of the churches will be completed in the near future.

It is the plan of the Board, where possible, to make use of Mr. Dubarry's visit to our churches to present the entire missionary programme of the Union, home and foreign work included. Thus our churches will have before them a comprehensive view of our missionary enterprises that will spur them on to more earnest prayer and more sacrificial support.

It is the earnest hope and prayer of the Board that Mr. Dubarry's coming to us will be the means of a spiritual enrichment of our churches. The Lord's work, either at home or abroad, is not accomplished by might or by prayer, nor even primarily by money, granted that it is a necessary commodity, but "by My Spirit, saith the Lord". Missionary effort springs from a deeper experience of spiritual things, and the two are always intimately related. Pastor Dubarry has been a pastor of the same church for thirty-five years, where his ministry has been very fruitful, and he has made it his business for many years to be a friend to smaller churches and their pastors. He is an evangelist at large in Europe, preaching the gospel and establishing groups of believers in the apostolic manner. We are confident that the coming of such an honoured servant of God as this will be a source of much encouragement to our people in our missionary work at home as well as in that abroad.