

The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF EVANGELICAL PRINCIPLES
AND IN DEFENCE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.

\$2.00 Per Year; Postpaid, to any address. 5c Per Single Copy.

Editor: T. T. SHIELDS

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

Address Correspondence: THE GOSPEL WITNESS, 180 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2, Canada.
Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada.

Vol. 17, No. 2

TORONTO, MAY 19, 1938

Whole Number 835

TALKING FOR TALK'S SAKE

One evening some years ago a young woman called at our house to enquire the way of life. She was a school-teacher, and evidently a thoughtful girl. We endeavoured to explain the way of salvation by grace through faith, and as she was leaving gave her a very earnest invitation to attend prayer-meeting. To which she replied, "Is there such a thing? I never attended a prayer meeting." Then she explained, saying, "I have been to a great many meetings called prayer-meetings, at which the leaders seemed to be more concerned to hold a meeting, and to make it a success as a meeting, than they were to pray."

It was a discerning remark. We too have known meetings which were chiefly occupied with exhortations to "take part", and with responses thereto. How different when people gather simply to pray, when they have no concern about numbers, manifestly no desire to make an impression upon anyone, or to work up a successful meeting; but in utter forgetfulness of all these matters, like little children, merely talk with God!

There is, however, a great deal of talking for the sake of talking, both in prayer and preaching. We have known some men who professed to be very fond of fishing, a careful observation of whom has convinced us that they loved fishing more than the fish. They can sit for hours together in a boat, and hold a rod, and though through the livelong day they never get a bite, they come home in the evening perfectly satisfied with their day's fishing. And we have heard preachers who so impressed us. The great matter with them was to preach a sermon, or make a speech, of such a character as would seem to please people—and feel perfectly happy if they succeeded in this, even though the sermon or speech accomplished nothing else.

We have heard a great deal of street preaching of this character. We have heard men who seemed to imagine they were preaching, or that they were at least exercising some natural oratorical gift, when all they were doing was pouring forth a lot of words which had little or no meaning, but who seemed to think that lung-power was an adequate substitute for brain-power, and that noise might justly be appraised as having equal value with sense.

We ought to "pray without ceasing". We ought to "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season". "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." But

prayer should be a laying hold of God, real converse with the Skies; and should never be offered for the sake of "much speaking". All honour to the men who go out into the highways and the hedges and compel men to come in, that God's house may be filled, who publicly and privately, on every possible convenient occasion, testify to the power of the gospel; but those of us who preach may well search our hearts diligently, lest our speech and our preaching should be either with enticing words such as man's wisdom teacheth, or, otherwise, a darkening of wisdom by words without knowledge, and not "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

Mr. Spurgeon once said that it is permissible for a preacher sometimes to wander from his subject, provided he always sticks to his object. Which is quite true provided, first, that his object shall be the glory of God, and, secondly, either the salvation of the sinner or the edification of the saint.

In our day, in any city or town of considerable size, one cannot walk many blocks without coming upon a new religious "centre" of some sort; and very frequently such places exist to give someone an opportunity to talk. Many of those who profess to preach are destitute of biblical knowledge, and equally devoid of ordinary common sense. But though they can pour out words like straw from a threshing-machine, without so much as a kernel of wheat, and utterly without logical sequence, they imagine they are preaching. Such volubility is neither glorifying to God nor edifying to man. There is "a time to keep silent, and a time to speak." Unless and until we have something to say worth saying, let us hold our peace.

Our private speech is to be always with grace seasoned with salt: how much more our public preaching. We would not, however, write a word for the discouragement of any earnest soul who is bent upon doing the Lord's work. Countless thousands have been converted through hearing what seemed to be a stray word spoken by some street preacher. We ought to have more of it: not less. But even the street preacher should be more than a mere exhorter.

He must do vastly more than talk: he must preach the Word. And as men cannot hear without a preacher, neither can one preach except he be sent; and every man really sent of God will be a man with a message.

JARVIS STREET ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of Jarvis Street Church was held in Cooke's Presbyterian Church, Thursday evening, May 12th. There was a large attendance of members, and reports for the year, April 1st, 1937 to March 31st, 1938, from all departments, were submitted. The reports were gratifying, but as the whole ground was covered in the report of the Deacon's Board, we content ourselves with publishing that report, which was as follows:

REPORT OF THE DEACONS' BOARD PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CHURCH, BY DEACON J. E. JENNINGS, THURSDAY EVENING

May 12th, 1938, at 8.00 p.m.

The year just concluded has been one of unusual difficulty to Jarvis Street Church. On the last day of March, 1937, the Pastor was taken ill, and for the first four months of the year, April 1st to August 1st, he was out of his pulpit. His place was ably and acceptably filled by several supplies, but naturally the absence from all the affairs of the church of the Pastor himself had some effect upon the work of the church in general.

Before the Pastor was able to return to his pulpit the polio epidemic began, and on account of the general fear, made serious inroads upon the School, and made many people timid about attending any public service. Then in the last month of the church year, on March 4th, the church building was destroyed by fire. So that in some respects, Jarvis Street Church has had a taste of Job's experience of successive disasters.

Notwithstanding these things, however, as a church we have very much for which to be thankful. A spirit of delightful unity continues to characterize our church life, and throughout the year there has been the heartiest co-operation on the part of the membership in all the work of the church.

During the Pastor's illness and protracted absence the members of the church stood nobly by, and the attendance was splendidly maintained.

All things considered, the financial report for the year is gratifying, but the Deacons would call attention to the fact that there are still a fair number in the membership of the church who do not contribute to the church funds through the weekly offering, and we suggest that the adoption of this report should be considered as an instruction to the Deacons to make every effort to secure the enlistment of every member of the church who is able to give at all, however little, as a regular weekly offering contributor.

We would remind the church that the foreign mission work of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches with which we are affiliated, in Liberia, was discontinued last summer, and that since that time the Union has adopted as its special foreign mission enterprise the work of the Evangelical Association of French-speaking Baptists of France, Switzerland, and Belgium. As this matter was not definitely settled at the last Convention of the Union, but was referred to the Executive Board for consideration and ultimate action, the Convention rose without making provision in its budget for foreign missions. The Deacons therefore recommend that the missionary contributions of Jarvis Street Church from now until the next Convention of the Union in October, unless otherwise designated, should go to the Union Budget as at present ordered, and that when a new budget is adopted at the next Convention, the Jarvis Street offering would conform to the budget as then arranged.

During the year the services of prayer have been well maintained, but the Deacons feel it necessary to keep constantly before our people the importance of the church's intercessory ministry, and to remind them that if and when we have not, it is always because we ask not. The Deacons earnestly recommend that the membership should address itself ever more earnestly to seeking the fullest measure of spiritual power for the members as individuals, and for the whole ministry of the church collectively, by the ministry of intercession.

During the year THE GOSPEL WITNESS has continued its worldwide ministry, and by the time this report is submitted will have begun its seventeenth year of publication.

Toronto Baptist Seminary continues to be a mighty power for good, and the reports published in THE GOSPEL WITNESS during the last quarter of the church year, indicating the widespread character of its ministry, must have impressed the entire membership with the importance of this part of our work. We earnestly recommend that the church take the Seminary more and more to its heart, and keep it constantly before them in prayer.

While the Sunday School report will show a large decrease in attendance on account of the polio epidemic throughout the summer of 1937, which delayed for about six weeks the opening of the School in the autumn, the work has been carried on by a band of devoted officers and teachers with commendable faithfulness.

During the year the church, and particularly his fellow-deacons, suffered a severe loss through the home-going of Deacon James G. Hyde, of whom the Pastor wrote in THE GOSPEL WITNESS in the following terms:

Two weeks ago, just as we were sitting down to the preparation of GOSPEL WITNESS copy, we received a telephone message that Deacon J. G. Hyde, who had been poorly for some time, had taken a turn for the worse. We jumped into our car and drove to his house; but were met at the door by Mrs. Hyde who said, "He is in glory." He had passed but a few moments before.

When Parliament Street Baptist Church was amalgamated with Jarvis Street in 1912, Mr. Hyde, who had been a Deacon of Parliament Street, became a Deacon of Jarvis Street, and occupied that office continuously until the time of his death. Through all the years, Mr. Hyde was absolutely loyal to the gospel of Christ, and to the church of which he was a Deacon. During the period of his incumbency, Jarvis Street passed through a number of crises in her contention for the faith; but one could always depend upon Mr. Hyde to take his stand on the side of truth and righteousness. He had a great love for his Lord, for the Word of God, for the house of God, and for the people of God.

Mr. Hyde was never absent from the place of prayer or of preaching except when prevented by sickness or absence from home. For years he assisted the Pastor in preparation for baptism, and at such times we had many little intimate chats which greatly endeared him to his Pastor. Mr. Hyde was a "good" man, and faithful to duty in any position he occupied. On the day of his passing, he had lunch with his family, had a little sleep after lunch, and then remarked that he was not feeling quite so well—and in a minute or two was gone. Mr. Hyde will be greatly missed at all the services of Jarvis Street Church, and we shall ever gratefully cherish his memory as a faithful servant of God: "The memory of the just is blessed."

Others have also left us for the home beyond, the memory of whose Christian testimony the church will always gratefully cherish: Mrs. F. C. Austin, Mrs. F. B. Bartlett, Miss Margaret M. Carson, Mrs. T. H. Cooper, Mr. Frank F. Hillman, Mrs. S. Hodgson, Mrs. C. J. Kerruish, Mrs. Robt. J. Kidd, Mr. Norman Knowles, Mrs. Wm. Loveday, Mrs. Lucetta G. Magee, Mrs. Annie McKay, Mrs. Charles Reid, Mrs. E. Thurston.

"For all the saints who from their labours rest,
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy name, O Jesus, be for ever blest.

Hallelujah!

"Thou wast their Rock, their Fortress, and their Might;
Thou, Lord, their Captain in the well-fought fight;
Thou in the darkness drear their one true Light.

Hallelujah!

"O may Thy soldiers, faithful, true, and bold,
Fight as the saints who nobly fought of old,
And win, with them, the victor's crown of gold.

Hallelujah!

"O blest communion! fellowship divine!
We feebly struggle, they in glory shine;
Yet all are one in Thee, for all are Thine.

Hallelujah!

In common with the entire membership of the church, the Deacons keenly miss the presence of our greatly beloved Deacon George Greenway, who has been ill since shortly after the fire. We believe no one has ever made for himself, by

his long faithfulness and splendid devotion to the Lord and to His church, a larger place in the affections of the church membership, than Deacon Greenway. For more than seventeen years he was regularly in his place as leader of our prayer meetings, and while he is still with us, his fellow-deacons desire to place on record their deep appreciation of his great and long-continued service to the church; and of their own, and they are sure, of the entire membership's affection for him as a noble Christian and a worthy New Testament Deacon. We are thankful to report an improvement in Mr. Greenway's health, and we earnestly pray that he may soon be in his accustomed place again.

The Deacons are glad to observe that, following his illness, the Pastor returned to his work apparently in perfect health, and with no diminution of his former vigour. As a Board we would express our appreciation of his strong and able leadership in all that pertains to the life and work of Jarvis Street Church. We give God thanks upon every remembrance of him, and praise God for his faithful biblical pulpit ministry which has been largely owned of God in the salvation of souls, and in the building up of the saints in their most holy faith; and feel that we represent the whole church as we pledge to him our love and loyalty for the future.

The Deacons desire to place on record, for the church's approval in this annual meeting, their deep gratitude for the expressions of sympathy of a great multitude of people outside the membership of Jarvis Street Church, and from many quarters of the earth, on the occasion of the destruction of our building by fire. We especially record our appreciation of the hospitality afforded us by the minister and congregation of Cooke's Presbyterian Church where all our week-night services are now held. It would be impossible for mortals to be kinder, and we sincerely pray that the Head of the church will reward this great congregation for its generous treatment of a stricken sister, in a way that is entirely beyond the ability of Jarvis Street Church.

We express our gratitude also to the many who have already made some contribution to our Building Fund. And in these days of difficulty when we must worship in Massey Hall on Sundays, and are the guests of another church on week-days, trust our entire membership will feel a special obligation to stand faithfully by and fully discharge their duty as church members.

REMEMBER! MAY 24th MEETING

The great meeting in the roofless auditorium of Jarvis Street Church, Tuesday, May 24th, at 3.30. All members and former members of church and Sunday School, and all friends of the work, are cordially invited. This day will be observed as the twenty-eighth anniversary of Dr. Shields' settlement as Pastor of Jarvis Street Church. He will be in what was the parlour of the church from 10.30 to 1.00, and again from 1.30 to 3.30, May 24th, to receive gifts for the furnishing of the pulpit and Communion platform in the new church. All who bring gifts are kindly requested to put their gifts in an envelope, with their name and address and the amount marked on the envelope; and to remember, please, that all must enter by the Gerrard Street door of the B. D. Thomas Hall, then turn to the left through the Beginners' Department, and through the parlour.

At 3.30 there will be a great standing service in the auditorium that will be largely a service of praise. The choir and orchestra will be present, and the Pastor will give a short address. We invite all our out-of-town friends to make a 24th of May pilgrimage to old Jarvis Street once more.

ANOTHER SAINT GONE HOME

Only yesterday afternoon, May 18th, we laid away under the flowers the body of Mr. Alfred Cullington. For years Mr. and Mrs. Cullington have cared for our Seminary dining-room, and students of the Seminary, now scattered far and

wide, gratefully cherish the memory of their joint kindly ministry.

Mr. Cullington had been ill for more than a year, and wakened in glory early Monday morning last. He was the very essence of kindness and Christian courtesy; a man who was well informed on many subjects, who was gifted with an unusual spiritual discernment; and could be depended upon to be always on the right side of any biblical issue. Very quiet and reserved, Mr. Cullington will be remembered chiefly for his presence and ministry in the place of prayer. Very significantly, one of the floral offerings at the funeral contained a card with this inscription: "In loving memory of Mr. Cullington's faithfulness to our Heavenly Father at the Tuesday night prayer meetings."

We remarked at the service yesterday that it was a benediction always to hear Mr. Cullington pray. Reserved as he was, he prayed always with marked freedom and unction, as though he were familiar with the way to the mercy-seat, and delighted to be often there. He will be greatly missed in Jarvis Street, for the life of the students—six of whom bore the loved form to its last resting place—and of the whole church was enriched by his quiet, prayerful example.

Mrs. Cullington, we are sure, will be upheld by the grace of Him Whom she and her husband have so loyally served, and will have the prayerful sympathy of a host of friends.

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH, ORILLIA—*Rev. John Byers.* The Bethel Baptist Church annual business meeting was held some time ago and encouraging reports were given from all departments. The Church Clerk's report was particularly gratifying, showing that twenty-nine new members were received into the church, twenty-six by baptism and three by experience. Sunday School work has been most difficult, but last year showed a steady increase, with an all-time record last Sunday.

The Tenth Anniversary of the pastorate was celebrated on May 8th. We had capacity audiences, and seven adults were baptized at the evening service.

Fourteen days of evangelistic meetings will be conducted by the gifted evangelistic pastor, Rev. Robt. Guthrie of London, beginning Monday, May 23rd. The churches in the Sunderland and Cannington Association are warmly invited to co-operate in this special effort of evangelism.

Rev. Robert Dubarry will preach at both services in Orillia, on Sunday, June 12th.

CANNINGTON AND SUNDERLAND ASSOCIATION—A meeting of the Cannington and Sunderland Association will be held at the Bobcaygeon Baptist Church on Wednesday, June 8th. Sessions begin at 2.30 and 7.30 Standard time. We are happy to announce that Dr. T. T. Shields has promised, notwithstanding his manifold duties, to address the Association in the evening, and Rev. Robt. Guthrie of Briscoe Street Baptist Church will be the guest speaker of the afternoon. A special program of music has been arranged, and all within the Association are urged to make this a record gathering. The Association will be entertained by the Bobcaygeon Church people, so there will be no necessity to bring lunch baskets. Will each pastor in the Association be kind enough to inform Mr. Gillion of Bobcaygeon how many he may expect from his church, so that ample provision may be made.

VERDUN—*Pastor T. D. M. Carson.* The Emmanuel Baptist Church Bible School recently had its annual Sunday School evening when gifts were brought in. There was a delightful, refreshing and spiritually helpful programme in which members of each class in the school took part. We are thankful for the real testimony that was carried to the people in every item. During an intermission, representatives for each class brought the gifts of money of their respective classes to the front, many of which were attractively arranged in baskets and ribbons, or prepared novelties. We think that the children vastly enjoyed this part. We thank God for the offering: about \$110.00 was brought in by the Bible School at this its annual thank-offering to the Lord. The purchase of a much-needed lantern, and the turning over of a substantial gift to the building fund of the church have been two items in the use of the money.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

WHY SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE THE BIBLE AND OTHERS REJECT IT

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

Preached in Massey Hall, Toronto, Sunday Evening, May 8th, 1938

(Stenographically-Reported)

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."—ohn 7:17.

"For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water."—II. Peter 3:5.

It is the simplest of truths that the whole teaching of the Bible is to the effect that all the benefits of salvation, of Christianity, are conditioned upon the belief, or faith, of the individual: "According to your faith be it unto you." "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God." It is therefore of vital importance that we should know something of the genesis and true character of faith.

How do men come to believe? And why is it that some other men continue in unbelief? What makes the difference between a believer and an unbeliever? What is faith? How can it be defined? Is faith an evidential consequence? Is it based upon sound and demonstrated truth? Is it the result of pure reason? And are men believers because they are superiorly endowed with certain intellectual faculties which enable them to apprehend the truth? Is faith the result of some evidential compulsion—that is, the compulsion of indisputable fact as it is apprehended and dealt with by the faculties of reason, and the judgment of the mind? Or is it a volitive act? Is there an element of reason, essentially, in faith itself? Why is it some men refuse to believe? Is it because they are without evidence of the divine character of the Bible? Is it because they have been convinced, on the ground of factual evidence, by the exercise of their reason, that it is untrue, and therefore untrustworthy?

If faith be the issue of pure reason, why should a man be penalized if he finds himself unable to believe? Or why should he be rewarded if because of his superior endowment, he is able to believe? If, on the other hand, faith should be an act of the will, if it has its rise in the volitional faculties so that a man can believe or refuse to believe, by the exercise of his will, there might seem to be both justice and reason in one's being penalized for unbelief, and rewarded for his faith.

I.

Let us then for a little while this evening, to use a very common word—I do not like it because it has become hackneyed—let us think of THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS FAITH, AND OF UNBELIEF, IN ITS RELIGIOUS ASPECT. That is to say, by what sort of mental processes does a man come to believe the Bible, and all that is implied in that belief? Or by what mental processes does he reject the Bible, and with it, the implications of all that the Bible teaches?

Let us look at the circumstances surrounding our first text. Here is a Man. His real humanity is indisputable. He is Jesus of Nazareth. The great question facing all

those who came into contact with Him was, Who is this Man, Whence came He? What authority does He exercise? How far may His teaching be regarded as true?

We cannot blame men for asking these questions, for He appeared among men as a Man. They had to enquire as to His origin. They had to examine His credentials as a religious teacher. It was part of their responsibility as moral agents so to do. There was a division among them, and Jesus Christ recognized that. He said to them, "My teaching, or doctrine, is not mine, but His that sent me." He referred to another invisible Authority Whose mouthpiece He was, and He said, "My teachings I have received from God. You are troubled to know whether you ought to receive them or not, whether you ought to believe me or not. And", said He, "I will tell you how you may determine that question. If any man willet to do his will, that is, the will of Him that sent me, he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God. If any man will accept what I say, with all that it implies, if he will receive my teaching and assume what I say to be true, and be willing to obey my teaching in all its bearings, be willing to do what the truth requires of him, he will have no difficulty in ascertaining whether what I say is true or not."

In other words, our Lord Jesus said that faith, in the last analysis, is an exercise of the will; and, by implication, I think, He related the will to the affections; so that if a man receives the truth "in the love of it", desires to know the truth and is willing to believe the truth when it is demonstrated to be the truth, he will have no difficulty in knowing whether what Jesus taught was of God or of man.

That is a tremendous statement. But let us look at the other text for a moment.

Peter said the day would come when there would be certain scoffers, people who would mock at the promises of divine revelation. He described them as people who would "walk after their own lusts". Which does not mean necessarily, or exclusively, in a gross, sensual sense, but that they will walk after the desires of their own eyes, according to the tastes and standards and desires of the natural man, the carnal nature. Walking after their own lusts, they will scoff at the promises of Christ's coming, and say, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." Peter, by the Holy Ghost, explains it thus, "For this they willingly are ignorant of"; or, "This they wilfully forget." They shut the Book. They close their minds. They take up a settled negative attitude toward a certain postulate, that Christ is coming again; and are "willingly ignorant of" the history of creation, saying

that "all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

Again you will see that rejection of divine revelation is accounted for by the attitude of the will. They are "willingly" ignorant of it. We have a proverb to the effect that "where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise". When a man does not want to do certain things, it becomes convenient for him not to know that he ought to do them. "Do not tell me about it, then I shall not be responsible for not doing what that knowledge would oblige me to do." He becomes "willingly" ignorant of a certain duty in an endeavour to evade responsibility for neglecting it.

Let me give you a few illustrations of that principle. Let us take, for example an illustration from the political arena. Hold in your mind the picture of certain political parties with their policies. The men belonging to those parties are of equal mental stature. They wear the same clothes. They have the same general characteristics. Yet here is one party that sets forth a certain programme. Its leader argues in support of it, and is followed heartily and unanimously by all those who belong to his party. Another leader argues the opposite, and receives an equally loyal support from his followers. In respect to the policy at issue, they are almost at the poles apart.

How do you account for that human difference? Do you mean to say that the intelligence, the reason, the judgment, are all on one side in the appraisal of the merits of that political issue? Would you say that all the intelligence belongs to one party, while the other is hopelessly ignorant? You know better than that. You know very well that those men, in the main, are influenced by something other than reason. There are certain interests involved, self-interests, interests which belong to themselves, and which would promote their advantage. So they argue back and forth, each calling the other a simpleton because they disagree with each other. The fact is, if their brains could be weighed in balances, if there were an instrument by which their respective exact mental quality could be appraised, and you were to put the two parties in the balances together, very probably one would weigh quite as much as the other. They differ because they have different aims, different desires, a different objective; because they are seeking their own interests in different fields. As a matter of fact, the issue is not determined between them by pure reason, but by personal prejudices grounded in their personal interests. All the school-masters in the world could not help the situation.

If you want further corroboration of that principle, read the result of a debate in any deliberative assembly, whether it be a religious or a political one. Men argue *pro* and *con* in respect to a certain proposition. At last a vote is taken. Is the vote determined by the cogency of the argument on the one side, or the weakness of the argument on the other? Will you say when it is over that all the debating power was on one side of the house? Strangely enough, it may appear that the vote is cast in support of the side weakest in debating power. If you could analyze the situation, you would probably find that the issue was determined before the debate began, at least in the minds of the majority of voters. Men had come with their minds made up. In one of our Baptist assemblies, one very shrewd observer, more frank than some of his fellows, rose and said, "Argument will profit us little, for I have no doubt that every

delegate to this assembly had his mind made up before he came."

Of course! You remember in the trial of the Lord Jesus, how they asked Him questions, and He refused to answer them. At last He said, "If I tell you, ye will not believe; and if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go." He knew that no argument would be of any avail in that trial, and therefore He was silent. He did not speak for Himself, for He knew that they had made up their minds, as Caiaphas himself said, "It was expedient that one man should die for the people." When the people brought Him to Pilate, he said, "Take ye him, and judge him according to your law." "Ah", said they, "it is not lawful for us to put any man to death." They had made up their minds as to what they would demand, irrespective of witnesses or argument. It was settled in advance. Their attitude toward the Subject at issue was already determined.

I could find illustrations too in the affectional realm. I do not suppose there ever was a perfect husband, or ever a perfect wife. And yet certain pairs endeavour mutually to persuade themselves to the contrary. If they can succeed, happy are they. But they must not expect anyone else to believe the same thing. Why do they believe it? Because they want to believe it.

You have seen many an example of parents who were quite ready to recognize and acknowledge the defects of other peoples children, but quite unwilling to acknowledge any defects in their own; and yet possibly in some instances, the defects in the character of their own children were more apparent than the defects in the characters of other people's children. It all depends upon the heart-attitude toward the subject.

The truth is, people believe what they want to believe; and belief is an exercise of the will rather than of the reason, or of the judgment. A man will refuse to believe in the face of the most conclusive evidence in support of the proposition submitted to him for judgment. And, on the other hand, men will give their hearty assent to a proposition the falsity of which is overwhelmingly demonstrated to any unbiased logical mind. The conclusion depends upon where the prejudice lies.

II.

LET US MAKE APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE TO THE RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES OF MEN. I can find an illustration, for example, among our Roman Catholic friends. There are some things in Roman Catholicism which you and I could not possibly believe. There are some elements in that system which we should regard as the grossest superstition. We say that our reason rebels against them.

I went into Notre Dame Cathedral in Montreal some years ago. I saw little children saying their prayers, and older people. I saw some men who seemed to be men of quality, men who might be expected to occupy positions of some importance in life; in other words, men of education and intelligence. I saw them go through their prayers, and then presently go into a little cubicle to make confession to their priest. I saw one man, a fine, upstanding fellow, walk about, and enter a confessional-box. As he went to the one side, the priest drew on a gown, and slipped into the confessional to hear the confession of a man many years his senior. I said to myself, How is it possible for men of intelligence to believe a fellow-sinner has authority to forgive sins? I will tell you how it is possible. From the beginning of

life, from earliest infancy, those men were trained, carefully sequestered, kept in school where the tenets of Rome were instilled into their minds, and a mental prejudice in favour of that position was gradually developed, until their minds were entirely shut to everything that was contrary thereto. However you might reason, they would not listen to you. Whatever evidence you might supply, they would disregard. The matter for them was settled; they had acquired a certain prejudice, and beyond that you could not lead them.

On the other hand, I have known many Protestant people whose Protestantism consisted in anti-Catholicism. They were opposed to another system, but why they did not know. It was not an intelligent opposition. Theirs was not a reasoned opposition: they were opposed only because they had been trained in prejudice—and I have as little sympathy with one attitude as I have with the other. That is not how we are to arrive at the truth; nor can we by such means effectively and justly combat error.

Let us apply this principle to *our attitude toward the Bible and the whole Christian revelation*. What is your attitude toward the Bible? Do you believe it to be true, or are you persuaded that it is untrue?

Assuming it to be true, what then? The Bible is a very critical Book. It will find fault with you. It will pay you no compliments. It will tell you that you are a bad man, or a bad woman. It will call you a sinner. It will tell you that your whole course, naturally, is contrary to the will of God, which is another word for the law of God. It will tell you that the only perfect man who ever lived was Jesus Christ, and that, measured with Him, you are not only a moral dwarf, but a midget; that you have no stature at all, that you have come short of the glory of God. It will tell you that the course you are taking is the way to destruction, however right it may seem to you. It will tell you that the end thereof is the way of death. It will tell you that there is no joy, no peace, no abiding satisfaction, in that course. It will tell you that it is necessary for you to recognize in Jesus Christ the supreme manifestation of God, and the Standard of righteousness and of true holiness which a holy God will require of every one of us. It will tell you that all authority is given to Him, and that it is your duty absolutely to submit to His authority, to be governed by His precepts, guided by the principles of His teaching; that your tastes, your decisions, your ambitions, your aspirations, should be regulated by His infallible appraisal of the values of life. It will tell you that the things that you count most precious are of no worth at all. It will say of those things to which men give their life, concerning which they strive with one another, and because of which all the cruelty, and injustice, and "man's inhumanity to man", have come about—that all these things are altogether lighter than vanity, and that the only way of life is submission to the person and supreme authority of Jesus Christ, and that really to know what life is we must follow Him, and do His commandments.

When a man comes to read that sort of thing in the Bible, he does not like it. Mark—he does not like it! He prefers to walk after his own lusts, after his own desires, after all that is in the world—the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. Of the things that are in the world he will say, "I want them." The Bible says, "You must not have that." The man says, "I will have it." The Bible says, "If you do, it

will ruin you." Then he says, "I will not believe the Bible." He is "willingly ignorant" of that which the Bible teaches. Hence he rejects it because he will not submit to its authority.

You say, "You would not go so far, sir, as to say that that is the philosophy of the higher criticism, and of the whole movement that we speak of as Modernism? You do not mean to say that that is why the preacher in the pulpit preaches his doubts instead of his faith? That that is why the young man who comes from college, though he went in as a believer, comes out an unbeliever?" Yes, I do. I am convinced that the reason for the Modernist movement, for the rejection of the Bible by human scholarship without and within the church, is to be found in the fundamental determination not to submit to Jesus Christ, and to all the implications of His authority.

There never has been any difficulty in the acceptance of the Bible as the word of God with the man who was willing to bow to its behests, and obey its precepts, and incorporate its principles in his everyday conduct until by and by his character becomes an illustration and exemplification of the principles of the gospel. If any man willeth to do His will, if any man is willing to yield himself to the truth, and let the truth have sway over him, he will have no difficulty in knowing it to be the truth.

Some years ago, in my early ministry, I conducted a series of evangelistic services in a country village, and in a church of some size. We had full congregations so far as the capacity of the church would allow them to be great. The principal of the local school, who was looked upon as the leader of the local intelligentsia, a very clever man for whose future great things were predicted, came to the meetings. One evening I spoke on God's judgment upon Ninevah and upon the Assyrian empire as summed up in the message of God through the prophet to that great world-power: "I will make thy grave; for thou art vile."

I tried to show the people how, because of their rejection of God, and because of their wickedness, the power of Assyria was destroyed, and the world-metropolis was buried so deeply that it was not until many centuries afterward that the spade of the archeologist discovered its site—and so preached of the necessity of repentance. When I gave the invitation, this school teacher gripped the back of the pew in front of him, and pulled himself up to his feet. A great thrill went through the congregation as this "leading" young man showed evidence of a desire to submit to Christ.

I talked with him that night, but the next night he did not come. I sought him out and said, "Mr. So-and-So, what is the meaning of your change of attitude? Why did you rise so readily, so spontaneously, the other night?" "I was impressed with what you said. I was really afraid that God would make a grave for me, and bury me out of His sight." "You had reason to be afraid; but will you explain your change of mind?" "Just this, sir. I am ambitious. I have marked out a programme for myself. I am not always going to be the principal of a village school! I am determined that I will make my mark in life, and will succeed in the direction in which my ambitions lead me." "And what has that to do with it?" "I cannot pursue the course that I have outlined, as a Christian." "And why not?" "There are things that I should have to do, that I have determined to do, that I should have to abandon." "You

would have to turn right-about-face?" "Precisely." "You would have to repent and take another course?" "Yes." "You are determined not to do so?" "Yes, and I am not sure that I believe in any case." I said to him, "It is not that you cannot believe: it is that you will not believe. It is because you are determined to walk after your own lusts, and therefore you are 'willingly ignorant' of the truth of God. For that deliberate blinding of your mind, God will ultimately call you to account."

That is the explanation of the wide-spread religious apostasy of our day. In the course of the years I have dealt with scores of men, university professors, university presidents, and ministers of distinction, who have abandoned the Bible. I have yet to meet the first man who really abandoned his faith on intellectual or scholastic grounds. Pressed, in the last analysis, it is to its ethical content, it is to its impossible standards, its tremendous exactions, that they object; and because they will not have this Man to reign over them, they say, "Crucify Him; crucify Him." That is the reason the Bible is rejected—but such rejection does not make it untrue.

How then are we to convince the man who has taken up that attitude of unbelief toward the Bible? Shall we pile up evidence in support of its divine inspiration? Shall we review the record, the long record, of its supernatural achievements? Shall we show something of the mighty power for good which the Bible has exercised through all the centuries? Shall we show to him the fact that here is a Book which has challenged the allegiance of all good men, that has incurred the displeasure of all bad men; and that the utmost the human mind could devise for its discredit and destruction has been mobilized against it? Shall we show men that through all the centuries, many of the keenest of minds have been directed against it—and yet, notwithstanding, after all these assaults, it still stands? Will that convince a man that the Holy Scripture is what Gladstone called it, the impregnable rock of Holy Scripture? Will the man say, "That being so, sir, I ought to believe it"? Not at all! He will go on in his unbelief just the same because faith is something vastly more than an evidential consequence, more than something that may be forced upon the mind of man by the appeal of truth itself.

On the other hand, *what of the man who believes the Bible?* Does he need all I have suggested for the confirmation of his faith? No! There are millions of people who know nothing about these things, who believe the Bible, believe it implicitly, wholeheartedly; and yet not ignorantly. Their devotion is not born of ignorance, but rather of an experience of its truth. It would be a sad day if we had to bring the Bible into court, and thus to argue in support of its divine authority in order to convince men that it is the word of God.

I will tell you how you may be convinced of the truth of the Bible. If you will take up this attitude toward truth, if you will say, "I want to know the worst about myself. If I am evil, I want to know it. If I am on the wrong road, I want to be informed of it. If there is a better way of life than this, I should like to find it", belief will be born of the Holy Spirit.

A Jewish woman came into our prayer-meeting some years ago and told us this story. It was before the war. She said that she and her husband were living in Constantinople. One day he came home and told his wife that he had discovered that Jesus of Nazareth was the

Messiah, and that he had given heart and intellect to Him, and was now His avowed disciple. Telling of it, the woman said it seemed as though the devil himself—or a whole legion of devils—entered into possession of her heart. She cursed her husband, she warned him that she would do everything in her power to destroy his faith, and bring him back to the religion of his fathers. She said, "I studied, deliberately studied, how I might make his life miserable". And I should fancy that a woman, living with a man, deliberately studying every day how she could make her husband's life miserable, would be likely to meet with some measure of success! She said, "I kept at it week after week, month after month. But something had happened to him, and he would say so kindly in response to my assaults, 'My dear, I wish you knew Him as I know Him. I wish your eyes could be opened'".

But said the woman, "I did not want to know Him. I was determined I would not know Him. But at last I could stand it no longer. I went to my room, shut and locked my door, fell on my knees, and prayed like this: 'O Jesus of Nazareth, if Thou art still living, and if Thou art in very truth the Messiah, come and introduce Thyself to me, for I would fain meet with Thee. If Thou art He for Whom I wait and long, make Thyself known to me.' I cannot tell how it happened, but somehow He came through the shut door, and into my heart, and, like Thomas, I fell at His feet and said, 'My Lord and my God'."

"If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." Faith is far more than the result of a mental process. You and I cannot learn to love the truth as a mere abstraction, as a something that is unrelated to a person, saying, "This is truth", and therefore I believe it, and love it." I cannot love a logical proposition: no one can. And God knew that nobody could. So He incarnated the truth in a Person, and summed up all the Bible has to say in a Personality, in Whom all the fulness of Deity itself dwelleth, the matchless Son of God. "The Word was made flesh."

But He is not here. We cannot see Him. God knew that we could not love an absentee Saviour, and therefore He sent the Holy Ghost. You cannot see Him, you cannot feel Him with your finger; but He is here—just as truly here as He was in the upper room at Pentecost. Why is He here? To take "of the things of Christ, and reveal them unto us." Like that Jewish woman in Constantinople, if any man or woman will say in his or her heart, and before God, "I want the truth as it is in Jesus. If the Bible be true, if Jesus Christ be true and if He is the Son of God, if He was virgin-born, crucified for me, died and rose again, and ascended into heaven, and if indeed He is coming again, I do not want to be among the scoffers who say, 'Where is the promise of his coming?' I would not be wilfully ignorant of these things. I want to know them. Come to me now"—if any man will assume that attitude, just as the Spirit of God communicated with that woman in Constantinople, He will communicate with you, and make you to know beyond all possibility of question that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; that the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is the record that God has given to us of His Son.

TWO SERMONS THIS WEEK

We publish two sermons this week to catch up, as we omitted the sermon last week, and we like the sermons to be up-to-date. Forgive us! We do not often so offend.

WHY ARE THE JEWS PERSECUTED?

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

Preached in Massey Hall, Toronto, Sunday Evening,
May 15th, 1938

(Stenographically Reported)

"And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.

"This title then read many of the Jews; for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.

"Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.

"Pilate answered, What I have written I have written."
—John 19:19-22.

Twenty-eight years ago this evening, at my first Sunday evening service as Pastor of Jarvis Street Church, I preached from this text; and so far as I know, in all the twenty-eight years, I have not changed my testimony. I have nothing new to preach. In these twenty-eight years we have testified to the truth for the propagation of which the church was established. I was quite respectable then. A man might in those days enjoy a reputation for sanity notwithstanding his absolute conviction that the Bible is the word of God. But nowadays a man who so believes, in many quarters, is voted to be hopelessly antiquated. These—what shall I call them?—these pseudo-intellectuals who boast of their superiority, I find rather amusing. I wish some of them would read Mr. Dubarry's address, and learn to think.

But the Bible is coming into its own. Every word in it is being verified by the history of our time. Those who stood about the cross when Jesus Christ was crucified had no idea that, by His very crucifixion, the Scriptures were being fulfilled. We are later told that they actually fulfilled the Scripture by crucifying Christ. The Word written, like the Word Incarnate, has been subject to the contempt of the wisdom of men now for many a year, and the truth of the gospel has been rejected on a wholesale scale by men who profess to believe it. Yet I am sure that, by their very attitude, unknown to themselves, they are verifying the Bible.

The four evangelists have given us a record of the earthly life of our Lord. Each story is complementary to, and never contradictory of, the other. The four together give us a complete portrait of "God manifest in the flesh". They approach their subject from different points of view, but, like the creatures of Ezekiel's vision—they go every one straight forward, and lead us at last to "the likeness of a throne", and to "the likeness of the appearance of a man above upon it." They unite in proclaiming Jesus of Nazareth to be the King.

I want you to study the superscription of His accusation, the writing which was written. First, *the writing itself*, and secondly, *that the writing was upon the cross*; then to notice *the human effort to change it*; and last, to meditate upon that inevitable human discovery, *that what is written is written, and cannot be changed*.

I.

WHAT SAID THE WRITING? It was to this effect, that Jesus of Nazareth was far more than an ordinary man; that He was in very truth, not only a King, but *the King*; that He stood apart from all others, unique in His char-

acter and in His claims, and in all the endowments of His matchless personality.

And I may remark that *the title given to Him was appropriate to the character of the person it designated*. Jesus was a kingly man. The personality of Jesus was an unceasing wonder to all who observed Him. They were informed of His humble origin. His mother and His brethren they knew. That He was born in Bethlehem and had lived in Nazareth was common knowledge. But an inscrutable mystery attached to His birth; while His inexplicable life filled His observers with amazement. His blameless, nay, His positively holy character, arrayed Him as with a robe of more than regal magnificence; while the truthful aspect of His whole life was as the sun shining in His strength. In Him there was an unique combination of qualities which seem in our poor judgment to be opposites, but which in Him were elements of His moral perfection. In Him were beheld the august dignity of service, the majesty of meekness, the inherent kingliness of love. The truest Servant—Jesus Christ stooped to be the sinner's scavenger, to take away the sin of the world!—and the highest Sovereign, in one Person. And when men had considered His claims—for a time, at least, they put Him among the kings. And still the old question, "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is He?" persists. No answer but Pilate's title is sufficient: "Jesus—the King."

The writing was in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin—the three principal languages of the then known world. He was called the King of the Jews, but He was everybody's King: He is everybody's King. Since that time it has been translated into more than six hundred languages, and all nations and peoples and tongues have already united in proclaiming Him to be *the King*. You can never take up a proper attitude toward the Lord Jesus if you accord Him a lesser place than that. I have a quarrel with any man who classes Jesus Christ with any other man who ever lived. He is not one of the reformers, He is not one of the great religious teachers, He is not merely the best of men: He is the only whole man this world ever saw. The rest of us are fragments, broken pieces of humanity. He is the one and only Exemplification of the divine ideal. As I have before told you, when God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness", He had the pattern of Jesus Christ in mind. He is not merely a King. I will not allow that the authority of any other's teaching is inherent in itself by virtue of its essential moral perfection. His every word was clothed with an authority as unique as His personality. He must be given a place apart. He became "the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence."

Do not compliment Jesus Christ. Do not dare to say you "like" Him. Do not waste your honeyed sayings upon Him. Somehow, when one uses such words as "dear" and "precious", to the Lord Jesus, and multiply adjectives of a soft and tender order for application to Him, I rather shrink from it. He is that; He is all that; but He is infinitely more than that. I tell you, He is *the King*. There is no question about it. And there can never be agreement anywhere as between those who have seen Him, with those who have not seen Him, except upon that basis that He be accorded His divine right, and be recognized as King.

Does one enquire, "Do you believe the Bible?" I have

long been weary of the assumptions of the critics who relegate the Bible to a position of equality with other books. For myself, though I be called old-fashioned, or "unlearned and ignorant", or what you will, inasmuch as this, *the Book*, proves itself to be divinely inspired, I insist that it be appraised as a Book apart. It is the inspired, infallible, and absolutely and everlastingly authoritative word of the living God.

Is that what it is to you? Jesus of Nazareth is the King; and the Book that magnifies Him, and puts the sceptre in His hand, and the crown upon His brow, is God's Book, to whose principles and precepts all men must ultimately bow. Not until then can the world's problems be solved. By no other means, however remote the prospect, can our difficulties be removed. Not until the principles of Jesus Christ shall be given the primary place in religion, in-commerce, in industry, in literature, in art, in law—by which I mean, in affairs of state—not until then can our problems be solved. You will have to excuse what I have to say if you do not like it, but in one way or another I have called your attention to these matters several times within recent months. I am a patriot, I am a Britisher—I was so born. I love British institutions. But I am ashamed of our present courses. I have not heard the comments and criticisms that have been voiced over the radio, to which objection has been taken, but if I had to speak on the subject, I should have to object.

I felt the blush of shame mantling my face as I read the other day of Haili Sellassie standing before the Council of the League of Nations, telling Britain—our country—that she had pledged his independence, and that she has broken her pledge, virtually, that she had joined the truce-breakers of our day. Lord Halifax—I wish he would go to Halifax, or somewhere else—admitted such independence was guaranteed by the League covenant; and he said Britain adheres to the principles of the League, but that for the sake of peace they had to take political action. Such sacrifice of moral principle to political expediency may postpone war for a time; but it cannot do so indefinitely.

These men, the Jews, thought they were postponing trouble when they took up an attitude of opposition to Jesus Christ. The individual, or the nation, or the empire, which does violence to the principles of righteousness revealed in the Bible, is sowing to the wind and must inevitably reap the whirlwind, as God is true. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." I want as a British citizen to disclaim participation or approval of Italy's wicked rape of Ethiopia, as one of the most damnable crimes of history. But Britain has tacitly approved it by recognizing the conquest of Ethiopia as legitimate. God have mercy upon us!

That sort of speech is not popular. It is assumed we ought always to shout for the flag, no matter what the Government does. I will not. I honour our King; and approve the Government of which he is the symbol and representative, just so far as it does righteously; but I have another King to whom I accord the supreme place. He is *the King*, and I will put loyalty to Jesus Christ and to the principles of His government before all other considerations of earth. There is no other way to peace but on the basis of righteousness. We shall pay terribly, terribly in blood and treasure, for the immoral compromises of these last few years.

II.

Pilate wrote a title, and he PUT IT ON THE CROSS. It was especially significant that that title was put upon the cross. The cross was an instrument of shame, a symbol of the curse—and our Lord endured the cross, and depised the shame. And in the darkest, blackest hour of the world's history, when Incarnate Deity hung upon a cross, illustrating man's attitude toward God, the manifestation of the supreme hostility and implacable hatred of the carnal nature for the divine holiness—in that blackest hour it was written, at least for the angels to read, "This is *the King*."

And it was written on the cross, a symbol of weakness, of shame, of ignominy. But the cross, properly understood, was the mightiest attestation of the sovereignty of Him Who died thereon that could possibly have been afforded. Men thought they were wreaking vengeance upon Him. Men supposed they were eliminating Jesus Christ, and all that He represented—not alone from their individual lives, but from their corporate life as well. In effect they said, "We will drive Him from light into darkness, and chase Him out of the world." Notwithstanding, on the cross it was written, "This is the King."

Thus *He showed His sovereignty over men*. It looked as though men were having all their own way when He yielded Himself to the nails, but Peter explained it when at Pentecost he said, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." Said he, in effect, "The cross was no accident. The Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world." His crucifixion was the result of the "determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God", though theirs were "wicked" hands who slew Him. But I repeat, the cross was the mightiest certification of the sovereignty of Jesus Christ over men that even divine Wisdom could possibly give. That cross, an instrument of torture and of death, by His sovereign grace became at last the central golden pillar, with ruby-jewelled chapter upon which the whole structure of God's eternal temple rests.

The cross was an evidence of *Christ's sovereignty over Satan*. "The strong man armed keepeth his palace, and his goods are in peace." "Satan entered in Judas", and now Satan said, "We have accomplished our fell purpose: Now we shall have done with our chief enemy", when He was nailed to the cross. If devils can laugh, they must have laughed in triumph at what they thought they had accomplished.

But the devil never did a worse thing for himself than when he erected the cross at the place called Calvary. What did he? He did what Haman did when he built a gallows fifty cubits high that he might hang Mordecai thereon—but it became the instrument of his own death. He did what Goliath did when he girded his sword at his side, and went forth to challenge the people of the living God: in defying the God of Israel he carried the instrument of his own decapitation. The cross has been a battering-ram that has breached the walls of every fortress of evil all down through the ages. It is the central post, blood-sprinkled lintels on either side, and beneath which have swung the gates of pearl, through which the countless hosts of the redeemed have thronged into the heavenly city, there to acclaim Jesus Christ as *the King*.

On the cross our Lord Jesus proved His sovereignty *over nature*. When Jesus Christ hung upon the cross all nature trembled in sympathy with Him. When but at sight of the cross did ever the constellations form in funeral procession, or the heavens put on sackcloth, or the sun exchange at noon his wonted bridal vestments for the mourning robes of night?

"Well might the sun in darkness hide,
And shut his glory in
When Christ, the mighty Maker, died
For man, the creature's, sin."

Sovereign to the end was He, and most of all, *sovereign of Himself*. I wish I had language with which to express to you my own conception of His supreme manifestation of divine power at the place called Calvary. Brave Peter whipped out his sword in the garden and severed an ear from the head of one of the high priest's servants. Jesus Christ bathed His sword in heaven, and refused to unsheath it in His own defense. "No, Peter! Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"

Human science has accomplished much in the field of engineering. It has harnessed many of the great forces of nature to the human will, for human service. But do you know of any engineer who, for instance, could dam back the torrents of Niagara, and command its thunders to sleep? A creative force issued from Him in creation, Who is the eternal Logos, when He said, "Let there be light, and there was light." But in redemption He exhibited a power which showed its kinship with the tides, and with the sovereignty of the sun. When He arises all lesser lights must fade; when He commands all storms subside. At the cross Omnipotence controlled Omnipotence; Almightyness was subject to Almightyness; and all the powers of Deity became, in a sense, latent while He, Who was Deity Incarnate, trod the winepress alone. As I see Him yielding Himself to the nails, and without protest permitting men to put a crown of thorns upon His brow, I see the divine Creator do the mightiest thing that God ever did as the God-man sovereignly laid down His life that He might take it again.

III.

BUT MEN OBJECTED TO THE WRITING ON THE CROSS: they always have done so: they always will. They said, "Let him come down from the cross, and we will believe." Have you thought of *the philosophy of that saying*? Millions of people who are called Christians say that to-day. "Let him come down from the cross, and we will believe. Do not preach to us the gospel of blood. Do not tell us that men are morally bankrupt. Do not tell us that men can be saved only by the grace of God. Do not tell us that it was necessary for a God-Man to die in our room and stead, to take upon Him our guilt, and expiate our crime. We will not have that. Let Him come down from the cross and we will believe." But He will not come down from the cross. We must receive Him as One Who went to the cross.

Those men put a difference between *what was written, and what was true*. They said, "Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews." Pilate wrote not only, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King", but, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." "Do not write that." "Why not", said Pilate. "Write that he

said He was King of the Jews. There is a difference between what He said, and what is written there in the superscription." The carnal mind is ever opposed to that which Jesus Christ said. Men do not accept what He said as being the truth—but it is true.

But especially—for the subject I announced is at the end of my sermon, and not at the beginning—this is "the King of the Jews". It was the Jews, and the chief priests of the Jews, who said, "Do not write that. That is only what he said he was." Said Pilate, "Behold your king!" They said, "We have no king but Caesar." Said he, "Shall I crucify your king?" They said, "He is not our king. We do not acknowledge him as such. We consign him to the cross. We demand his death. He said he was the Son of God. Crucify him. We do not want him as king of the Jews." Then they said a terrible thing, "His blood be on us, and on our children." Does someone say, "The Bible is not true"? Is it not?

I remember reading a sermon by Dr. Joseph Parker on this text, "Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." Dr. Parker said something like this: "Some man down there says he does not believe that to be just, that it ought not to be. Never mind what you believe ought to be: I ask you a question, Is it a fact that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation?" If you doubt it, go to the hospitals; go to the asylums.

A friend of mine told me that he walked through the Hospital for Sick Children in this city one day, and saw a man with bowed head, sitting at the bed-side of a little boy, a lad of about ten years of age; and he said, "I saw a man in hell." "You saw a man in hell?" "Yes. The little boy's eyes were bandaged, and I asked a nurse what was wrong with him. She told me he was going blind, that he would lose his sight entirely, that he would never see again. I asked the reason, and softly she said, 'His father's sin.'"

The sins of the fathers *are* visited upon the children. The law of God in the moral realm, as well as in the physical realm, is continuous; it goes on from generation to generation. "His blood", said they, "be on us, and on our children."

Keep that in your mind as we consider this other word: "We have no king but Caesar." And the Jews have never had a king from that day to this. And oh, how they have been trodden beneath the heel of successive Caesars! They have never had a country, nor a kingdom, nor a king. They have been the outcasts of the world—and they are to-day. You ask me to explain it? Let me rather ask you, Is it a fact? Look at the Russia of the Czars! Look at Germany! Look at Austria! and many other countries that are no better. Do you say it is the peculiar quality of the Jew that makes him hated of all men? I have met a good many Jews with whom I would just as soon live as with some Gentiles. I do not see that the Gentiles are so very superior. But you cannot shut the Book, and tell me that it is not the word of God, and then offer me an adequate explanation of this age-long problem of human history, the lot of the Jew—persecuted as no one else has ever been persecuted.

If our eyes were open—if only our eyes were open, the Jews of this and other days would be an indisputable testimony to men of all ranks, that there is no way of

peace and prosperity and eternal felicity save through an acceptance of Jesus Christ as *the* King. He is the King of the Jews? Yes, perhaps in a special and peculiar way. But is He anyone else's King? Yes; He is everybody's King. Ludendorf began the propagation of a new paganism, but he did not live long. Hitler and Mussolini—and some Canadian imitations—set themselves up as though they were going to rule the world. No! No! "THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS,"—THE KING universal.

You say, "I do not believe it"? It will make no difference to anyone in the world but yourself—but it will make a difference to you if you do not believe. You say, "I am going to rub it out"? This sinful world has been busy trying to rub it out for a long time. "Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews." Pilate was no friend of Jesus Christ. A weak man was he, a place-seeker, who would fain have done Him a good turn if it had not cost him too much, but who delivered Him to the will of His enemies at last. But he wrote a title, and *he* put it on the cross.

IV.

Those who tried to change what was written DISCOVERED IT WAS INDELIBLE.

"This title then read many of the Jews." They read it. They did not read it until it was on the cross. Then they hurried to Pilate and said, "Please change that. Change it!" "No. What I have written, I have written." How he wrote, I do not know; but as he wrote that title an unseen Hand was placed on his, and he was sovereignly compelled, as will be witnessed at the day of judgment which shall come upon all ungodly men, to put upon that cross, "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Let it stand! None can change it now!

"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron: thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

Jew and Gentile must acknowledge Him as King.

I wonder if I have any Jewish friends here to-night? I think there are some. What will you do, my friends?

"Ye seed of Israel's chosen race,
A remnant weak and small,
Hail Him Who saves you by His grace,
And crown Him Lord of all.

"Ye Gentile sinners, ne'er forget
The wormwood and the gall;
Go, spread your trophies at His feet,
And crown Him Lord of all.

"Let every kindred, every tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To Him all majesty ascribe,
And crown Him Lord of all.

Oh, that I could effectually make this appeal to you who have not yet acknowledged Jesus Christ as King, nor vowed allegiance to Him!—

"O that with yonder sacred throng
We at His feet may fall,
Join in the everlasting song,
And crown Him Lord of all!"

There is no other way. Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! Crown Him, Lord of all.

Let us pray.

O Lord, but for Thy holy Word we could not understand why men do not receive Thee; but we remember that it is the God Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, Who must shine in men's hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We pray Thee this evening to make us all the willing subjects of this glorious King of love. We worship Thee, Lord Jesus. We would, if we could, undo forever the wickedness perpetrated at the cross, and leave only the accomplishment of sovereign grace. Help us that we may believe in Thee while Thou art on the cross. Thus,

"Trusting only in Thy merit
Would we seek Thy face;
Heal our wounded, broken spirit,
Save us by Thy grace."

For Thy name's sake, Amen.

Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 2 Second Quarter Lesson 22 May 29th, 1938

CHRIST APPEARS TO THE DISCIPLES

Lesson Text: John 21.

Golden Text: "And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."—John 21:17.

I. The Manifestation to Discouraged Disciples—verses 1-14.

After appearing to His followers in the time of sorrow (John 20:11), fear (20:19), doubt (20:26) and disillusionment (Luke 24:21), Christ manifested Himself again to them in the midst of utter discouragement. He comes to us with grace for every time of need (Heb. 4:16).

Peter announced his determination to return to his former vocation of fishing from which he had been summoned to follow Christ (Matt. 4:18-20). Peter was a leader of men, but this time his influence was harmful, instead of helpful. He and Thomas are named first in the list of backsliding disciples, indicating that the denial and doubt concerning Christ, of which they had been respectively guilty, lead easily to a departure from the life which is pleasing to God. Backsliding in heart is usually succeeded by backsliding in conduct.

A genuine Christian who abandons his holy profession and seeks to live the old life will experience nothing but barrenness. Fishermen who run away from the Lord catch nothing. They have no fruit (John 15:5), no testimony, no power and no joy (Psa. 51:12). Self-chosen paths do not lead to green pastures and still waters (Psa. 91:12; 106:15; Prov. 28:18).

But the black night of discouragement and failure will give way to the glorious day of cheer and power when Christ manifests Himself. Sorrow may endure for the night, but joy cometh in the morning. The presence of Christ will illuminate and bless. Service at His command and under His control will yield abundant fruitage (Luke 5:5, 6).

The risen Christ Himself provided refreshment for His weary disciples (compare I. Kings 19:6, 7). That simple meal

of bread and fish would remind them of His power (John 6:14) of their vital union with Him through His death (Matt. 26:26-29), and of the strength to be derived by feeding upon Him (John 6:35).

II. The Restoration of the Sinning Disciples—verses 15-17.

The primary need of the one who has departed from the way of the Lord is a personal interview with Christ. Yet, that is frequently the last thing the sinning saint desires (verse 7). It requires courage to face our sins, to view them as the Saviour views them, to confess and forsake them, to judge ourselves in His sight (I. Cor. 11:31).

Three times had Peter denied his Lord, and three times he was asked to confess his love for the Master against Whom he had so grievously sinned. Restoration to fellowship with Christ was followed by restoration to service for Christ. Only those who abide in fellowship with Christ can feed the lambs and the sheep (Psa. 51:12, 13).

III. The Revelation concerning Dying Disciples—verses 18-23.

The Lord prophesied that in future days Peter, self-assertive and independent in spirit as he was at that time, must submit to the humiliation of being led away unto death (2 Pet. 1:14). His hands, like those of the Master, would be outstretched on a cross. Tradition tells us that Peter was

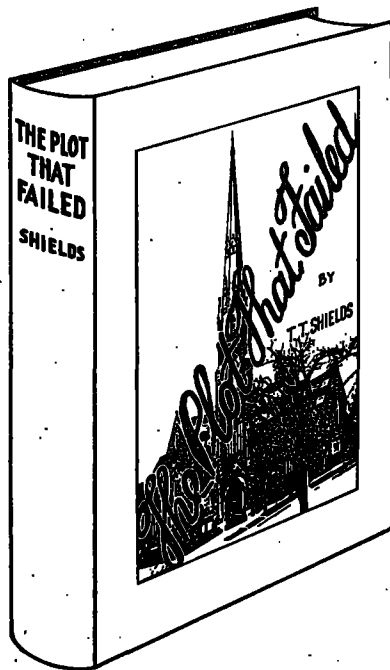
crucified head downward, since he deemed himself unworthy to follow his Lord, even in the manner of death. A Christian should be ready, as were Peter and Paul, to glorify God by his death, as well as by his life (Phil. 1:20; Rom. 14:8; 2 Cor. 5:9; 2 Tim. 4:6).

Peter was slow to learn that the essence of Christian service is absolute obedience. The call of early years had to be repeated: "Follow me" (Matt. 4:19; 16:24; 26:58). "A Christian has but one Person to please, and one thing to do at a time."

In refusing to reveal the time and manner of the death of John, our Lord would teach us that the times and seasons are in the hands of God, and it is not good to be wise above that which is written (Acts 1:7). At the same time, the dissimilarity noted in His words concerning Peter and John, coupled with His reference to the Second Advent, reminds us of the fact that when He comes there will be two classes of believers, for all will not die (1 Cor. 15:51). The dead in Christ will be raised and those living in Christ will be changed.

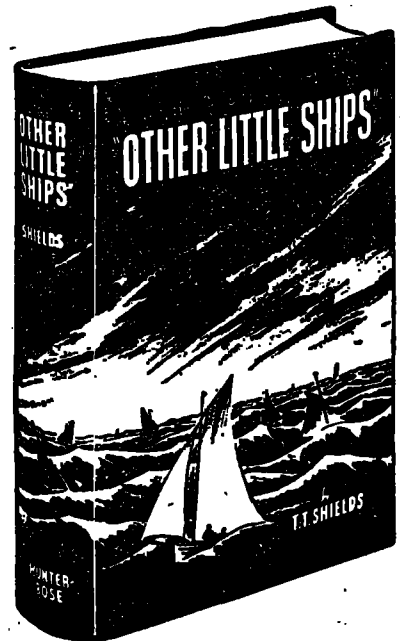
IV. The Testimony of True Disciples—verses 23, 24.

The human authors of the books of the Divine library of the Scriptures gave testimony to the truth just as surely as did the Son of God (John 8:14; Rev. 1:5), for they were inspired by the Holy Spirit of truth.



One Dollar Each
SPECIAL OFFER

Either Volume - - - -	\$1.00
The Gospel Witness, one year - - - - -	2.00
The Witness and either book - - - - -	2.75
The Witness and both books - - - - -	3.50



OTHER BOOKS BY DR. SHIELDS

The Most Famous Trial of History - - - - -	\$.50
Address on Separate Schools - - - - -	.10
12 for - - - - -	1.00
The Roman Catholic Horseleach - - - - -	.05
25 for - - - - -	1.00
The Papacy in the Light of Scripture - - - - -	.10
The Baptist Message - - - - -	.05
Is So-Called Close Communion Scriptural? - - - - -	.05
The Anti-Christian Cult of Russellism - - - - -	.10
Oxford Group Movement Analyzed - - - - -	.05
25 for - - - - -	1.00

The Gospel Witness,
130 Gerrard St. E., Toronto.

Find enclosed the sum of \$.....
for which send me

Name.....
Rev.
Mr.
Mrs.
Miss

Address