

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.

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

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Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada.

Vol. 17, No. 5

TORONTO, JUNE 9, 1938

Whole Number 838

THE PERIL OF AN EMPTY HOUSE, SWEEPED AND GARNISHED

The parables of our Lord are pictorial representations of principles as old as creation, and as enduring as the sun. One such parable was spoken in connection with His rebuke of the evil and adulterous generation which sought after a sign, which generation He said would be condemned in the judgment by the men of Ninevah and the queen of the south. This is the parable: "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."

I.

Ever since man, from the beginning, gave heed to the whisper of the serpent, human nature, and all that proceeds therefrom, in thought and word and action, as represented by individual character, organizations, and institutions, has a natural tendency to provide hospitality to some kind of unclean spirit. In spite of theological liberalism, the natural bias of all human things toward evil is attested by every individual record and by every page of human history.

And never was that tendency more manifest than in our day. Human personality is a great house, fitted to be the palace of a king. It is a tremendous force, capable of great achievements. But, left to itself, to develop its own inherent potentialities, in whatever direction it exercises its powers, it enters into partnership with an unclean spirit.

Education becomes selfish, sordid, and animalistic. Art outsings the birds, imitates every melodious voice, and every form of beauty; yet falls at last into the mire. Science outruns the roe upon the mountains, vies with earthquakes and cyclones, outraces the wind, and keeps pace with the lightning; but, to the complete eclipse of all its benevolent ministries, becomes a destructive devil at last.

Religion, issuing from carnal human nature, rejects the image of the invisible God, and makes a god or gods for itself, in harmony with its own desires. Thenceforward, it becomes an avenue for self-indulgence and

self-aggrandizement, a means of temporal advancement and worldly prominence.

Politics, the science of human government, whether by the people or by a person—and which ought to be of the people, and for the people—brings all forms of human endeavour under its command, and prostitutes its authority to the accomplishment of selfish ends. Who can successfully deny the universal tendency toward deterioration manifest in all human affairs?

II.

But this human tendency toward self-decay and self-destruction may, paradoxical as it may seem, check its progress toward the precipice by a self-imposed effort to arrest its downward course. The unclean spirit takes a vacation, and in his absence the house is swept and garnished. In every realm of human thought and activity, there is an occasional renaissance, a rebirth. It may express itself in an apparent purification of thought, a revival of letters, an elevation of social standards, and a general refinement of life. It may touch the life of individuals, of communities, of nations.

Such human agencies as we have enumerated will be contributing factors in the general sweeping and garnishing of the house. If it be but an individual life under observation, it may be plastered and stuccoed and painted by Christian Science; or "changed" by the famous "Frank"; or otherwise cultured by some other educational or religious agency. The unit multiplied by the million becomes "Civilization", and the general agent effecting the sweeping and garnishing is honored by the name of Evolution.

III.

Our parable suggests, however, that negative virtues cannot ensure a permanent morality. In the house vacated by the unclean spirit, the litter and filth accumulated during his occupancy had been swept away, and some effort had been made toward external or superficial garnishing. Notwithstanding, the house was really empty. It was without a master and lord. It was a moral vacuum, inviting a whirlwind of evil. In spite of its fine appearance, its vacuity hung a "To let" sign in the window, and soon the old occupant returned and brought with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and the last state of that house was worse than the first.

In the last analysis, godlessness in any realm spells demoniacism. In all spheres of human life, the choice must be made between one Holy Spirit and an octarchy of demons. A godless educational system becomes an agency of the devil. A godless literature soon wallows in the mire of sensuality. A science that substitutes evolution for creation evolves man, not into a god but into a hydraheaded démon. A Germany that substitutes a philosophical Kultur for Christianity, sweeps and garnishes the house, and makes it ready for the occupation of a devil called Hitler with all his imps. The country that enthrones a man in the place of God, and invites men to come from the uttermost parts of the earth, not to hear anyone's wisdom, but to kiss the toe of the Pope, develops a human fiend who sends his legions to the land of the queen of the south for the "fun" of raining death from the clouds upon the helpless inhabitants. A modernistic Christianity, which is but a moral philosophy without divine authority, and devoid of any supernatural dynamic, leaves the house empty, and the door open to welcome every type of anarchistic pacifism, and blind safety-first-ism and economic vagary, seeking shelter and sustenance.

Such a view was not beyond the implications, and I believe the direct intention of the parable under consideration, for said our Lord, "Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation." The only safety, the safety of the individual, of every form of human thought and activity, whether it finds individual, social, national, or international expression, must ever consist in the recognition of divine authority, and an experience of divine possession. Once more we repeat: the human choice must ever be made between submission to a sovereign God and an octarchy of demons.

A LETTER FROM PALESTINE

We publish below a letter from a missionary in Jerusalem, a member of the first graduating class of Toronto Baptist Seminary, and still a member of Jarvis Street Baptist Church. To avoid identification, we omit the name and the Jerusalem address. The letter speaks for itself:

Jaffa, May 18, 1938.

"Dear Dr. Shields:

"It is with much regret that I have let such a long time elapse without writing to express my deep sorrow at the loss of dear old Jarvis Street Church. Toronto wouldn't be Toronto to me without it. It is written, 'He maketh the wrath of man to praise him,' so I trust that even this fire may be used to His glory.

"And, now, may I tell you how much I enjoyed your sermon of April 24th. Here in Palestine we are seeing in a tangible way the fruit of Britain's weak, compromising policy. Before the strike which began in April, 1936, Palestine was in a prosperous condition. The strike could easily have been suppressed in its initial stages, but things were just allowed to take their course. The Nufti, whom all knew to be the prime instigator, and who was helped by Italy, was given a free hand. And now, what have we to-day? Lawlessness abounds. Bands which had time to organize cannot now be easily dispersed. Palestine is now in a deplorable condition both economically and morally.

"But even worse is the damage that has been done to British prestige. I have been here nearly eight years and as I move among the people, for I have openings in many homes, I notice a vast change. Respect for British law has been replaced by an attitude of cynical humour.

"And all this might have been avoided. One is inclined to believe with Brutus that it were better to crush the serpent in the egg, for fear of the evil it might do once hatched. At

least events here would seem to justify his argument. For instance, a couple of weeks ago the Arabs of Safed decided to go on strike when they heard that the commission was to visit that town. They were informed that if they did so a twenty-two hour curfew would be imposed on the Arabic quarter. What was the result? Before noon the strike was off. Why was not such action taken at the beginning in April, 1936? Alas! the damage done is now almost irreparable and cannot be repaired quickly.

"Of course, some claim that the conditions in Palestine were inevitable. They are the natural results of the industrial revolution from which Europe has already emerged but which in Palestine is only beginning: that conditions are worse here because in Europe the revolution was gradual as the mechanical devices developed slowly, while here the perfected products are dumped on a backward population unfit and unable to cope with them. But Palestine could and would have been able to adjust herself had her morale not have been weakened by the insidious spirit of lawlessness.

"Before closing I have a request to make. Sometimes French literature is asked for and we don't know where to obtain good tracts or books. It occurred to me that the French Baptists might have a publishing house. If so, we should be greatly obliged to receive a list of their publications so that we might order suitable literature.

"Mother wishes me to express to you her grief in our mutual loss. We both trust that the new Jarvis Street Church may be filled with His glory and that you may be spared to see even more saved there than in the old church.

"Yours in His grace,

"(Signed) _____"

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

ESSEX—Rev. J. Fullard. We are glad to be able to report a measure of blessing. Three adults have recently accepted Christ and including these three, seven have been baptized and added to the church. A new record high was set for Bible School attendance a few Sundays ago, and for the past two months the attendance has averaged 103. We rejoice in an enlarged interest in the prayer meeting. Last Wednesday night we had cause to bless the Lord for a Christian man who had not been to church for years who joyfully gave his testimony that he had gotten back to Christ and as he put it, "had his faith restored". We thank God for a measure of blessing and pray for a mighty quickening of the Spirit of God.

LACHUTE, QUEBEC. Rev. Roy Hisey preached his farewell messages on Sunday, May 29th, in Lachute, after three years' ministry there. Two young men were baptized at the evening service who were converted through the evangelistic services of last year, one during meetings at Thomas' Gore under the ministry of Rev. Lorne Hisey, and the other in the Brownsburg meetings under the ministry of Rev. C. J. Loney. Rev. Roy Hisey is devoting the next few months to evangelistic work in various churches, and the pastorate at Lachute is being assumed by Mr. W. C. Tompkins, a recent graduate of Toronto Baptist Seminary.

Mr. Dubarry Among the Churches

From all the churches we continue to receive the most enthusiastic accounts of the ministry of Rev. Robt. Dubarry of France. We take the opportunity of printing the following glowing tribute from Rev. H. C. Slade of Timmins: "My trip with Mr. Dubarry was of a most delightful character. I have met few men like him, he has so intelligently consecrated himself to the Lord Jesus Christ. Not only was he received with a great welcome in every church, but, after he gave his addresses, the people were loath to let him depart. The only fault anyone could find with his visit was that it was altogether too short. Mr. Cunningham and my brother were at Noranda, and we had several real ministerial conclaves. You can guess the one to whom we gave audience. It was feasting of the choicest kind, as we listened to the great Baptist principles laid down so logically, and of the battles which had to be, and still must be fought to maintain our liberty. Mr. Dubarry's experience is so great, his reading has also taken him into

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"TILL HE COME"

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

Preached in Massey Hall, Toronto, Sunday Evening, June 5th, 1938.

(Stenographically reported)

"Till he come."—I Corinthians 11:26.

In these days of aeroplane travel I suppose there remain but very few portions of the earth that are still unexplored, and still fewer that are entirely unknown. It was not always so. Indeed, stories of human thirst for a knowledge of the unknown; of the courage displayed, the ingenuity revealed, the methods of travel and of subsistence invented, and of the hardships endured, in order to obtain that knowledge, form a very large part of the record of human heroism.

There was a time when this Western Hemisphere was but a dream in the minds of a few people, when all its wealth was entirely absent from the thought of the greater part of the world's population.

There is a spiritual world beyond this, undiscovered by and undiscoverable to unaided human reason. It is a world of reality, the pleasures and delights of which have been unexperienced by many, the riches of which are inestimable, and its glories unimaginable. And it is a very real world. You remember how the Samaritan woman said to the Stranger Whom she met at the wellside, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." So might we say to vast multitudes of people in respect to these spiritual realities: "Thou hast nothing to fly with, nothing to see with, nothing to hear with, and nothing to taste with. Yet the world is high, and that spiritual realm is of infinite dimensions and of inestimable wealth."

I remember once to have remarked rather facetiously to a friend when discussing these things, that I had never been able to understand why people were so anxious to discover the North Pole; saying, that for myself, I was content to keep as far away from it as possible. He replied, "I do not agree with you. It is rather disturbing to one's mind to conceive of a part of this world as being unknown to men, unexplored by human feet, and unexamined by the human mind."

How strange, therefore, it is that men should not have a larger interest in certain tracts of this universe that are beyond the reach of microscope or telescope, a mystery out yonder somewhere, but none the less real because it is unknown. But it has been given by the divine Spirit, to some, to see and to appreciate and to appropriate things which the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, things which have not entered into the heart of man—yet made discernible by grace to that part of our complex nature capable of seeing the invisible.

I want to hint at some of those unknown things this evening, taking an old text once again for the comfort and edification of God's people; and, I hope, also, to make the way of life plain to the unconverted.

How large a part of the Word of God—of the Old Testament and of the New—is occupied with explanations to God's people of some of the riches of divine

grace, in order that His people may be built up, or edified, and established in the truth!

I.

This well-worn text—well-worn to many of us; we are familiar with its recitation as often as we come to the Table of the Lord—directs our attention to A GREAT TRUTH THAT IS TO BE PERPETUALLY PROCLAIMED. We are to proclaim the Lord's death. That itself is significant, that an organization should exist in the world, of divine institution and subject to special providential care, and that that organization should exist primarily for one purpose, namely, to proclaim the Lord's death.

Of course it is to be regarded and proclaimed as a *fact of history*. We must never forget that the Christian religion is not a mere philosophy with nothing but a legendary or a mythical basis. Our God is not like the gods of the heathen. Christianity rests upon a sound, indisputable, historical foundation. That is to say, once upon a time there was a man called Jesus in the world, Who was born in Bethlehem, lived for a space of something like thirty-three years, and then was crucified. Let us not get into the error of forgetting that though the birth of Christ was of divine origin, and the truth concerning Jesus is a matter of supernatural revelation, the central Figure of it all had an-actual historical existence on this earth. Jesus Christ really lived, and really died; and His death is to be constantly proclaimed.

And yet, that in itself, demands some kind of explanation; for *why should the death of a mere man be kept in perpetual remembrance?* Great men have lived; great figures have occupied the stage and theatre of time; men have had great achievements to their credit; and in due time they have passed away. Their names have thereafter been remembered by a few, but as years have been multiplied they have receded into the dim and distant past, until at last they have been all but forgotten except as their names are preserved, as certain curiosities are preserved in museums where ancient things are collected, to be examined by those who are interested in the annals of the past. But the great mass of people know nothing about them, are not interested in them; nor has there been found any good reason why the fact that they lived and died should be kept in perpetual remembrance.

But here is a unique and commanding Figure Who appeared remotely on the stage of history, and yet Whose influence persists, and the fact of Whose death is to be proclaimed to the end of time.

Do not forget, dear friends, that no special provision is made for the celebration of the name of this Man Jesus as a teacher or a reformer, but *specifically as One Who died*. That is the least remarkable thing about most men, for that has been true of all men, of count-

less millions, that as surely as they lived, ultimately they died, and their bodies returned to the dust. But here is one Man singled out from all the rest, Who is not only to be remembered, but to be remembered as One Who died.

Men die because they live. It is the natural and inescapable end of natural life. There is nothing remarkable about it. But the distinguishing feature about this Man, that must never be forgotten, that must always be emphasized, is that He died: "Ye do proclaim the Lord's death." That is where the emphasis must be laid. Thus we are given a song that will never wear out, a story that will never become old, a theme that will never become threadbare: we must always proclaim the Lord's death.

Mr. Brown prayed—and I am sure you prayed with him—that the preacher might be instructed by the Spirit of God, that he might bring forth out of His treasury, things new and old. What other story will bear such frequent repetition, and such poor repetition? An accomplished elocutionist, a real actor, may make some figure of the world of fiction to live before his audience; and for a while he can command attention. But inevitably it wears out; it is of interest only as such an one is represented by someone of great ability. But anyone—everyone—may tell this story of the death of Jesus Christ. It requires no great ability, no special natural talents, no large intellectual capacity. A little child may listen to the story of the death of the Man of Nazareth—and tell it with stammering tongue; and it commands attention and interest. Without much knowledge, without a great command of language, we may somehow make known the fact that Jesus Christ died. It is not the way we tell it, but the substance of the story which commands attention.

Why? It is a story which tells of a *provision of paramount importance to all of us*. Some people are interested in the markets. I have observed, when travelling, that some men, as they buy their morning paper, turn first of all, not to the general news of the day, but to the financial page, to see how the stocks are listed for the day. To them that is a matter of great interest. A friend told me that he goes three days of each week, for two hours each afternoon, to a broker's office, to watch the fluctuations of the markets, and comes away saying, as the case may be, "I am so much poorer to-day", or "So much richer." The farmer is interested in the selling of his wheat; the merchant, of his merchandise—all are interested in various things that are relatively important. "What shall we eat, or, What shall we drink, or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" While these may not be the matters of first importance, they are nevertheless concerns to which men in the flesh cannot be entirely indifferent.

But the story of the death of Christ goes deeper and higher than that. The other day I drove through a certain section of the city, past a number of houses I used to know very well. I saw one house that, to my certain knowledge, cost seventy-five thousand dollars to build. The owner has long since passed away. I saw another house, a magnificent mansion, a palace in its way. I have been in Toronto only twenty-eight years, and that house was built a good while after I came here; but long since the man who built and occupied it for a little while has gone to his reward. The house has passed into the hands of strangers, the

family is scattered. I passed another in which I remember I was most royally entertained, a magnificent home—I do not know who lives in it now: I do know that my host and hostess of that day have long since passed from this sphere of action. "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; (for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:) that he should still live for ever, and not see corruption. For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations: they call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless, man being in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish. This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling."

The truth of the text has to do primarily, not with the clothes we wear and the food we eat—though I doubt whether any gift from the divine hand is unrelated to this fundamental merit secured by the death of Christ. Though tabernacled in flesh, there is an immaterial, immortal part of every one of us that never dies: hence that which provides for the cleansing of these souls of ours, which makes possible the enjoyment of eternal felicity, in some other world, some other realm beyond, is of vastly greater importance than the consideration of mere temporalities; for rich and poor alike reach the end of the journey, and sooner or later the time comes when this tabernacle must be put off. The death of Christ has to do with the provision of "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens".

That is why it is proclaimed constantly. That is why we must for ever proclaim the Lord's death. "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh." The habits of life, the fashions of life, the conditions of life in general, change with succeeding ages; but this remains for ever true that as for these bodies, they at last decay—"dust to dust, and ashes to ashes." But the spirit takes its flight, and must return to God Who gave it.

He has an everlasting vocation who is commissioned to proclaim the Lord's death, for he is dealing with that which is the deepest requirement of the human soul, a means by which we may be prepared for that larger, richer, and holier realm beyond.

We must perpetually proclaim the death of Christ, furthermore, because thereby we celebrate *an achievement of universal and eternal consequence*. The lives of some men move in a very small orbit, and so far as appears to human observation, the influence of their lives terminates; it stretches only a little distance into the future. A man comes into this world, touches a little circle—how far the influence of his life may have reached we cannot say. Much farther than we know, I am sure; but so far as his public achievements are concerned, so far as the accomplishments of his life are known to his fellows, in the vast majority of instances, a man's influence ceases very soon after his body has been laid in the grave.

There have, of course, been exceptions to this rule.

Men have written books like Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, that have lived—and still live. Men have achieved greatness in the realm of statesmanship; they have laid foundations deep and broad. Washington and Lincoln are outstanding names in the history of the Republic to the south of us. Wellington, Cromwell, and many others, in the records of our own Empire. They lived largely and influentially; but even their influence is a steadily diminishing force after all. But here is Someone Who, by His death, achieved something that is of universal influence, and touches not only this world but all worlds, and accomplishes much for time, and stretches forward through all eternity. Never in all the history of the world did anyone ever achieve anything comparable to that which was achieved by Him Who, knowing that His time had come to depart out of this world, at last at the place called Calvary, cried triumphantly with a loud voice, "It is finished", bowed His head, and gave up the ghost.

And we are commanded to keep on proclaiming the death of Jesus Christ because the influence of His death, the consequences of that which He achieved in our behalf at the place called Calvary, are of everlasting duration. Oh what a theme! I expect to preach it for ever, I really do. I put it in our advertisement this week—

"E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die."

But do not let anyone suppose that when I die I have ceased to preach. I shall only have graduated then, for—

"When this poor lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave,
Then, in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing Thy power to save."

I am sure I shall never retire. I shall never have completed my ministry. Neither will you, if you are a Christian. We have a vocation that will last—I was going to say, as long as the stars, let me rather say which will outlive and outlast the stars—as long as the throne of God endures. That is the significance of this ordinance, which proclaims the Lord's death.

II.

And here is AN EVENT TO BE CONTEMPLATED. We are to think of the coming again of our glorious Lord. I do not believe there is a superfluous word in the Bible. I am sure there is no doctrine of the Scripture, no teaching of Scripture, that is unimportant. I confess I am jealous for every word of the truth of the Book. I am always pained when I see that, by the distortion of some precious truth of Scripture, whether it be the ministry of the Holy Spirit; or the fundamental thing of which I am speaking this evening, the expiatory death of our Lord; or the second coming of Christ, which is treated so lightly and sometimes so imaginatively and speculatively as to make it absurd, or some other great verity of the faith that ought to be precious to every believer, the Word is brought into disrepute and discredited because it has become associated in many minds with so many speculative or sensational vagaries.

The truth of the second coming of our Lord is an integral part of the whole plan of divine redemption. You will have observed, as Mr. Brown read, how the two advents are linked together: "Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the

sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without a sin offering unto salvation." He came once, and He will come again. That is the end before us, as believers, a great and glorious event of the future which we are to hold in perpetual commemoration and contemplation. We are to think of His coming, dear friends, to look for and love His appearing, and to talk of His coming. Write it down as true, that as surely as Jesus Christ came once, He will—He must—come again, inevitably. A personal, visible, audible, coming, of Christ is in prospect.

His coming is essential—I will not say to the maintenance, but to the *manifestation of His own integrity*. A man who lightly breaks his promise is held in but little regard by men who are themselves men of integrity. Our Lord Jesus definitely promised, "I will come again"; and when He had commissioned His disciples, as we saw this morning in our lesson, to bear witness to the uttermost part of the earth, He went out to Olivet, lifted up His hands in parting benediction, and "a cloud received Him out of their sight". And the angels said to the disciples, "Ye men of galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." He will not fail to keep His promise in that respect. Do not forget that the space from the day the promise of His first advent was first given, to the day of the fulfilment of that promise, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea, covered a much longer period of time than that which has elapsed since He Himself said, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself."

It must have seemed to many of the seers and saints of old that God was slow in the implementation of His promises, in sending the One Whom He had said would come. Yet in due course the Vision came, Jesus appeared; and certainly, unmistakably, inevitably—what stronger word shall I use—inexorably—He will come again. There is no power in the world that can prevent Him from coming. Jesus Christ will come again. When He was in the garden in the days of His flesh, said He to 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?" He suffered, drank the vinegar, entered into the outer darkness. He suffered in order that the minutest particular of every prophesy related to His death should be fulfilled. Let me assure you that the prophecies which remain will just as surely come to pass by the exercise of the sovereign will and power of our gracious God, as the prophecies now fulfilled. As it was necessary that the Scriptures should not be broken in respect to His first coming, so it is impossible that any scripture related to His second coming should be broken. He will come again.

Not merely to keep His word. How many people there are who foolishly promise to do that which is wrong, and then will not recede from the position they have taken, saying, "I have said it: I will stand by it. I have said I will do it, and I will." There is nothing particularly wise about that: If you show yourself to be a fool by one word, there is no use confirming it by other words. You had better repent. I would not

represent my Lord as being merely concerned with having spoken some word, that must, because of that fact be fulfilled. Of course He must keep His word, but there is this difference: that He never promises anything without a holy purpose in His promise. It is necessary that His promise be fulfilled because the outworking of His promise is the fulfilment of the whole purpose of redemption. Your redemption and mine depend upon His coming. We have in the Supper material emblems, bread and wine, emblems of His flesh and of His blood. But the redemption that is in Christ Jesus is for the whole man. I never admire the sentiment of people who seem to think it an outstanding Christian virtue to despise the body. A man said to me recently, "A three-dollar box will be good enough for me when I die. What is the body anyhow?" The body is—or ought to be—the temple of the Holy Ghost. There is nothing in the Word of God to justify you or me in speaking lightly of the human body. Your body and mine, because of sin, are full of physical imperfections, but "this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Victory for the whole man. The spirit? Yes. The soul and all the marvellous faculties with which man has been endowed? Yes. And the body? Yes; "fashioned like unto the body of his glory".

What a wonderful day that will be! "Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." All that is contingent upon the second coming of our Lord. How mistaken are they who have brought many people into great anguish of soul by teaching that here and now it is the privilege of all believers to have perfect bodies, free from disease, and that if only we have faith we can be healed of everything! Certain people tell us that if we have anything wrong with our bodies, it is a certain sign that we are harbouring sin. What a damnable doctrine! I say again, what a damnable doctrine! I stood by the bedside of one of the greatest saints I ever knew who had fallen under that delusion. She was dying of cancer, and anguished in soul as she cried, "I try to believe. I know if I were not such a sinner I could believe, and could be healed." Her poor soul was writhing in agony because she had been taught that it was because of her sin that she was not healed, when she ought to have been resigned to the will of God.

That was the lie of Job's friends. What a scourge that thing has been everywhere! Paul left Trophimus sick at Miletus, and I suppose one might safely say that if ever a man was competent to exercise a ministry of healing, it was the Apostle Paul. Sometimes God permits us to suffer when it is His will, and to bear affliction. The death of Christ reaches forward to the time—and will find its culmination—when He Who was the Firstfruits of those who sleep, shall come again. The bodies of the saints shall be raised in the likeness of His glorious body. Then we shall be changed; then we shall have perfect bodies. But it is just as unscriptural to say that we may demand perfect physical wholeness here and now, as it would be to say that it is possible for one to go out to the cemetery and command the graves to open, and the dead to come forth. The graves will open; men will come forth; we shall have perfect bodies—when Jesus Christ shall come down the skies. Blessed be His name, He is coming;

and we shall have just such bodies one of these great days, as He wears. Blessed be His name for ever, for a salvation that is for the whole man.

The coming of Christ is *essential to the pacification of this old world, essential to the vindication of divine justice*. I do not believe we shall have to preach Christ and Him crucified to sinners after Christ comes. We are to proclaim the Lord's death "till he come"—no longer, except to celebrate it as an achievement. For myself, I can find no passage of Scripture to support the theory that after the Lord Jesus comes, and the church is taken away, the saints of the earth removed, the Spirit's ministry terminated, the Jews are to be the world's evangelists in the greatest revival the world has ever seen, when countless millions are to be saved, after the Lord's coming. In my view, there is not one shred of scriptural support for that theory. It is a delusion and a snare. The dispensation of grace extends to the coming of our Lord. We are asked to proclaim His death "till he come". And when He shall come, He shall come "to be admired in all them that believe"—and what else? "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The coming of Christ is just as essential to the vindication of His justice as of His mercy. He will come again, and how His love and grace will be vindicated by the complete salvation and redemption of His elect people! When you read of the fulminations of Hitler, or Goering, or Mussolini, do you not find your soul fired with an holy indignation, and are you not led to cry out, "How long, O Lord, how long?" If I did not believe in a day of judgment, I could not believe in the holiness of God. The whole tale of the world's awful sin of other days, of our day—and God only knows of how many days that are yet to be—that that should go unpunished! It would argue that there was no moral government of the world.

But it will not go unpunished. "He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained." The Stalins, the Hitlers, and the Mussolinis, and all the rest of the dictators and sinners, everywhere, will lick the dust when He shall come. "Judgment also will he lay to the line and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the many plains." He will put things right when He gets here. Justice—His justice—will ultimately be vindicated; and it will be vindicated when He comes "in flaming fire." Therefore His coming is sure.

III.

THERE IS AN INTERVAL BETWEEN THESE TWO ADVENTS, TO BE ENJOYED—I was going to say, to be endured. No, not endured by the believer: to be enjoyed. "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death, till he come." Sometimes I get tired waiting, do you? Sometimes I feel that I wish the Lord would come now, that He would "finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness." When He says, "Behold, I come quickly", I can answer, "Even so come, Lord Jesus." Come! Come! Come! But we must await His time.

How shall we get on until He comes? The Lord says the best way to get on is to keep Him in constant remembrance. *The first thing necessary for us to know*

is that we at present, here and now, enjoy the favour of God, that has been secured to us by the death of Christ.

Do you enjoy praying? Do you feel any confidence in yourself when you pray? I do not. If for a moment I should lose sight of the Crucified, I am sure I could not pray at all. I should have to say, "How can God hear the prayer of a sinner like me?" I could not pray. What should I pray for? But there are so many things to ask Him for. My need is so great. I want something to assure me that all is right between me and God. "All right", says the Lord, "I will give you something to think of. Until I shall come again, take the bread and drink the wine, and keep the tremendous fact of my death in perpetual remembrance. By that you will know that you now enjoy the favour of God in Christ." I could not be happy about the coming of the Lord if I knew that the judgment books were going to be opened on that day. Would you? You say, "I always do the best I can." No, you do not. "I always have done the best I could." No, you have not. There are a thousand ways in which we have failed to do our best. No one here to-night would find any enjoyment in contemplating the second coming of the Lord if you knew that that was a day when God would open His books, and judge you according to the things written therein. The contemplation of the day of the Lord could inspire no gladness in any of us, if it were to be for us a day of judgment.

The Lord says, "I want you to know you have not that fear." *It is indispensable to your present peace to know that the record of the past has been completely expunged.* If you have any doubt about it, remember the blood of the everlasting covenant by which all our sins are washed away. "If your sins are atoned for", I think He seems to say, "you will be able to think of my coming with joy, and not with grief."

I am glad it is all under the blood, everything covered, and the favour of God now secured to us—and also that *all the future is absolutely assured.* "But it will be a long time before the Lord comes", someone says. Some young man says, "I may have to live a long time in the world; I may stumble." No one was ever saved—ever has been saved—by works of righteousness which they have done. "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, and wound for wound, stripe for stripe." That is the law. He laid down His life that you and I might go free. "If you have any doubt about it", He seemed to say, "keep your mind upon the cross, upon the precious blood." I think He meant to say to us believers, "I shall be invisible to you. I am the High Priest, and I am going within the veil." You remember how the high priest under the old dispensation took the blood, and entered within the veil and it closed behind him. The people saw him no more; they were outside while he was within. They listened, and as he went to the mercy-seat and sprinkled the blood, as he walked in the holy of holies, the skirts of his garments swayed, and they heard the music of the golden bells—a priest within the veil ministering for them. Said my Lord Jesus, I "shall be absent from you, for I am going to enter into heaven itself, not with the blood of others, but with My own blood. I shall be there in the presence of God for you until I come again. While I am there, you celebrate upon earth what I am doing in the heavens. Take the bread, take the wine; for as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do proclaim the Lord's death till he come."

Is there a weary soul here to-night who has never, with the eye of faith, seen Jesus Christ? Is there a burdened heart whose sin has not been washed away? Will you enter into the joy of this truth? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, trust Him as your Substitute at the place called Calvary, as your Representative when He came out of the grave, and as your Representative in the glory where He ever liveth to make intercession for you. You can then go home from this house to-night rejoicing that you are saved, and saved for ever, ready to meet Him when He shall come.

Let us pray:

Once again, O Lord, we thank Thee for the completeness of the work of redemption, for the assurance we have in Thy Word that all is well for those who believe. Ere this service shall close, may everyone within these walls, if there are any who entered unsaved, become a true believer. Help us to breathe the publican's prayer, God be merciful to me, a sinner; and then to go down to our houses justified. For Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 2 Second Quarter Lesson 25 June 19th, 1938

THE FIRST APOSTOLIC MIRACLE

Lesson Text: Acts 3.

Golden Text: Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.—Acts 3:6.

I. The Miracle of Divine Power—verses 1-11.

Peter and John appreciated the opportunity of united prayer, when God's people may have fellowship with Him and with one another in intercession. It was while Peter was in the spirit of prayer that God used him as His instrument to bring blessing to the lame man. The stated hour for prayer on this occasion was about 3 o'clock in the afternoon (Psa. 55:17; Dan. 6:10).

The entrance to the House of God is indeed a "Beautiful Gate" for those who love Him (Psa. 26:8; 84:1, 10; Isa. 64:11).

The references to sight in verses 3 to 5 would make a helpful study:

- (1) The casual glance of one in need ("seeing Peter and John"); the look of the curious crowd (Luke 23:35; Lam. 1:12).
- (2) The intent gaze of one who can help ("fastening his eyes upon him". Same Greek word translated "look so earnestly upon" in verse 12); the look of the compassionate God (Exod. 2:25).
- (3) The attentive look of one who has faith ("Look on us . . . he gave heed"); the look of the contrite soul (Isa. 45:22; Nu. 21:9; John 1:29).

Teachers will find this incident a helpful illustration of the steps of salvation. The lame man gave heed, heard the message of salvation, believed, arose, received strength, rejoiced, praised God, and then joined the believers in the fellowship of prayer and worship. No longer was he on the outside of the temple, begging; he was on the inside, praising. He was not ashamed to allow people to see him enjoying the newly-acquired powers of leaping, standing and walking (Matt. 5:16). His testimony aroused others to interest and faith (Acts 4:16, 21).

The name of Christ represents His personality, His power, His authority. As Jesus of Nazareth, the Saviour had been subject to human ills, and could have compassion upon the one burdened with sickness and sin (Matt. 8: 16, 17; Heb. 4:15), and as Jesus of Nazareth He had died (Heb. 2:14). But He was also Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the Messiah, the Son of God, the risen glorious Lord.

II. The Message of Divine Faithfulness—verses 12-26.

Peter's message was directed especially to the Jews, and he aimed to meet their special difficulty and need.

The apostles had no power in themselves to perform miracles; they simply acted as channels for the power of God (Matt. 28:18-20). Peter wasted no time, words or effort on minor matters, but spoke immediately of the main issue—the identity of Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, and their personal relationship to Him.

The God of their fathers had glorified Christ in His passion (John 17:1), making even the wrath of men to contribute to His praise, for at Calvary God was fulfilling His own purpose for the redemption of mankind. Nevertheless, the Jews sinned when they delivered up the Christ, denied and rejected Him, preferred the wicked Barabbas to the Holy and Just One, and crucified the Lord of glory (Gen. 50:20; Acts 2:23). Notice the paradox in the words, "Killed the Prince (or Author) of life (John 5:26; 17:2). He could not be held prisoner by the powers of death, and rose triumphant from the grave (Acts 2:24; Rev. 1:18).

By the power of the glorified Christ the lame man had been healed. Faith had been the means by which he had received the blessing (Eph. 2:8). The man stood before them perfectly whole, not merely physically, but also spiritually.

While hating their sin and speaking strongly against it, Peter loved the sinners, and aimed to bring them to repentance and faith in Christ. Their ignorance did not excuse them, but it was an extenuating circumstance (Luke 23:34; 1 Tim. 1:13; 1 Cor. 2:8).

The suffering and death of Christ proved that God was faithful to His Word; He was but fulfilling the promises He had made through the prophets of old (Luke 24:25-27). The Jews had been looking for a King of glory, and they failed to recognize Him when He came as the humble servant of Jehovah. But just as surely as the promises relating to Messiah's suffering had been fulfilled in His First Advent, so surely would the promises relating to His glory be fulfilled in His Second Advent.

Peter counselled the Jews to repent, and be converted, to change their attitude and actions toward Christ, that their sins might be forgiven, and that so they might have part with those who should in future enjoy full blessing from the Lord. They must hear the message given to them through Christ the Prophet spoken of by Moses (Deut. 18:15, 18, 19; Acts 7:37), lest they be destroyed as were those who were

disobedient in former days (Heb. 2:2, 3). They were the children of the prophets, and the covenants given to the patriarchs of old belonged also to them. God desired to bless them, and had made provision for the forgiveness of their sins through His Son, once crucified, and now glorified.

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

(Continued from page 2)

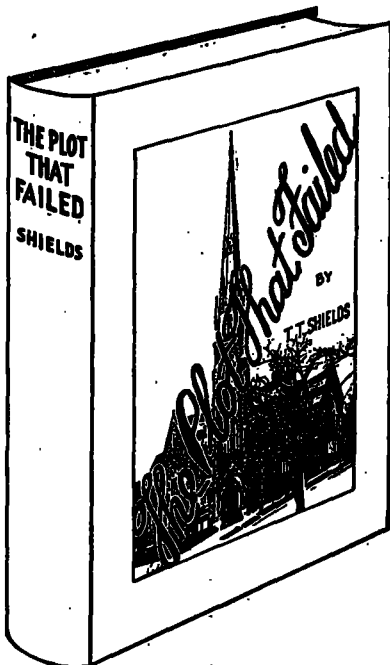
so many fields, and his mind is so keen and wise that we younger ministers were greatly helped by his able counsel. Really I have no words to explain what those few days of fellowship meant to myself personally.

"Above everything else, of course, we were made acquainted with France and its pressing need for the gospel. Mr. Dubarry has his own way of presenting those needs, and the hearts of all were stirred, as well as much encouraged over the work they have already accomplished."

In the same enthusiastic tone Pastor Carson, of Verdun, Montreal, writes: "We enjoyed Mr. Dubarry's visit very much. Our impression was that we had never met such a scholarly humble man. We hope he will be able to drop in again on his way back. His visit was very valuable to us at Emmanuel."

And from Brownsburg, Quebec, comes this report: "In Brownsburg Baptist Church on Thursday evening, May 12th, Rev. Robt. Dubarry of France brought a very helpful and interesting address, which was listened to with great attention, as he showed the need of the spread of the gospel in France. Rev. W. W. Fleischer of Fenelon Falls gave a short address in the interest of Home Missions. May God bless these efforts of His servants to extend His Kingdom."

From Lindsay, Ontario, we have this word: "Last Sunday indeed was a high day in Israel. The warmer weather, instead of hurting the attendance, seemed only to add to it. Mr. Dubarry's message at the morning service, as well as giving us a vision of the need of France, was a benediction to all who were privileged to listen to him. And the doxology was sung from the hearts of all our people when they looked upon ten adults, all of whom have taken a strong and uncompromising stand for the Lord, given the right hand of fellowship. Ten were baptized during the month of April, and at least two more are ready for baptism."



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