

The Gospel Witness

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

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"SEEKETH NOT HER OWN"

Nothing is more futile, and few things are more offensive, than exhortations to love. In the last analysis, love is the distinctive mark of a Christian. But love is not a work, is not something that flows from human effort. "The fruit of the Spirit is love." And unless the Spirit of God dwells in one, and manifests His grace in Christian conduct and character, no one can really love in the Christian sense. Notwithstanding, it is by the quality of love that one proves his Christian discipleship; and only as by grace we may learn to love, can we faithfully witness to the God Who is love.

Righteousness, with all that it implies, should be characteristic of a Christian; but that, in itself, is not alluring to others. We must not be less than righteous in our conduct, but we ought to be more: "for scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die." Goodness is neither less nor other than righteousness: it is righteousness plus. We are admonished not to love in word, but "in deed and in truth". That is to say, where there is truly Christian love, it will manifest itself in loving deeds.

Included in Paul's analysis of that Christian grace is this characteristic: "Love seeketh not her own." In other words, it is distinguished by an utter lack of self-seeking. It would be a healthy exercise for any of us to consider how far that quality is exemplified in our lives. We have seen motor-cars adorned with texts of Scripture. Sometimes they are on a metal plate with the license, sometimes pasted on the inside of the back window. We should hesitate to criticize such practices, but we believe it is possible to witness for Christ by one's manner of driving. The practice of the love that "seeketh not her own" would reduce the toll of motor accidents enormously.

How much unselfishness is needed in the home circle! Years ago we were entertained in a very fine home, where there was no lack of money, or of any of the comforts of life. Father and mother and several children, and some guests, sat about the table. The father presided, and carved a large joint of beef. He selected several of the choicest cuts and placed them on one side of the platter. When he had served the company, he put these selected cuts upon his own plate. His wife, a charming woman, explained—quite unconscious

of the apologetic character of the explanation—that father, always insisted upon reserving certain cuts for himself. There was a general smile about this paternal peculiarity; but stripped of all disguises, the simple fact was that the head of the house was an intensely selfish man. We could never rid our mind of the estimate of the man's character formed at that dinner table.

In scores of other ways, the same disposition manifests itself. How the springs of life would be sweetened if every member of the family were controlled by that charity which "seeketh not her own". This is a mad world we are living in, and an intensely selfish one. A little of the love that "seeketh not her own", would be as a light that shineth in a dark place.

Another simple illustration of a similar character occurs to our mind. Travelling in Scotland some years ago we fell in with some American acquaintances, and stayed at the same hotel somewhere in the Trossachs. One of them was a preacher. At dinner time we sat at the same table, and when dinner was served, the meat which the preacher had ordered was not as rare as he had stipulated. When he observed it, he gave the waiter a terrific castigation, and in doing so, exhibited not only a very selfish disposition, but a very ugly temper. It would have been impossible for that preacher to bear any kind of witness before that waiter thereafter; his whole behaviour was so distinctly unchristian.

That may seem to be a very homely illustration, and in the main, but a small matter. Notwithstanding, it is in just such commonplaces much of life is spent. In many other ways and places we who profess and call ourselves Christians are daily supplying our observers with a yardstick by which to measure our genuineness.

The end seat monopolist in church, the "me-first" shopper at a bargain counter, or at market—or anywhere else—advertises the presence of a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

True love is never quiescent or inactive. It is always aggressive, always giving itself; and though not "seeking her own", is always seeking the welfare of someone else. When due allowance has been made for the world's selfishness, it must be acknowledged that people who really live serviceably, and find positive de-

light in spending themselves for others, are by no means scarce. It has been our happy privilege to know great numbers of people who find their chief joy in life in helping other people.

The world has never known but one perfect exemplification of this principle, and He was the One Who came to seek and to save that which was lost; and as the Father sent Him into the world, so has He sent us; and only by a life of unselfish seeking we may prove ourselves to be His disciples indeed.

REGULAR BAPTIST CONVENTION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

The eleventh meeting of this Convention was held at the Ruth Morton Memorial Regular Baptist Church, Vancouver, June 20th to 23rd, 1938. We have received only a brief report of the service, but the special feature of the meeting was the visit to the Convention of Rev. Morley R. Hall, of Calgary; Rev. Howard Phillips, of Edmonton; and Rev. Harold C. Slade, of Timmins, Ont. In a letter from Rev. W. J. Thomson, who was President for two or three years, there is this paragraph:

"The ministry of our visiting brethren, Slade, Hall, and Phillips, has not merely been a tonic, but it has been like new health brought to us from the divine laboratory, with the appetite invigorated by the atmosphere of the everlasting hills of God."

We are delighted to hear of the visit of our brethren from Alberta and Ontario. The Alberta brethren are giving a clear testimony to the scripturalness of Regular Baptist principles, and Mr. Slade of Timmins is a veritable valiant for truth wherever he goes.

In the course of the Convention the following resolution was unanimously passed. We rejoice in the steadfastness of our western brethren, and of their determination still to stand fast in the faith, as the following resolution indicates:

Reaffirming Resolution

"WHEREAS, it is incumbent on all God's people at all times, to give a reason for the hope that is in them, and it is also imperative that they bear witness to 'the things most surely believed among us', and to guard the citadel of truth against all encroachments on sound doctrine, principles and practices, which are according to the teaching of God's Word: and

"WHEREAS, this Convention of Regular Baptists of B.C. had its inception in the struggle against Modernism, declaring itself for ever opposed to all that was then threatening to destroy the faith of Bible-loving Baptists: and

"WHEREAS, THESE SAME CONDITIONS PERSIST, but in a more insidious and deadly form, often coming as an angel of light, seeking to disarm and neutralize our outstanding witness to Christ, the Scriptures and Regular Baptist Principles, as held and maintained by the Churches of our Faith:

"THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as custodians and conservators of 'The faith once for all delivered to the saints' and held by the churches of our Regular Baptist Convention; we do here and now re-affirm our unchangeable attitude of opposition to every phase of Modernism, and place on record our allegiance to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the great Head of the Church, in the stand taken at the inauguration of our Convention in the year of our Lord 1927.

"AND FURTHER, that we recommend to our churches the need of emphasizing our entire separation unto God and His Word, from every compromising attitude that would lead us into association or holding fellowship with those who would betray us into any alliance, where our witness would be made void, and our churches become the prey of the enemies of the Truth."

MY MOST GRATEFUL FAREWELL!

By Robert Dubarry

For eleven years I had feared that I could never attempt a sixth journey to the American Continent. Duties at home, world economic conditions, and some diffidence about the welcome I should receive overseas made me consider such a big undertaking with some hesitancy.

But the pressing invitation of influential friends, the advice of our French Board and the gracious consent of my ever unselfish church are now permitting me to look back with delight to this last, unforgettable semester.

Miraculous travelling mercies have been enjoyed, health better than ever, continually secured, and a rather exacting program most happily fulfilled to its minutest detail. It would be difficult to classify the welcomes enjoyed in so many places, since they were everywhere most hearty and pleasant, with no difference between the States and Canada, or between big and small companies of believers.

I was cheered to discover that in these days so poor in sane spirituality, there are everywhere an unsuspected number of faithful and progressive assemblies of primitive Christians. My most earnest wish is that they may more and more realize their real affinities.

These farewell lines being particularly written for our Canadian friends, may I express here to them my heartfelt gratitude for the ten weeks of cloudless happiness which they have so kindly procured to me, at the cost of innumerable friendly courtesies?

Pastors and churches of the Union have won my warmest esteem and love. Their interest in "The French Bible Mission" and my own admiration and sympathy for their Canadian effort have linked us for ever in the most pleasant and intimate of fellowships.

Among a number of prominent memories, I feel bound to refer here to the uplift secured through my frequent contact with Jarvis Street Baptist Church, its great Pastor, and their far-reaching enterprises. The fortitude, self-sacrifice and helpfulness of these friends under their fiery trial will always remain an example to me.

Numberless visits to the Seminary have raised to a high pitch my appreciation of the quality of its teaching and of the wonderful aptitude of its students for hard and intelligent work. Those of them whom I saw on the field can well compare with the best products of other similar training institutions, not only in knowledge but in ministerial service. Brother Fritz Buhler will prove a good sample of such production, and we shall certainly wish that all our future workers may enjoy, after him and Brother William Frey, the same unusual training facilities.

I must here express my joy in seeing the profitableness of the French teaching of the Seminary, which is so wisely preparing facilities for action among bilingual populations. I have submitted to the test of French conversation and composition a number of fine young men and women, and I feel sure that their fine knowledge of my tongue will fit them for much increased influence. The problem of French evangelization in Canada has to be faced, and it can be solved in some fair measure through the engrafting of French-speaking people in English-speaking churches. But I have also reasons to believe that in some strategic centres, most interesting and productive distinctly French enterprises might be attempted.

One of my most lasting and blessed memories will be that of my tour in the Union home mission fields of the Northern mining districts. I do not know of a more self-sacrificing and promising effort anywhere, and I have never met a more devoted, sane, united, delightful band of pioneers than the pastors of those fascinating new districts.

But I must stop! Let me just add that I expect to sail on the 13th of July aboard the magnificent "Normandie" in the pleasant company of Madame Paul Baumann, of Jarvis Street Baptist Church, and of Brother Fritz Buhler.

I shall take home with me, along with most thankful recollections, the firm hope of a happy, efficient, and durable co-operation between the French Bible Mission and the innumerable friends I have met.

Since it is hopeless for me to attempt private correspondence at the present moment, I wish this to convey, through the wide constituency of THE GOSPEL WITNESS, my most cordial gratitude for the privileges enjoyed all along my happy Canadian pilgrimage.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"IN HIS PAVILION"

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

Preached in Massey Hall, Toronto, Sunday Evening, June 26th, 1938

(Stenographically Reported)

"For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock."—Psalm 27:5.

"Oh how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men.

"Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man; thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues."—Psalm 31:19, 20.

The benefits of the Christian religion, of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, are by many conceived to belong to the future, to the life beyond. And there is such advantage to those who believe. We have been begotten again "unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." The benefits of the future cannot possibly be overestimated. The golden city—the city that is deathless, and painless, and hungerless, and sorrowless, and nightless, and tearless—cannot be pictured by the most vivid imagination. Nor could the most daring dreamer exaggerate its glories.

"They stand, those halls of Zion,
All jubilant with song,
And bright with many an angel,
And all the martyr throng.
The Prince is ever in them,
The daylight is serene;
The pastures of the blessed
Are decked in glorious sheen.

"O sweet and blessed country!
The home of God's elect!
O sweet and blessed country
That eager hearts expect!
O fields that know no sorrow!
O state that fears no strife!
O princely bowers! O land of flowers!
O realm and home of life!"

It is well that we should think thus and often of "Jerusalem the Golden, with milk and honey blest", beneath whose contemplation sink heart and voice oppressed. But we have a proverb to the effect that "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." The salvation that is in Christ provides us with a bird in the hand and two in the bush. There is such an inheritance, an inheritance of incalculable worth, an inheritance of incomparable splendour reserved in heaven for all who believe. For that, let us forever praise the Lord. But we are men and women in the flesh, subject to physical conditions, confined by the limits of time. Therefore we are given "an earnest of our inheritance" for our present maintenance and for our soul's enjoyment.

Frequently on Sunday evenings my appeal is made especially to those who are not Christians, and I would fain thus appeal to any one who is without the pale, who has no present personal experience of the saving grace of God; but I think it is legitimate sometimes for the children of God to think together of the goodness of God to them here and now. Mr. Spurgeon once said

something to this effect, "While I preach as earnestly as I can to the unconverted, sometimes, in the presence of the unconverted, I endeavour to hold up the joys of the Lord, the luxuries of His salvation, if possible to make the mouths of the ungodly water." I wish I could so preach this evening, and so explain and expound some of the privileges which they enjoy who are in Christ, as to make anyone here who is not a Christian, say in his heart, "I wish I could enter into the enjoyment of all this." I wish I could say, He brought me into His banqueting-house, and His banner over me is love." As I try to encourage the hearts of believing people this evening, will you not pray that God may be pleased to open the eyes of any who, looking through the window—I was going to say, upon the well-spread table of the Lord—may desire to come within and share the Father's bounty.

I have put these two texts together because they are very similar, both in their terms, and in their significance; and yet they are sufficiently varied to make them the complement of each other. Taken together, they tell us something of *the untoward conditions of life by which the souls, even of the saints, are afflicted*. Then they describe *a certain shelter which grace has provided for the comfort and protection of such as believe*. They further predict, at least in the end of the day, *the joyous triumph of those who trust the Lord*.

I.

We must begin here—well, where we must begin; on the common ground where we stand, and recognize in our own souls, and acknowledge to each other THE UNTOWARD, THE OPPOSING, THE UNFRIENDLY CONDITIONS OF LIFE BY WHICH THE SOUL IS AFFLICTED.

In our first text they are all gathered together in one phrase: the Psalmist speaks of *a time of trouble*. There are some dear friends who are expert in prophecy, who are fond of speaking of—and identifying to their own satisfaction—the time of Jacob's trouble, of which we read in the Word of God. There are some who look upon Jacob's trouble as being historical, an experience through which Jacob has already passed. Some date it still in the future. I think the sons of Jacob in Austria and Germany just now would be at least half-minded to write it in the present tense! Jacob has trouble enough, but Jacob is not the only troubled one. The Jews may have a good deal of trouble, but so far as I am able to observe, the Gentiles are not wholly exempt—at least, such Gentiles as I am acquainted with. Most of us know something about it, for the simple reason that

trouble is the common lot of humankind. Long ago Eliphaz observed that "man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward". It is just as natural as it is commonplace for human beings to get into trouble—or for trouble to get into them; as natural as it is for the sparks, by the operation of a natural law, to fly upward. If there are any present this evening who have escaped trouble thus far, I congratulate you on your immunity. Yet I would faithfully warn you that you had better be on the alert when you come to the next corner. If you have escaped trouble thus far, it is quite possible—and probable—that trouble will find you before long.

I am not a prophet of trouble, of gloom. I shall try to tell you how to get out of your trouble. But I ask you to recognize the simple facts of which we are all cognizant, that trouble is not unusual. This is a world of trouble. Take your concordance and look up the word "trouble", and see what a large place the Bible gives to its consideration, how it recognizes that trouble is common to the race. I did that this afternoon, but I found the passages altogether too numerous for me to quote. Unfortunately, one does not need a concordance to find trouble: we can find it without. If by any means you should fail in doing so, almost certainly trouble will find you. There is any amount of it in the world, all kinds of trouble; and in the Psalms particularly you will find the word occurring again and again. Indeed, the book of Psalms is a book of trouble—or rather, it is a book that is designed to help people who are in trouble. Mr. Whitcombe read it, without design, this evening, "I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him." I say, the book of Psalms is full of that suggestion. Perhaps that is why it is so popular, because it comes down and meets us in the common ways of life. You can turn to almost any passage in the Psalms, and feel as though someone had taken account of all your difficulties, and is speaking some word of comfort to your soul.

I say, all the troubles of life are gathered up in the one phrase of our text when the Psalmist speaks of a "time of trouble". I wish there were no trouble, but as it is here, we had better learn how to behave ourselves in the day of trouble, and how to find deliverance from it, and support as we pass through it.

The other verse which I have read suggests *two principal causes of trouble*. There are many, but two principal causes are named in this verse: "the pride of man", and "the strife of tongues".

Human pride causes a great deal of trouble in the world. I am not sure but that it is the origin of all trouble. It was so historically. Read the opening chapters of the book of Genesis, that concise, that pregnant description of God's marvellous creation, a world of perfect order and beauty prepared for human habitation. What was it that spoiled it all? Human pride, man's desire to be something other than God had willed he should be. Human ambition, a passion if not for pre-eminence, at least for priority, has brought endless trouble to the world.

That common human disposition manifests itself in the youngest child, and even when a man is old and gray-headed pride often stands out as his chiefest vice. Many of the wars of history have been provoked by human pride. The lives of countless millions of men have been sacrificed on the altar of human pride. Hear the proud Napoleon as he boasts, "The lives of a million

of men are nothing to me." So would some men boast in our day. Europe is in a condition of unrest, of turmoil; it is a seething volcano. Why? Because of human pride. How foolish it sounds when one hears Hitler and his imps boasting about the excellencies of the Aryan race! One might suppose that the German people, to hear some of these men talk, were the exclusive envy of all the angels, so superior are they. Pride is productive of endless trouble. It has been in that larger sphere of national and international relations.

It is prolific of a great deal of trouble also *in the ordinary affairs of life*. Years ago when motor-cars were not so common as they are to-day a friend gave me a lift. As he did so, he apologized for his car. I had no car, and as I looked at the machine I thought it rather a good one. I hazarded that opinion, but he said he had been driving it for some time and needed a new one. I said, "Your neighbour has just bought a better one, has he," "How did you know?" "I did not, but I supposed that was what had put you out of heart with this one. It is good enough for anyone."

I used to drive a Ford car myself, and I said to my wife again and again as we rolled along, "What a luxury! Even the King himself could not ask for any more comfortable transportation than this." I do not say that now! Why? You know why. When I got a better car I was almost afraid to drive it to church for fear people would think the Pastor was putting on style. When I drove up to the church a man, a small man physically, said to me, "Is this your new car, Pastor? I have said nothing about it before, but I was always a bit ashamed to see you drive the old one." What was wrong with him—and me? Just pride.

The departmental stores would do much less business if it were not for our pride. That is, partly, why we buy new clothes, new hats, and new shoes. You remember the story of Mr. Dubarry of a lady sitting down in a shoe store, in a very dignified-fashion, to buy a pair of shoes? When she got her feet into a comfortable pair of shoes she said, "I do not quite like them." After trying vainly to please her the clerk said, "Just what do you want?" "I want a shoe that is about as comfortable as these you have shown me, but a shoe that does not look so big." "Ah, I see what you mean, madam. You want shoes that are big inside and small outside. I am sorry, we do not carry such shoes."

It was just pride. Why should the woman want to have feet like the Chinese? How on earth they walk on those high heels, I do not know. Nor do I sympathize with them very deeply. If God had meant us to walk on our toes He would not have given us heels. It is only pride! Trouble? Yes! Half the women go around with foot trouble. Any amount of trouble. Why? Because of their pride.

So I could go on, but the mere suggestion is enough. That passion for other's approval, the habit of living for the praise of men, wanting people to praise us, is a snare to everyone of us. The pride of man makes much trouble. If you have trouble, ask yourself how much of it is caused by your pride, or someone else's pride. If the vice of human pride could be done away with, if the virtue of humility could be substituted for the vice of pride, the waves of trouble sweeping over this world to-day would very largely subside, and there would be a great calm. There is individual pride, family pride, national pride, racial pride. We are proud of all sorts of

things, yet who of us has anything of which he may justly be proud?

And growing out of the pride of man, "the strife of tongues". What a great deal of trouble the tongue makes in the world! The Apostle James, by inspiration, describes it as "a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" We had a fire in Jarvis Street Church about three months ago. I do not know how it started, but it must have begun in a small way; yet it destroyed that great building. We can build it up again—and will as the Lord helps us—but I have known some churches that were destroyed by other kinds of fire, set on fire by the tongue, until there was nothing left of them but a heap of ashes.

"The strife of tongues!" You remember how the Babel builders gathered together and said, "Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name." That was their pride. They were going to build a monument to their pride, and climb up to heaven by their own effort. "And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language . . . let us go down, and there confound their language." And the place was called Babel—and the world has been a babel ever since, full of the strife of tongues.

I am rather glad we have not as keen hearing as the radio has. What a blessing one can shut the radio off! Suppose you had an ear so sensitive as to pick all the sound-waves out of this hall. This hall is full of the strife of tongues, millions of men speaking, thousands of human voices being broadcast over the earth, and the sound-waves fill this hall. We cannot hear them, but if we had a radio sufficiently sensitive, we could detect them, and should have some idea of the universality of this "strife of tongues."

What wars the tongue has made! Hitler thus far has fought with his tongue. I do not believe that either Hitler or Mussolini could ever have come to power had it not been for the radio. They have wielded their power by projecting the force of their personalities into the lives of millions of men, by their voice. What are statesmen doing now? They are engaged in a strife of tongues. Brussels, and Moscow, and Berlin, and Rome, and London, and Paris, and Washington, and Tokio—talk, talk, talk, battling with the tongue politically. And in a lesser way, in our own country. It is very interesting to read the strife of tongues, but not very edifying when you find these leaders, men prominent in political life, each declaring that what the other says is untrue. They do not actually call each other liars, but that is about what these investigations amount to,—a mere strife of tongues. What a weary world it is!

It is true *in business*. I have a radio, but I have not turned it on for two months. I used to speak over the radio, but I do not blame people for turning them off. You have only to listen for a minute or two to learn about everything there is to sell in all creation—lipstick, face powder, boots and shoes, hats, and motor-cars. And scarcely have you got rid of that when the crooner starts—whatever he is. I suppose he is a human being of some sort. I never know what it is about, to what primitive instinct crooning is related, or what animal in the zoo the crooner tries to imitate. What a Babel is the strife of tongues!

In the religious realm we are almost as badly off. We are being pulled this way and that, by a strife of tongues. How shall we get rid of it all?

II.

Let me speak to you of THE SHELTER THE LORD PROVIDES FOR THOSE WHO BELIEVE: "In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me"; "Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man; thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues."

What a blessing that there is a shelter, a bombproof shelter! In England to-day the newspapers and the magazines are publishing almost constantly articles telling people how to build for themselves in their gardens a shelter from the enemy's bombs, should the need arise for protection. We have all been exposed to bombs. How many things there are from which we would fain hide away in a place of safety!

Three phrases are used: "his pavilion", "the secret of his tabernacle", and "his presence"; but they all have the same meaning. *The believer finds security in the presence of the Lord*; to be where He is, is to be safe. It is a great thing to be sure that we have the Lord not only on our side, but at our side. In all the experiences of life the believer has the great Helper beside him:

"Other refuge have I none;
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee;
Leave, ah! leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me."

"The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."

During the Great War, one summer when supplying at Spurgeon's Tabernacle, as I was making my way to the Tabernacle I came up from the underground station and saw people running as rapidly as they could for "the underground," as they call it. They were looking for shelter in the underground. I had been down below, and had not heard the warning. When I got to the Tabernacle I was told that the first warning signal had been given that enemy planes had been sighted over the British Coast; and the people were warned to be ready. I was instructed as to their way of doing it. In Spurgeon's there are two balconies as in this building, balconies of solid cement. I was requested to advise the people that the first signal had been given, and that should we hear the second they should rise, and in the most orderly way possible, make their way under the galleries and into the basement. It was a horrible thing to have to say to a Sunday evening congregation of worshippers—but it may have to be said again.

That serves only as an illustration. Altogether apart from that, there is not a man or woman present, who within the last year or so, has not wanted a shelter of some kind to run to. Difficulties and troubles are multiplied. "Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence." Will you take that literally, that the Lord does really hide us from trouble? Some of us would not be here to-night if that were not true. We know that it is true. We have had experience of it.

Look at the case of Daniel. Human pride forbade Daniel to pray to anyone save to the king for a certain period, and "when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon

his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." He was cast into the den of lions—you know the story. Daniel explained his deliverance. He said, "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me." God did not save him from trouble, but saved him in trouble. The Angel of His presence saved him.

There was a king who made a golden image and said, "Whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace." Human pride again. But three Hebrew children said, "We will not bow down to thine image"—and they were cast into the fire. They were not saved from trouble. They had their trouble like the rest of us. They were cast into the fire, and the inspired record tells us that when the king came and looked into that furnace that was heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated, he said, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." They found protection from the flames in the presence of the Lord.

Many of us here have had similar experiences. We have had to face, if not real lions, things harder to battle against. You can shoot a lion, but what can you do with an ugly man, or an ugly woman? Just put up with him. You cannot get rid of him: How terrible it is when a man makes a hell of his home! But they do. Many a woman would gladly change places with Daniel. She has more to put up with than Daniel ever had. Yet many an one has found in the presence of the Lord shelter even from domestic trouble—and that is the worst kind of trouble any man or woman can possibly have.

This shelter in the divine presence provides a peculiar protection from "the pride of man". Human pride cannot live in the presence of God. It is only when we get away from Him that we stretch ourselves and become proud. The moment we see Him, we repent ourselves in dust and ashes. When Isaiah saw the Lord "high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple," he cried, "Woe is me! for I am undone." How foolish we are to be proud! "Why should the spirit of mortal be proud?" But "the pride of man" will leave us when we get into the presence of God. When we dwell in the divine Presence, and learn to see things as God sees them, how utterly vain all the pomp and vanity of earth seem to be! I read something of the Eucharistic Congress in Quebec, with the priests of the church, the cardinals, in their garbs of honour; all the pomp and pageantry of earthly pride. When I read it I said to myself, I know that God has nothing to do with that except to abhor it. That is not Christian. We are delivered from all that when we find our way to the secret of His presence. We are saved from the pride of man.

Rather an elderly man used to come to our prayer meetings, whose testimonies, while biblically sound were rather harsh. He seemed to be unnecessarily contentious when he talked with men. But when he prayed, when he talked with God, in the consciousness of His presence, he became like a little child. No one ever heard him pray who was unblest—which is the highest compliment I could pay him. When in His presence, all thought of human opinion died away, and he was nothing but a poor, poor sinner saved by the matchless grace of

God. Oh that we might ever abide, in His presence, and walk humbly with our God! What trouble we should save ourselves and others!

And "from the strife of tongues"? Ah yes, the strife of tongues is silenced by the divine presence, as we hear His voice. When He speaks, all other voices are silent. When He speaks, all lesser authorities subside. Take your newspaper to-morrow, morning or evening, and without knowing what the editorials will be about, I can predict you will put a question-mark after many of them and say, "I do not know where I am. I do not know what this means. This is confusion worse confounded—what shall I do?" Then endeavour to enter into the secret of His presence; let Him talk with you; listen to His voice. Then the strife of tongues will cease. If you are a Christian you will say, "That is it. One Voice instead of many. "Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man; thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues."

III.

AND WE SHALL TRIUMPH IN HIM. "He shall set me up upon a rock." "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son cleanseth us from all sin." It is the old story of the blood on the lintel and doorposts: "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." In the secret of His tabernacle, where the mercy-seat is, where the sacrifice has been offered, where the blood has been sprinkled, and the Shekinah glory is revealed—is a wonderfully safe place to be. Is that where you are living to-night? You have not much of this world's goods? Never mind. Be thankful for the pavilion of His provision.

It is a secret place where no one can find you. There is a story in Jeremiah's prophecy of a king who did not like the word of the Lord, and who burned the roll, and commanded that Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet should be apprehended; but "the Lord hid them". Where? "In the secret of thy presence from the pride of man." Jehoiakim's Old Testament G-men could not find them. Elijah met Obadiah on the road one day, following the three and a half years of drought, and said, "Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. And he said, What have I sinned; that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me? As the Lord thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, He is not there; he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not. And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here. And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the Spirit of the Lord shall carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me." "No", said Elijah, "I shall not disappear; tell Ahab I will show myself to him this day." But until God's time came, Ahab could not find Elijah. He searched everywhere for him, but he was hidden in the secret of the divine presence, and kept safe from all harm.

"Secret" because no one can understand it. It is secret. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." I knew a woman whose husband was stricken with a fatal disease, but it seemed as though he would never die. It looked to me as though his wife could not survive him. They had no money; she could not afford to have help. Day and night, month after month, that woman seemed to be always on her feet, ministering like an angel to that dying man. It

seemed as though his reserve of physical strength would not let his spirit go. I sat down with her one day and said, "Mrs. So-and-So, I think of you often, and wonder how you keep up." She smiled and said, "So do I, Pastor. If anyone had told me it was possible, I should have said it was not in human strength to endure what I have had to endure. It is a joy to minister as well as I can, but it is trying. Of course you and I know that there is Someone Who helps me. I am not without a Helper. People do not see my Helper. I have no nurse in uniform, but I have Someone Who helps me day and night." "Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence." It was there that woman found relief from her trouble.

Many of us here have had to run to just such a shelter when the bombs were falling; and we have found in that shelter, safety, security. Nay, more than that: real joy beside.

During the war I saw a great crater which had been formed by the explosion of a British mine. It was so deep, and broad that I am sure you could easily bury this hall in it—perhaps two of them. There were terraces all around in which afterward the army had made dugouts. They were gone when I visited it, but I turned to my friend and said, "They had a good deal more comfort here than I should have suppose was possible." They had made that shelter as comfortable, as it was safe.

Our "dugout" is wonderfully well provisioned. Our dugout is richly furnished by the King Himself. Said this Psalmist, "How great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men." In that shelter, what glorious provision has been made! Have we not tasted the sweets of divine compassion? Have we not been made to triumph in Jesus Christ?

Read those two psalms before you go to bed to-night. Read them carefully. Let me give this testimony. I believe it is true of this church; I believe it is true of its membership: I know personally that it is true of its Pastor, that but for the truth of this text, we should not be here. I remember when a very influential man in this city attended one of our services, and introduced himself afterward. In our conversation he said to me, "Dr. Shields, you had everything that a man could possibly have against you. You had wealth against you; you had social position against you; you had business interests against you; largely, you had the press against you; you had the mass of unregenerate people against you, utterly unable to understand how or why anyone should stand for the faith of Christ. In fact, you had everything against you but," then he paused and added, "God." Ah yes, but God! "In the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock."

"On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand."

"And now," said the Psalmist, "shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord." "Blessed be the Lord: for he hath shewed me his marvellous kindness in a strong, or fenced city." And the devil knows of our hiding-place. When he was asked if he had considered Job, he replied, "Yes. I have tried to get at him for a long time, but I could not get through." Until God let down the fence roundabout His servant, until he length-

ened Satan's tether, he could not touch Job. And even then He said, "You shall not touch his life." The New Testament tells us that the devil has the power of death—and he has. He would kill every one of us were it not that God's angels are roundabout us. If we are Christians, we are here to-night because we are sheltered in Him Who is our Saviour here and now.

I wish I could tell you of *the luxury of it*. But if you are tired of the pride of life and of the strife of tongues, come away to the secret pavilion of the Most High, and sit down and hold converse with the King. Then you can go out and take up the tasks of life again, and witness to His gracious power. Come to Him if you are not a Christian. Trust Him, and He will save you for ever. If you are a Christian, cast all your burdens upon Him. Hear Him call you away to the secret place, and you will find it but the vestibule of heaven:

"Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile,
Weary, I know it, of the press and throng;
Wipe from your brow the sweat and dust of toil,
And in My quiet strength again be strong.

"Come ye aside from all the world holds dear,
For converse which the world has never known;
Alone with Me and with My Father here,
With Me and with My Father not alone.

"Come, tell me all that ye have said and done,
Your victories and failures, hopes and fears;
I know how hardly souls are wooed and won;
My choicest wreaths are always met with tears.

"Then fresh from converse with your Lord, return
And work till daylight softens into even:
The brief hours are not lost in which ye learn
More of your Master and His rest in heaven."

Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 2 Third Quarter Lesson 28 July 10th, 1938

THE FIRST DEACONS

Lesson Text: Acts 6.

Golden Text: "And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people."—Acts 6:8.

I. The First Deacons Appointed—verses 1-7.

The harmony existing in the Church at Jerusalem was broken by race prejudice and ill-feeling among the brethren. A dispute arose when the Hellenistic Jews, Greek in language and nationality, complained that in the daily distribution of food (2 Cor. 8:4; 9:1, 13) their widows were being overlooked by the Palestinian Jews, who perhaps thought themselves superior (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11; Rom. 10:12). Whether or not the charge of partiality was true, Satan took advantage of the situation to attempt to sow the seeds of discord and to disrupt the work. Let us endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3; Rom. 12:18; Eph. 4:31, 32), loving God with all our hearts and our neighbour as ourselves (Luke 10:27).

The apostles did not covet positions of prominence for themselves (1 Pet. 5:1), but they sought to manage the affairs of the Church in such a way that they might devote their energies to the work of teaching, preaching and public worship. The task of selecting helpers was left for the whole body of the believers. While the men appointed to assist the apostles are not here called deacons, it seems reasonable to suppose that this occasion marks the first institution of that office. The word "deacon" means "servant".

The deacons were to be men of good report, men with a reputation for honest and fair dealings, men in whom all would have confidence. They were to be men filled with the

Holy Spirit, and thus fitted for an office of leadership in the church (1 Tim. 3:8-13).

The apostles appointed and consecrated the men whom the congregation had elected. The laying on of hands was the physical action which was symbolic of the prayer that the power of God would rest upon them. God used the apostles as His channels in the early church for communicating grace and power (Compare Num. 27:18; Deut. 34:9; Acts 8:17; 1 Tim. 4:14).

When the difficulty in the church was removed, and harmony restored, the Holy Spirit manifested His power in their midst. Many believed the Word and were saved (Acts 12:24; 19:20).

II. The First Deacon Persecuted—verses 8-15.

Stephen, mentioned first in the list of deacons, was the most outstanding man among them. In addition to performing the practical duties assigned to him he carried on a spiritual ministry for which God had fitted him. He was full of faith and power because he was full of faith and the Holy Spirit (verse 5, Acts 11:24; Eph. 5:18). He had faith in God (Mark 11:22). He did not rely upon his own strength or natural abilities, but trusted fully in the Lord. Through the power of the Holy Spirit he worked miracles.

When Satan's attempt to destroy the work of God by causing disunion within the church failed, he made his attack from without. He it was who stirred up men of the various synagogues in Jerusalem to dispute with Stephen. We are never free from the assaults of Satan; we must continually watch and pray (Matt. 26:41).

The Libertines were Jews who had been taken captive by the Romans in war, then freed. Returning to Jerusalem they formed a synagogue of their own, as other groups had done. Cyrene was the capital of Upper Libya in Africa. Alexandria, in Northern Africa, was a noted city of culture, the chief seat of Jewish and Greek learning. Cilicia was the province in which Tarsus, Paul's native city, was situated (Acts 22:3). Men of other nationalities or creeds who embraced the Jewish faith were called proselytes (verse 5).

The leaders of the synagogues, even against their will, were impressed by the words and manner of Stephen. His wisdom and gracious spirit (Matt. 7:29; Luke 4:22; John 7:46) by which he won victories over them aroused their jealousy and anger. The only weapon they could use against him was deceit. They secretly instructed men to lay a charge of blasphemy; they incited popular opinion, and provided false witnesses (Matt. 26:59, 60). His teaching of the prophetic word (Matt. 24:2), and his exposition of the relation of the law of Moses to the New Covenant (John 1:17), were misinterpreted as blasphemy and treason.

Stephen was given the honour of following his Master's footsteps in the path of service and suffering. He performed his work in the power of the Holy Spirit; he taught with grace and authority, and worked miracles. He endured the hatred of the leaders and the people. He was brought before the Council; he was falsely accused, and unjustly condemned. Stephen followed his Lord even unto death (Rev. 2:10).

As the faithful servant stood before the Council, his face was radiant with the reflection of the glory of the Lord (Exod. 34:29, 30; Acts 4:13; 2 Cor. 3:18).

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

ORDINATION OF PASTOR JOHN R. ARMSTRONG, HESPELER.

In response to an invitation from the Hespeler Baptist Church, a council assembled in the Hespeler Church, Tuesday, June 21, 1938, to consider setting apart the Pastor of the Church, Mr. John R. Armstrong, to the gospel ministry. After devotional exercises, which were conducted by Deacon Reeve, Rev. W. S. Whitcombe was elected Moderator of the council, and Rev. R. D. Guthrie as Clerk.

The roll call of the churches showed that there were 23 churches represented, and a total of 50 messengers, which made up the council. The Hespeler Baptist Church voted unanimously to accept the delegates from the above churches to constitute the council.

The Moderator then introduced the pastor of the Hespeler Church, Mr. J. R. Armstrong, who gave a three-fold statement. First: As to his conversion to Christ. Mr. Armstrong

was converted on the 28th of February, 1926, in the Villa Nova Baptist Church, during special meetings conducted by the Pastor, Rev. Mr. Lamb, assisted by Rev. Farr of Hartford, and Rev. A. J. Loveday of Boston. On the strength of John 1: 12, Mr. Armstrong left the church that night a son of God. He was buried in the waters of baptism on Easter Sunday, 1926. This statement was followed by questions from members of the council. Second: As to his call to the gospel ministry. This came about, first, from a realization that he was saved to serve; then, an inner urge to preach the gospel; and finally, from the opportunity that presented itself for Mr. Armstrong to preach, in the form of a call from a local Baptist Church to become Pastor. The proof of the call was the signs following his ministry in the conversion of sinners, and the building up of the saints of God. This statement was also followed by a number of timely and interesting questions. Third: As to his statement of Bible doctrine, Mr. Armstrong covered in a unique fashion this great field. His statement was brief, to the point, exceptionally clear, and convincing to the last degree. Both his statement of Bible doctrine, and the masterly way in which he answered the questions asked, proved to a demonstration, that he is well furnished for the work whereunto he has been called.

After Mr. Armstrong retired, the council proceeded to accept him on his conversion, call to the ministry, and the statement of faith, and agreed to proceed with the ordination service in the evening. The council then adjourned to the A. F. Hall where the ladies of the Hespeler Church had made abundant provision not only for the members of the council, but for the great host of visitors also.

The evening meeting commenced at 7 o'clock. The song service was led by Rev. John Hunter of Alton, prayer by Rev. J. Walthe of Villa Nova, Scripture by Rev. F. Roblin, Toronto, charge to the candidate by Rev. A. C. Whitcombe, charge to the church by Rev. W. N. Charlton, Ordination prayer by Rev. H. F. Schade of New Dundee, and the Ordination sermon by Rev. R. D. Guthrie, London. Pastor Guthrie based his message on Lev. 26:1-3: "If ye . . . Then I will." The Hespeler Church was well filled for the evening service, and after the benediction by Rev. John Armstrong, as the crowd dispersed, comments were heard on every hand to the effect that we had attended one of the best ordination services in the history of the Union of Regular Baptists.

R. D. GUTHRIE, Clerk.

CALVIN BAPTIST CHURCH, TORONTO—Rev. F. Roblin. From June 6th to 19th, Calvin Baptist Church was blessed with the visit of Rev. John Dempster of Niagara Falls, Ontario, as preacher in protracted services. The attendance was the most consistent throughout the week-night services that I remember in any campaign we have had. There were many strangers and visitors greeted at the services. The messages were certainly full of the power of the Spirit, and revealed real knowledge of the Scriptures and thorough preparation. The people of the church, and others who came, were enthusiastic in their appreciation of Brother Dempster's ministry. The last Sunday evening we had the best crowd of the campaign. Brother Dempster's subject in the evening was, "Did Jesus teach there is a Hell?" and from all reports it was an unforgettable sermon and one which will live throughout eternity in the memories of those who heard it. Brother Dempster is a welcome visitor to Calvin Baptist Church at any time.

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