

# The Gospel Witness

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AND IN DEFENCE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.

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

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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"WHEN THEY SHALL SAY, PEACE AND SAFETY"

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

Preached in Massey Hall, Toronto, Sunday Evening, October 2nd, 1938

(Stenographically reported)

"For when they shall say, Peace and Safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape."

—I. Thessalonians 5:3.

The religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, that scheme of moral and spiritual life which we call Christianity, the whole economy of grace in Christ Jesus, is something more than a plan to keep one out of jail, or to teach him how to live honestly. It is even more than a method and power of saving an individual soul from sin to holiness, and from hell to heaven. The religion of Christ concerns the individual, society, the nation—all peoples who dwell upon the face of the earth. Indeed, it comprehends the whole creation, and relates itself to principalities and powers in the heavenly places. Hence, no people are more vitally related, and no people should be more interested in world-affairs, than those who are called Christians. The Bible is a record of all human history. It spans the eternities, and within its categories of thought and estimation it comprehends everything—everything on earth, and everything in heaven.

The world generally I suppose this evening is rejoicing that peace has been preserved. Indeed, there is a disposition almost everywhere to say, "Peace and safety", peace for the present, and many fondly believe we have some assurance of security for the future.

One would be less than human who would not be thankful for even a respite from the horrors of war. We ought to be thankful that the millions who might immediately have been involved, are spared that suffering; and, too, that we ourselves are at least temporarily relieved of the necessity of sharing in the conflict.

It is pleasant and congenial always to imagine we have justification for felicitating ourselves, and for boasting of our prowess whether in diplomacy or in arms. It is easy to go with the multitude, and to shout when the multitude shouts. It is especially easy and pleasant to delight ourselves in an alleged worthiness of our own supposed accomplishments. This evening the British Premier is regarded almost as a world-hero. Nor would I pluck a leaf from his laurel-crown. But I do not believe

that anyone who knows his Bible, and who believes it to be the word of God, can feel wholly comfortable in the circumstances: if we rejoice we must rejoice with trembling.

From one point of view, of course, we may be glad; but if we take the larger, longer, that is a perspective view of things, I am by no means sure we have ground for felicitation. I am not a pessimist. No one can be a pessimist who believes in God. But believers in the Word of God will expect peace and prosperity to come in God's way, and in no other.

Upon what considerations has peace—what word shall I use?—has peace been achieved temporarily? I wish I could say permanently *obtained*, or obtained for permanent possession. First of all, not by British diplomacy, but primarily, by the heroic stand of the Czech nation, which prevented the deluge even last May, reinforced by the French army. Thank God for France, and for the French army! If France had been deluded as were our English-speaking people, no diplomacy of Britain or of any other power could have prevented the land-lust and blood-lust of Germany from expressing themselves. But because, from bitter experience, France has refused to believe in false hopes that were entertained by many, France fortified herself, and at last, reinforced by the mobilization of the British Navy, with the possible and probable assistance of the might of Russia and lesser nations, the bandit nation of Germany was faced with a superior power, and its bluff—for lack of a better one I use the word—was at last called.

Does anyone in his senses suppose that had Hitler been ready, had it been safe in respect to his own nation, that anything would have prevented that mad man from attempting to work his will? Last week Hitler literally bellowed his ruthless, lawless threats into the ears of the whole world, and his fellow-bandit in Italy, apparently feeling that he was eclipsed, tried to make himself

heard above the din. Every law-abiding nation on earth was threatened by these two agents of Satan; and every moral value secured for us through the influence, directly and indirectly, of the gospel of Christ through all the ages, was threatened with destruction.

What followed? As a last resort, Mussolini was invited to intercede. When I read of it, I remembered the time when Colonel Lindberg's child was kidnapped, and all the law-enforcing machinery of the United States was set in operation to secure the apprehension of the kidnapper. Then some papers seriously suggested that Al Capone should be let out of jail in order to capture the kidnapper! Whatever others may say, in the light of the Bible, I believe it cannot be right, it cannot be profitable, for any nation to enter into a pact with such vile and indescribably wicked men as Hitler and Mussolini. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." And no national peace or prosperity of any continuance was ever established upon such foundations. Talk about the diplomacy of Chamberlain—what did he do? In the face of the assembled might of France and Britain, the promised help of Russia, Roumania, Jugoslavia, with the single exception of the United States—and its moral influence was thrown into the balance—the greatest might that could be assembled on earth was arrayed against this lawlessness, ready to stay its progress, and strip it of its power—but in face of it all, Hitler was given all that he asked without striking a blow. Anyone could achieve peace on such terms. When bandits arm themselves to go out to "hold up" a bank or a store, usually they have neither the intention nor the desire to kill anyone. They have armed themselves only for an emergency, in the event of anyone's offering opposition; then, rather than be frustrated in their purpose, they will kill. But if they can get what they want without committing murder, all to the good. Hitler has obtained all that he asked without a blow.

At whose expense? Not at his. Not at Mussolini's. Not at ours, except in the long reach of history, at the expense of our moral prestige. It cost us nothing. Who paid? The heroic Czech nation. What is that nation? It is the nation that produced John Huss, one of the martyrs; that produced Jerome of Prague, another martyr. It is the nation of the Moravian people, the greatest Christian missionary church in the history of the world. They are all handed over to the spoiler, with certain guarantees! But who will guarantee the integrity of the state that remains? And who will depend upon any pledge given by either Hitler or Mussolini? Can anyone trust these men, with the fragments of the Versailles Treaty under their feet, having trampled under foot every national covenant to which their nations' signatures were set? Their signature to any pact can afford security to no one.

Someone will say, "War was averted, was it not?" Yes. "Is not that a great advantage?" Yes, in one sense. "Ought we not always to avoid war?" It depends upon the principle at issue. If the pact of Munich be right in the sight of God, then Stephen, the first martyr—and all the martyrs who since have died, were nothing less than fools. They could all have saved their lives by surrender of principle. Every war of history, fought at the price of blood, for the conservation of principles of righteousness, was a mistake. If the pact of Munich be justified the Great War was a mistake, and the ten million or thereabout who died, laid down their

lives in vain. The Germany of the Kaiser was infinitely to be preferred before the Germany of Hitler.

But it is symptomatic of the times, and that is why I refer to it. Everywhere you see it, retreat before the advancing tide of evil. We are admonished to resist nothing. Let me give you a simple illustration. We had a building down on Parliament Street, valued at one time at thirty-five thousand dollars. It became vacant. We tried to protect it, but the robbers began to take it down piece by piece. They stole the radiators, they stole the plumbing, they stripped the steam-boilers of all their gauges in broad daylight. They loaded up their trucks in daylight, practically under the eyes of the police. When we had nothing to sell left, after we had wearied asking for protection, we had it wrecked for a few hundred dollars—and had the privilege of paying three years' arrears of taxes because of the default of our tenant. We could do nothing.

A law is put upon the statute-book that someone does not like, and we are told it is difficult of enforcement. We have the chief law-enforcing officer of this Province, in the person of the Attorney-General, telling us that the Lord's Day Act, with all its provisions, is simply out of date, and unenforceable. "Stand back, and let the evil-doers have their way." Similarly in all realms, there is a tendency to break down all restraints, and to surrender to lawlessness.

Here is a principle I want to bring to your attention, not in a spirit of pessimism, but only to warn you against cherishing a false hope, or allowing yourselves to be deluded by the promise of things which can never come to pass. Here it is in the Book: "When they shall say, Peace and safety." I shall not date it; I shall not point to a particular time in history and say, "That belongs there and only there." It is a principle which will find its final illustration and application in the ultimate summing up of all things, but, like all other principles of the Book, it has a present illustration and application leading up to its supreme exemplification when the consummation of all things shall be reached.

#### I.

It is illustrative of THE TENDENCY TO MAGNIFY THE TEMPORARY ABOVE THE PERMANENT, THE TEMPORAL ABOVE THE ETERNAL; and to favour measures which promise to secure such temporary advantages.

Let me show you how that principle is illustrated in everyday life. Many prefer *an opiate to the surgeon's knife*. In my experience as a Pastor, I have seen it scores, perhaps hundreds of times. Father is ill, or mother has been taken to the hospital for examination. The family is fearful of the results. Presently there is a report that the patient is much better. Oh no, the doctors did not operate. They thought the patient would be better without an operation. "Mother is feeling very much easier now; she is much better. There is nothing malignant there, nothing to be fearful about"—"Peace and safety" until by and by the undertaker is called. Then it is recognized that some other course might have been taken.

I knew of a case, of two sisters; one was taken ill and brought to this city. A drastic operation was performed, and she recovered. Years passed, and her sister was stricken with the same ailment. A country doctor was called, fresh from college. He said, "It is a superficial matter. We will attend to that. She will not have

any such butchery as her sister was subjected to." A superficial operation was performed and she was told everything was all right—but the one who suffered the drastic treatment lived, while the other died. An opiate was substituted for the surgeon's knife.

You will find the principle of our text illustrated and exemplified *wherever principle is sacrificed to policy*. It always costs, whether in individual or national life, to do that which is right, to stand for truth and righteousness; to say, like Luther, "Here I stand. I can do no other: so help me, God." That costs something, but the way of expediency is easy. Suspend your principles; "Be not righteous over much". The present danger is averted, the path is made comparatively pleasant. But something has been sown the harvest of which must, in the future, be reaped. Whoever sacrifices principle to policy, in the end of the day discovers that he has taken the wrong and not the right course. When the siren voice of expediency drowns the testimony of human history, men take the easier course. It looks possible, seems feasible, appears to be advantageous; but turn the pages of history, and you will learn, not only from the Bible but everywhere else, that "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." They who sow to the wind must ultimately reap the whirlwind. When the material is preferred before the spiritual, when the visible is given precedence over the invisible, when that which is temporal is regarded as the great desideratum, at the expense of that which is eternal, then men say, "Peace and safety."

"Our light affliction"—mark you, the principles which determine the divine government, the providential ordering of life in the life of the individual, are the principles which determine the character and destiny of nations as well as of individuals—"Our light affliction which is but for a moment"—whether it be in the life of the individual or in the larger sphere of the providential ordering of the course of a nation—"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen"; while we say, "I will not allow this visible and material realm of temporal advantage to determine my course. I will stand for the eternal values, for the riches of the moral and spiritual world"—"while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen", this light affliction worketh for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory", whether in Canada or anywhere else.

It seems as though the statesmanship of our day is shortsighted. It has no vision of the long issues of moral conduct, and fails to see that a man may do well for himself here, and ruin his future. It is "peace in our time". What would you think of a father with a family of children, who would sit down with his wife and say, "We have certain resources. They will last during our time, and that is all we need care about"? The mother says, "But what of the children? Some of them are young, and might easily be left without parental care before they are able to look after themselves." What if that man should say, "Oh well, let the children look after themselves. Let us be comfortable in our time." You should be ashamed to call such a man your friend.

Has any generation a right to live for itself? Has any generation a right to regulate its conduct in such

a fashion as to be careless of the fruits which others must reap? Do you not know that it is written, and cannot be unwritten, that the iniquities of the fathers are visited "upon the children unto the third and fourth generation"? When the fathers eat sour grapes the children's teeth are inevitably ultimately set on edge. But we are asked to be thankful for peace in our time. Dare we rejoice if peace in our time may kindle a hell upon earth for the generation to come?

A character comes to my mind at the moment, a man of superior qualities, more richly endowed than any of his contemporaries—or, indeed, than any of his successors, "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians", "mighty in word and in deed". With the brightest of worldly prospects stretching out before him, with the possibility of being called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and perhaps of being seated upon a throne—what did he do? What was the secret of that statesman's decision? What was the motive that animated him? "Moses when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." A fool was he? No! He had regard to "the recompense of the reward". He was the wisest of men, for he "endured as seeing him who was invisible". He sacrificed the material to the spiritual, the plaudits of earth for the approval of Heaven, the present for the future—and reaped the inevitable eternal reward.

So is it with *those who face the question of their personal obligation to God*. Was it Abraham Lincoln who, when asked what was the most serious reflection that had ever exercised his mind, answered, "A sense of my personal responsibility to God." If you take away the fear of God from before men's eyes, you will have nothing but lawlessness. But I speak to some this evening who are not Christians, who have never faced the requirements of Jesus Christ. What does He ask of you? Merely that you believe on His name? Yes, but what does belief involve? It involves the acceptance of Jesus Christ, not only as the Saviour of the individual soul, but as the King of kings, and Lord of lords; surrender to Him Who is the Heir of all things, and the sacrifice of everything in life if need be, that we may be rightly related to Him.

Some man may say, "But, sir, I should have to give up this, and give up the other. It would involve a very difficult course for me. I should like to be a Christian, but I can see that there are so many things in my life that are out of harmony with Christian standards, that would be inconsistent with a Christian profession, that unless and until I am ready to make a complete surrender, I dare not say that I accept Christ." Are you comfortable? "Oh yes." Some young man says, "I am having a very good time, sir; I am enjoying the things of the world." I do not question it. Many there are who live that superficial life, and are for the present content. They say, "Peace and safety. Do not bother me. Do not ask me to live for the future. Do not ask me to relate time to eternity. That seems a long way off." It may not be so far as you think!

After all, it comes back to the one simple consideration, What shall be the standard of life? Shall we live a life of pleasure and profit, a life in the flesh and on this

lower plane, instead of the life of the cross? "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." I would not spend a moment of my time endeavouring to multiply the number of those who merely profess to be Christians. The great need of our day in the churches, in business, in political life, in every branch of public life—the great need of our day is men who will refuse to do wrong, and who will exert themselves to do that which is right in the sight of God—though the heavens fall. Take the broad road, if you will. There is a wide gate, there is a broad road, and a vast multitude cries, "Peace and safety"; "All is well". But that road leads to destruction. There is a narrow way for men and nations, which leadeth unto life. We are not taking it!

The pity of it is there is a disposition to assume the permanence of the transient and temporal. I have quoted it to you before: let me quote it again. The lines fastened themselves in my mind when I was in my teens, and I have seen it to be more emphatically true in later years:

"The Church, to place and power the door,  
Rebukes the sin of the world no more,  
Nor sees its Lord in the homeless poor.  
Everywhere is the grasping hand,  
And eager adding of land to land;  
And earth, which seemed to the fathers meant  
But as a pilgrim's wayside tent,—  
A nightly shelter to fold away  
When the Lord should call at the break of day,—  
Solid and steadfast seems to be,  
And Time has forgotten Eternity!"

## II.

To-day we are rather out of step with the world when we confess we are not quite so happy as some others about this matter. I do not know what your mind is. I wish I could, without reservation, feel that we have acted wisely; but I cannot. Such false hopes as are here described MAY BE OVERWHELMED BY SUDDEN DESTRUCTION. To whatever particular period this points, it is here written that "when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them". They will discover that the hope they cherished is a false hope.

So will it be of those who postpone the matter of their personal acceptance of Christ, to some more convenient day. It may be that that time will never come. I cannot allow you to go away saying, "Peace and safety", without warning you. Even though you say it in this hall, sudden destruction may come upon you before you have opportunity to make your surrender to Jesus Christ.

What is the testimony of the Word of God? I have no argument with anyone who does not accept the Bible. I could argue in support of its integrity and supreme authority, but that is not my present purpose. The Bible is the word of God, containing the only absolutely accurate history of human nature and activity, and the only true forecast of the future. However we may differ in our interpretation of eschatological matters, one thing is unmistakably clear, that the Scriptures teach that immediately preceding the personal advent of our Lord, lawlessness—not a refined civilization, the result of some long-drawn-out evolutionary process. The Bible inspires no such hope; but that this dispensation of grace will end in a reign of lawlessness, one "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of

God, shewing himself that he is God", will be in full flower and flood when the angelic trump shall sound and Jesus Christ shall come again.

There are some of my friends—and I want to be very careful, I do not want to offend you unnecessarily—who believe the Bible, and who believe that that day of terror which is in the future is not for them. Some years ago when I was in London, I went to a large meeting in Kingsway Hall, under the auspices of the Advent Testimony. The speaker was a certain medical doctor, a Christian man, who also had a reputation among many as a teacher of the Word of God. He described a period of dreadful tribulation such as is described in the Bible—and it lost nothing from his description, it was to be truly a day of terror. He was an elderly man, and apparently was not well, for he delivered his speech seated in a chair, and presented quite a patriarchal appearance. When he had described the reign of the lawless one, and the unparalleled tribulation which was to be ended by the manifestation of the Lord, suddenly he paused, and with rapt expression and clasped hands said, "But, my brethren, we shall not be there; we shall all be raptured before that." Many of those present cried, "Praise the Lord"; "Hallelujah"; "We shall not be there."

I am certain that there is not one passage in the Word of God that, by any fair, reasonable, interpretation, can be made to support that theory. It is not there. Christ came once: He will come again. He is not coming again twice, but once; and His coming will be the "glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ".

What about this Antichrist? He is to be consumed "with the breath of his mouth", and destroyed "with the brightness of his coming." When that Antichrist, whoever he is, or that lawless system, is at last developed out of the midst, no combination of France and Britain and Russia, can break his power. There is only One Who can do that, and when He shall take to Himself His great power and reign, He will put an end to lawlessness and to the reign of the lawless one.

I saw a paper on my desk to-day containing an article with some such title as this: "Will the great tribulation be a purgatory to the people of God?" I have not read it as yet, but I know the position of the author's stand. "No", says the writer, "they will not be there." I know one who has said again and again that the Divine Bridegroom would never be so cruel as to allow His bride to pass through the tribulation! What nonsense! The bride is made up of all believers, of the old dispensation and of the new, who were "stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy): they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Millions and millions have sealed their testimony with their blood. I myself have seen men and women, godly people, suffer to such an extent that it was not possible for any mortal in any dispensation to suffer more. The great tribulation may be greater in extent, but I submit to you that we all have seen men and women who loved the Lord, chosen in the furnace of affliction, suffering in-

describable tortures. Do you mean to say that God did not love them? That doctrine would force one to reconsider the whole problem of human suffering. The bride of Christ is made up of all the redeemed of all dispensations, and they go through tribulation: they always have done, and always will do. Why should those who should be alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord—why should that generation of believers be favoured above all generations? Why should you and I, if we should live to that day, expect that God would show some special favour to us, that He did not show to the multitudes who went home to heaven in a chariot of fire? Do not cherish such false hopes. "When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them."

What will be the next crisis? It seems to me that the whole testimony of history should lead us at least not to depend upon the permanence of the peace now achieved. I am for it, if we can postpone it until we get ready; but if we are foolish enough to begin lending money to Germany and Italy, if we are foolish enough to disarm ourselves on the ground of their promises, then we shall deserve all that we receive at last. I would take their promises for what they are worth, and for no more—and be ready for anything. The present truce has this advantage, that if ever again these men should attempt to break the peace, surely the whole world will know that it is folly to trust them.

I believe Hitler should have been challenged. I believe that if Mr. Chamberlain had never gone to see Hitler in the beginning, if the British navy and the might of the British Empire and France and Czechoslovakia, aided by what allies might have been providentially raised up, had said to this lawlessness, "Thus far hast thou come: thou shalt come no farther", I believe there would have been a revolution in Germany and Italy; that the boils on the back of the neck of the sick man of Europe would have broken, and the fever would have gone down—and God might have sent us peace. Who will trust our word now? How shall we recover the loss of moral prestige that we have suffered by this transaction?

If it be that in the next crisis the counsel of fear shall again prevail, and Hitler be permitted to possess the rest of Czechoslovakia and adjacent countries such as Roumania and the Ukraine, and so on, he will make himself more than he is to-day, the master of Europe. If you read the history of Prussia and of the Germanic peoples, great as many of them have been, you will find that for centuries they have been a nation of brigands and murderers, trampling righteousness under their feet. Whether the ultimate lawless one may come from such a development of lawlessness, I do not know; but if it does, our hope will be, Britons as we are, not then in the might of the British Empire. Upon this only can we lean: "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky." If we believe in Christ, then shall we be forewarned of these matters. We are not in darkness, that these things should overtake us as a thief in the night. We are advised; we are forewarned. If we do not know these things, it is our own fault. It is in the Book. Our one wisdom is to be in Christ, to be right with Him.

Are you right with Him? Do you now trust Him? Is He your Saviour and your King? If He is, all is well, though I be mistaken or you in our interpretation in

detail of those last things which gather about the coming of the Lord—if we are among those who love His appearing, among those who are constantly saying, "Even so come, Lord Jesus", all will be well on earth: all will be well for time and for eternity.

### "A HORROR OF GREAT DARKNESS"

"And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him." Millions of people must have experienced a similar horror of great darkness since the news of the abject surrender of Britain and France to Hitler and Mussolini at Munich, was given to the world. Earl Baldwin has spoken in the House of Lords in support of the Chamberlain policy, and said that it seemed as though the finger of God were tracing a new rainbow, and renewing His covenant with the children of men.

To associate God with such a movement as that in which Mr. Chamberlain participated, it seems to us, is little short of blasphemy. There was a circle, but it was not a rainbow, nor was it traced by the finger of God. It was a new shackle forged by the enemy of all human liberty, for the further enslavement of the human race. It was not surprising that Lord Baldwin should support Mr. Chamberlain, for Chamberlain fell heir to the fruits of the unparalleled ineptitude shown by the British Foreign Office during Lord Baldwin's entire regime.

If Czechoslovakia, forsaken by Britain and France, should now throw herself into the arms of Hitler, if Yugoslavia and Roumania should follow suit, if Germany and Mussolini, given a new lease of life, were to press their advantage in Spain to the overthrow of the Loyalist Government and the establishment of Fascist regimes in Spain and Portugal, and if France and Britain should then find themselves without a friend in Europe, who would be to blame but Neville Chamberlain?

If the present course of the British Foreign Office is pursued, we can see the inevitable disintegration of the whole Empire. We may well pray that Chamberlain's power may be broken, and that he and his short-sighted colleagues may speedily be replaced. We do not impugn his motives—probably they were of the highest—but we do discount his mentality. We believe the day is not far distant when liberty-loving people throughout the world will mourn the day in which Neville Chamberlain was born.

### "THE BEST COURSE IN CANADA"

A man called at the Seminary this week to enquire about lectures. In conversation he said, "I hear that you have the best course in Canada." We were much too modest to agree, but we were thankful for the rumour! The Seminary has a good course of study to offer. It is centred in the Bible. The subjects, both in matter and method, have been developed through the experience of a number of years. Our course has amply justified itself in the ministry of former students, and we are glad to hear that it is being said that we have the best course in Canada.

#### Lonely or Strange!

The Seminary opened for registration on Monday, September 26th. We are sure that every graduate of last year felt lonely that day! Seminary becomes home to its students. And of course, the new students felt strange. But really, they are a good class both in number, for there are more than we have had for several years, and in quality. Among the new men is enrolled one who has taught in a

Bible training school for some years, and another is a missionary who plans to spend the most of his year's furlough in study with us.

#### A Spiritual Centre

In the middle of each school morning is that which forms the centre for spiritual life in the school, the chapel service. The first chapel on Tuesday was taken by this scribe, who spoke from the third account of Paul's commission that he himself gives us in the Acts of the Apostles, and pointed out that as Paul was a witness of personal experience with Christ, so must we be; as Paul was sent to offer forgiveness of sins and an inheritance even for those who have nothing in this world, so are we all commissioned. On Wednesday morning, Rev. W. W. Fleischer, our instructor in Church History, took the service. His message was drawn from the story of how Elisha by a miracle sweetened the spring at Jericho. The speaker said that this is our ministry, too. For many life is pleasantly situated, but there is a bitter spring. Under God we may work spiritual miracles which may be compared with this physical miracle wrought of old. The following morning Rev. W. S. Whitcombe, instructor in Systematic Theology and English, spoke from the latter part of Proverbs One and the former part of the following chapter. In Proverbs One wisdom cries to be heard, in Proverbs Two she must be sought like treasure. So, said Mr. Whitcombe, is the life of the Seminary. Here knowledge is put before you, and yet you must seek it for yourself. Wisdom, in Hebrew thought, was a practical thing; so should all our acquisition of knowledge bring us into right relation with God. On Friday mornings chapel services are taken by the men students in turn. As "High Kakiak" for this school year, Mr. E. A. MacAsh conducted the service on Friday. He took the story of the sons of the prophets, under Elisha, building a new Seminary, and from this story urged the maintenance of the spirit of helpfulness and charity in the student body.

#### Dr. Shields a Climax

But the big event of the week in the Seminary was Convocation, held in Cooke's Church on Thursday evening. The attendance was large, many visitors being present from out of town. One by one the trustees and members of the faculty signed the statement of faith, saying that they would teach and have taught nothing that was not in accordance with the teaching of Scripture. Mr. MacAsh represented the men who have done pastoral work this summer, and spoke briefly of his joy in the service of the Lord with the Maple Hill Baptist Church. Mr. William Frey, our student-professor of French, who is pastor of the Baptist Church at Bienne, Switzerland, although he could not hold a conversation in English when he came to this country four months ago, delivered a fine address in his new language. He referred first to the difficulties of our Baptist brethren in the north of France, caused by the recent war scare. He then went on to speak of the possibilities of evangelization among the French-Canadians, as he saw them from his recent month's visit among our Union causes in northern Ontario and Quebec. Our President is always the climax of every meeting in which he takes part, and his address of Thursday night was no exception to his usual practice. In a forceful, scriptural way he showed the importance of the individual in the divine programme, and hence of the Seminary in its endeavour to produce real leaders for Christian work.

So the Seminary is off to a good start for 1938-39. Again we ask an interest in the prayers and fellowship of all our readers and friends. In the last analysis it is not by the might of oratory, nor the power of intellectuality, but by the Spirit of the Lord that His work is accomplished.—W.G.B.

### NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

#### Northern Conference

"The second annual conference of the Northern Fellowship of Regular Baptists was held in the First Baptist Church, Timmins, September 20th to 22nd. It proved to be another happy and profitable time of Christian fellowship as we who believed met together and had all things in common.

Each morning service from 10 to 12 was devoted largely to prayer and praise with a brief word from one of the

pastors. What a time of prayer and praise we had! There was no coaxing, no priming, but one after another led us to the throne of grace in earnest intercession. We believe these effectual fervent prayers did and will accomplish much. The afternoon sessions from 2 to 4 were encouraging and inspiring times. Reports were given concerning the Home Mission causes of our needy Northland. All these causes showed that a steadily increasing and lasting work is being done. Many difficulties have been and are being overcome. God's blessing upon each is a token of His approval and of the wise and worthwhile investment which the brethren of our Union are making. At the Round Table Conference, Thursday afternoon, the officers elected for the coming years were: Moderator, Rev. H. C. Slade; Vice-Moderator, Rev. S. Wellington; Secretary-Treasurer, Pastor J. Cunningham.

A house to house canvass was made following the afternoon meetings. Hundreds of people by this means were personally invited to the evening services and presented with a gospel tract and a printed announcement of the services. The evening meetings were great evangelistic services. Rev. J. Byers of Bethel Baptist Church, Orillia, was the guest preacher. Rousing gospel messages rang forth, and many in the large congregations gathered were convicted of sin and shown the way to God. Thursday evening a girl of the Sunday School and a woman responded to the invitation.

All our northern fields were represented at the conference: Kapuskasing, Timmins, Val d'Or, Noranda, Kirkland Lake, Sudbury and Geraldton. Several car loads came from some of these centres, and all the pastors, with the exception of Mr. Cunningham who was ill, and were royally entertained both at the Timmins Church and in the homes by a small army of women whose cooking and hospitality equalled anything we have experienced. We are very grateful to Mr. Slade and his people for their Christian hospitality. We look forward to our conference next year in Noranda as another spiritual treat.—G. B. H.

SCOTCH LINE—*Pastor J. E. Greening.* On Sunday, October 2nd, the Scotch Line Baptist Church held its sixty-second anniversary services. To all it was a day of rich and deep spiritual blessing. Our special speaker, Rev. J. H. Watt of St. Catharines, preached with genuine power and earnestness, and the results prove the reality of God's presence with us. Every Christian present, we believe, was stirred to greater desires for Christ. The special cause for our rejoicing is that four souls expressed their willingness to make Christ their Saviour. The spirit of liberty and expectancy seen throughout the crowded audiences was a happy feature. Miss Mary Jeffery, through her violin solos played with real depth of feeling, helped to make the services successful. We praise God for the glorious experiences of a memorable day.—J. E. G.

BRISCOE STREET, LONDON—*Rev. R. D. Guthrie.* "The attendance both at the Bible School and the Church services for July and August was everything that could be desired. The best of any summer to date. Since returning from vacation the Lord has given us much encouragement. Scores of visits have been made in South London, and this work is showing good results. The Bible School has been on the increase from week to week, and on Sunday, October 2nd, we reached a new record. Some of the classes have been divided, and the Lord has given us a small army of assistant teachers, some of them are being pressed into permanent service. During the past few Sundays I have been preaching to splendid crowds, and some have been saved, while others have come out for baptism and membership. Sunday, four were baptized, and received into fellowship.—R. D. G.

SUDBURY—*Pastor J. R. Boyd.* "Two years ago last June the writer accompanied Mr. John Boyd, then in his second year at the Seminary, part of the way to Sudbury, Ontario, I have a very vivid impression of the way in which Mr. Boyd said, as he left me, "I do not know whether it is a wild goose chase or not, but I believe the Lord has laid the needs of Sudbury on my heart, and as much as within me is I am ready to preach the gospel."

Last Sunday some of the fruits of this two and a half years of pioneer ministry were shown as the Sudbury Regular Baptist Church was organized. Almost thirty believers signed the statement of faith and resolution by which they declared themselves a church. A large proportion of these are young



people—as befits this young man's country, and all of them are workers. In the Sunday School of two hundred that met Sunday morning almost every member of the newly formed church was to be found surrounded by huge classes of boys and girls to whom they told the old, old story. Many of these children come from homes where the Lord Jesus Christ is not named, and some of them have been truly saved to become missionaries in their own homes.

It was good to have fellowship with such a vigorous young church that exemplifies true apostolic zeal in a great and needy field. It is evident that the teachings and example of the pastor have been fruitful in producing such intelligent and earnest workers. On Sunday there were five regular services, three in Sudbury and two in a suburb of the town. On Monday night I took part in two other services and the rest of Mr. Boyd's week is filled with eight additional meetings. How he manages fifteen meetings a week is more than a mystery. Only his own strength and inexhaustible zeal together with the loyal support of his devoted helpers make it at all possible.

Last summer tent campaigns and special meetings were held in a number of surrounding communities, in some of which a permanent cause has already been established.

A week-end at Sudbury is a strenuous race, without a minute for rest, but it repays many times over the investment of time and energy. Gratitude to God for such men as John Boyd and those whom the Lord has raised up to stand by him, a new vision of what can be done in many such towns in Ontario—these are some of the results of a visit to Sudbury, which we would share with WITNESS readers.—W. S. W.

## Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 2 Fourth Quarter Lesson 42 October 16th, 1938

### PAUL'S FAREWELL TO THE EPHESIAN ELDERS

Lesson Text: Acts 20.

Golden Text: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."—Acts 20:32.

#### I. The Journey to Miletus—verses 1-16.

The Apostle Paul had faithfully witnessed for Christ in every place which he visited. Consequently, on this third and last missionary journey, groups of believers gathered at various places to say farewell to their leader. The tender affection manifested on both sides shines as a clear light against the dark background of suffering and persecution endured by the faithful during these apostolic days.

In pursuance of his purpose (Acts 19:21), Paul left Ephesus for Macedonia, spending some time exhorting the Christians throughout that region. He spent about three months in the Province of Achaia, Greece proper.

The shortest and most direct route to Jerusalem would have been by sea from the port of Corinth to Syria, then south to Palestine, but he learned of the plot which the Jews had formed to take his life. His plans were changed, and he retraced his steps, travelling back again to Macedonia, thence by water to Troas on the north coast of Asia Minor.

The companions who travelled with him to Asia were devoted helpers who had proved to be true servants of the Lord; Sopater (Rom. 16:21), Aristarchus (Acts 19:29; 27:2; Col. 4:10), Secundus, Gaius (Acts 19:29; Rom. 16:23; 3 John 1), Timothy (Acts 16:1; 19:22), Tychicus (Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7; 8; 2 Tim. 4:12; Tit. 3:12) and Trophimus (Acts 21:29; 2 Tim. 4:20). Luke the historian joined the party at Troas; he was last mentioned as being with Paul at Philippi (Acts 16:17).

The lights in the room in Troas where Paul was preaching would add to the heat and discomfort of the crowded room. The window probably projected over an open court. When the young man died, Paul followed the example of Elisha (2 Kings 4:33-35). As teachers, let us remember that the unsaved members of our classes are dead in trespasses and sins. It is our duty, as well as our high privilege, to go to them in love, to breathe upon them, in a metaphorical sense,

by surrounding them with prayer, and to become the Lord's channels through whom His life may flow to them. "Resurrection is our aim; to raise the dead is our mission!"

The Book of Acts is an important and authentic document. It gives an authoritative account of the methods, routes and speed of travel in those early days.

We are not told why Paul preferred to go alone from Troas to Assos on foot, while the others went by boat. Perhaps he had become wearied in spirit because of the sorrow of parting with those who were beloved in the Lord. At any rate, he seems to have craved an interval of quiet (Matt. 14:23; Mark 6:31).

#### II. The Exhortation to the Ephesians—verses 17-38.

Paul desired to reach Jerusalem as soon as possible, and for that reason had planned not to stop at Ephesus, the scene of the riots three months before. But he yearned to impart spiritual help to the Christians, many of whom had but recently been rescued from the snares of pagan idolatry or from the formalism of Judaism (Acts 19:17-20). He sent for the elders of the Church to meet him at Miletus.

Teachers of junior classes would perhaps find it more profitable to deal in greater detail with some of the important topics suggested in the passage, rather than to attempt to bring the whole message within the reach of the scholars. Emphasize the all-important theme of the Gospel of the grace of God, eternal life in Christ which has been made possible because Christ died for us (verses 21, 24, 28). Though sold unto sin, we were purchased by the very blood of God (Eph. 1:14; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19; Heb. 9:14; Rev. 1:5). Impress upon them the value of helpfulness and unselfish service for others (verse 35), the nature of true riches (verse 33; Acts 3:6; Mark 8:36, 37; 1 Tim. 6:17), and the reward of investing one's life for Christ (verse 24; 2 Tim. 4:7).

The Apostle's farewell exhortation to the Church at Ephesus is full of suggestion and inspiration for the personal ministry of the teacher, preacher and Christian worker. Each one of us may take these words of counsel as from the Lord Himself.

Paul counted himself as a bondsman of the Lord Jesus (Rom. 1:1). The slave would serve in all seasons, and in every capacity (2 Tim. 4:2); the time and place of his service were under the control of his master. He took the lowly place as a matter of course (1 Pet. 5:5). Tears, testings and persecutions were to be expected (verses 19, 31; Psa. 126:5; Acts 14:22).

As an ambassador, Paul had faithfully delivered the message which had been committed to him, the Gospel of the grace of God (verses 20, 21, 24, 26, 27). No earthly sorrow or suffering could move him from his steadfastness (1 Cor. 15:58). He had devoted his whole life to God, fulfilling to the very best of his ability the ministry to which he had been appointed (2 Tim. 4:5). The responsibility now rested upon his hearers (Acts 18:6).

The elders of the Church must first take heed to themselves; they must ever take thought for their personal relationship to the Lord (1 Tim. 4:16).

"You cannot teach what you do not know,  
You cannot lead where you do not go."

The Holy Spirit had appointed them to their positions of leadership in the Church, and they were to recognize His Lordship. They must tend the flock, though not act as lords over God's heritage (Ezek. 34:2-4; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3). The sheep would need to be fed (John 21:15-17), to be protected from enemies without who should seek to destroy them (Matt. 7:15; John 10:1; 2 Pet. 2:1-3), and from traitors within who should attempt to lead them astray (1 Tim. 1:19, 20; 1 John 2:18, 19).

Let them be alert watchmen (Ezek. 33:7; 2 Tim. 4:5), remembering the one who had warned them earnestly, unceasingly, and yet tenderly. He was governed by no selfish motives (1 Sam. 12:3; 1 Tim. 3:3), but followed the precepts and example of his Lord, giving himself to help others (Rom. 15:1).

Paul lovingly commended the Ephesians to God and to the word of His grace (Acts 14:3), God's instrument for the strengthening of His people (Col. 2:7), and for enabling them to realize their inheritance as saints, and to enter into their inheritance (Eph. 1:18; Heb. 9:15).

Sorrow filled their hearts as they bade farewell to the one whom God had sent to give them the Word of life. No wonder it is said of the early believers, "Behold how these Christians love one another!"

**PROGRAMME OF ELEVENTH ANNUAL  
CONVENTION OF THE UNION OF  
REGULAR BAPTIST CHURCHES  
OF ONTARIO AND QUEBEC**

to be held in Cooke's Presbyterian Church, Toronto

**OCTOBER 25, 26, 27, 1938**

**PRE-CONVENTION MEETINGS**

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 24th**

2.00 p.m.—Meeting of the Executive Board of the Union.

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25th**

11.00 a.m.—Registration of Messengers.

2:30 p.m.—Inspirational Conference.  
Chairman, Rev. E. C. Wood.

**THEME: The Work of the Ministry.**

"The Pastor as an Evangelist"—Rev. R. D. Guthrie.

"The Pastor as a Teacher"—Rev. J. Fullard.

"The Pastor as a Visitor"—Rev. W. W. Fleischer.

**TUESDAY EVENING**

**FIRST CONVENTION SESSION**

7.30—Prayer and Praise Service led by Pastor D. Macgregor.

8.00—Opening of Convention—The President, Dr. T. T. Shields in the chair.

Adoption of Tentative Constitution.

Appointment of Committee on Nominations.

ADDRESS: "How the Spirit is Received"—Rev. E. E. Shields.

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26th**

**Morning**

**SECOND CONVENTION SESSION**

9.30—Prayer and Praise Service led by Mr. D. G. Aceti.

10.00—Rev. W. W. Fleischer, Vice-President, in the chair.

Conference on Sunday School Work.

ADDRESS: Rev. B. Jeffery.

Discussion led by Rev. W. N. Charlton.

**QUEBEC, A NEGLECTED MISSION FIELD.**

Addresses: Rev. W. S. Whitcombe, Pastor T. D. M. Carson.

**Afternoon**

**THIRD CONVENTION SESSION**

2.00—Prayer and Praise service led by Mr. Carl Harvey.

2.30—Rev. H. C. Slade, Vice-President, in the chair.  
Presentation of the Board's Report on Home Missions.

Brief Addresses by Home Mission Pastors:  
Messrs. MacBain, Vaughan, Hicks, Wyse, Hunter.

ADDRESS: "Walking in the Spirit"—Pastor J. R. Boyd.

**Evening**

**FOURTH CONVENTION SESSION**

7.30—Prayer and Praise Service led by Pastor H. G. Hindry.

8.00—The President in the chair.

ADDRESS: "Preaching in the Spirit"—Rev. John Byers.

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27th**

**Morning**

**FIFTH CONVENTION SESSION**

9.30—Prayer and Praise service led by Rev. J. K. Yalland.

10.00—Rev. H. C. Slade, Vice-President, in the chair.  
Board's Report on Foreign Missions.

ADDRESS: Mr. W. H. Frey, pastor of Bienne, Switzerland.

Board's Financial Report and Budget Recommendation.

**Afternoon**

**SIXTH CONVENTION SESSION**

2.00—Prayer and Praise Service led by Rev. K. M. Cutler.

2.30—Rev. W. W. Fleischer, in the chair.

**SEMINARY SESSION**

**I. THE APPEAL OF THE SEMINARY:**

Mr. C. H. Wilkins, first year; Mr. A. Hewson, third year; Mr. W. R. Slade, fourth year.

**II. THE WORK OF THE SEMINARY:**

Mr. E. A. MacAsh, fourth year; Mr. A. Melvin, third year; Mr. J. E. Greening, fourth year; Mr. F. S. Cook, fourth year.

**III. THE FRONTIERS OF THE SEMINARY (Illustrated):**

Rev. A. C. Whitcombe, Instructor in Hebrew, and pastor of Shenstone Memorial Baptist Church, Brantford.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS.**

ADDRESS: Rev. H. C. Slade—"How Not to Grieve the Spirit."

**Evening**

**SEVENTH CONVENTION SESSION**

7.30—Prayer and Praise Service led by Rev. John Armstrong.

8.00—Rev. H. C. Slade in the chair.

Reports of Committees.

Introduction of Board Members.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: "Be Filled with The Spirit"—Dr. T. T. Shields.

Adjournment.