

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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"WE SEE THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY"

The phrase which we have set at the head of this article is taken from the chapter in Corinthians which describes the superiority of love to all other graces. It is used to describe the partial knowledge of man in the flesh in contrast with the crystal clarity of one's view of things in the life to come. But for our purpose we shall take the phrase out of its setting, and use it to describe the vagueness of the view of those who are feeling out after a remedy for the world's ills.

Few there are to-day—though there were many but a decade or so ago—who are inclined to sing the praises of human progress. It is quite generally admitted that the world seems to be surrendering ground won through centuries of Christian influence, and to be slipping back into barbarism. Most people can see far enough to recognize that something is radically wrong.

Quite commonly the world's turbulence is attributed to economic causes. Japan is said to be seeking an outlet for her surplus population, and markets for her industrial products. Communism in Russia is ascribed to a natural reaction from Czarism. Naziism is said to have been born of the Versailles Treaty, and that Germany's present-day arrogance is the inevitable result of the severity of the peace terms. Italian Fascism is said to have sprung out of the nation's impoverishment and the fear of Communism. The Spanish Civil War is also justified by many as an attempt to ward off the "Red" bogey. Unemployment in Europe and on the American continent is said by some to be due to capitalistic monopoly of a machine age.

Perhaps in all these things one man's guess may be as good as another's. For the most part, "we see through a glass darkly"; but would it be an exaggeration to say that a close examination would reveal in all these situations the operation of age-long human qualities, a Luciferian ambition to be exalted above the stars of heaven, a lust for power, a passion for self-aggrandizement—and all without regard to the cost in suffering to others.

It seems to us one needs a pretty vivid imagination, a mind in which the influence of fancy is out of all proportion to that of fact, to account for and explain Hitler by the Treaty of Versailles, or to explain the insolence of Mussolini, or the militarism of Japan, on economic grounds. But even those who thus view the situation, through dark glasses, vaguely recognize that any real

amelioration, not to say effectual cure, must be of a spiritual quality. But again, the dark glasses forbid any clear definition of what is spiritual.

Some express hope of relief in religion, but leave us still in the dim twilight by a failure to define "religion"; whether it shall be the Romanism of Franco, the paganism of Hitler, or the formalism of other religious systems bearing the Christian name. Still others suggest a possible remedy in some kind of "revival"; but here again we are faced with indefiniteness. A revival of what? Are we not even now in the throes of a world-revival, a revival of barbarism and of all that has proved to be evil in human history?

The germ of the malady from which we suffer must be isolated, identified, properly named perhaps as well, before a remedy can be prescribed. And here again we are handicapped by dark glasses, by ill-lighted laboratories and indistinct stethoscope. For any accurate diagnosis we must resort to the divine rays, which are not X-rays, but the penetrating, omnivident gaze of His eyes, from Whom no secrets are hid. And He has plainly and unmistakably diagnosed our trouble: "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."

That being so, we are shut up to one remedy, to the cleansing of blood, and the regenerating, recreating power of God. Pharmaceutical science recognizes the necessity of insuring the purity of its healing agents. It will not do to assume that anything that is called "insulin" may be used by any sort of quack as a cure for diabetes. Perhaps in nothing have governments found it necessary to make more rigid and inexorable regulations than in their various drug acts.

Our main difficulty to-day is that the Christian remedy for the world's diseases, its solvent for its problems, has been used for merchandise; and the Christian label has been put upon a thousand things devoid of the least vestige of Christian principle. Neither Roman nor Greek Catholicism is Christian. Institutional Christianity, as represented by colossal ecclesiastical organizations, often has little of the ingredients of the original remedy as formulated by its great Discoverer. He has not patent-

ed His remedies nor copyrighted His formulas, for the reason that the elemental qualities which constitute the remedy, reside within Himself. He is Himself the Remedy, and He has delegated to no human agent the right or ability to mediate His grace. He Who made man in the beginning must Himself remake man. True: Christianity consists in vital and eternal union with the Christ of God. Hence the exclusiveness, as well as the inclusiveness of the great saying, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."

"FAITH AND PATIENCE"

In the epistle to the Hebrews we read: "And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full measure of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

The bringing together of these two graces, faith and patience, in this text is most suggestive. The mutuality of their relationship is self-evident. One cannot have patience without faith; and, for the continuous exercise of faith, we need patience.

Perhaps never did the Christian people of the world need these collateral graces more than to-day. Few of us have escaped the necessity of watching at the bedside of one in whom life seemed but a flickering hope. There had been a critical operation of a major character. The surgeon said the patient had come through satisfactorily; from day to day it was reported the patient was "doing as well as could be expected". But to the by-standing layman there seemed to be no progress; sometimes, rather a steady decline; but at best a state of standing still. But the expert said all was well. The surgeon declared time was the great healer, that Nature required time to effect her processes; and that notwithstanding the apparent contradiction, the patient was really doing well. So we had to believe the doctor, and summon all the patience we could command, and wait for better days.

That is a picture of present-day world conditions. The whole world is sick. Scarcely can we find a spot of earth where the public temperature is normal. The fever rages. And were we to trust the evidence of our senses, we could be assured only of a terribly fatal issue. But the great Doctor has given us many promises. He has not withdrawn from the case. He watches the patient's chart hourly. He is thoroughly cognizant of pulse and temperature—and, wonder of wonders, He is unalarmed! He recognizes the seriousness of the malady. He condemns unsparingly the crimes that brought it about. But He is far from being at His wit's end. For our comfort, He has even sketched a picture of a new heaven and a new earth, and somewhere upon it, an ideal, populous city, entirely free from poverty or pain, immune even to sorrow and tears, and absolutely secure from the ravages of death.

The Doctor says the patient will recover; the fever will subside; the poison will be eliminated from the blood, and every mark of the long illness will be obliterated. That is a great promise, Doctor! It requires both faith and patience to believe it. But because of what He is, of what He can do, what He solemnly declares He will do, we too in this day may find grace to be "followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

THE WEEK-END IN JARVIS STREET

We confess we are always somewhat relieved when Christmas and New Year days are past. So often much of the work of the Lord seems then to be suspended. But Jarvis Street had a fine watch-night service in Cooke's Presbyterian Church Saturday evening. A good number of the friends of Cooke's Church were present, with a good company of our own people, and a few strangers. We spent the time from ten-thirty until after twelve in prayer and praise, most of the time in prayer. The Pastor gave a very short address—and just past the midnight hour we wished each other a happy New Year, and went home.

Both services on Sunday were well attended, and, following the evening service, we had a great Communion Service. There was nothing extraordinary about the day—just another good day.

SEMINARY NOTES

If the Seminary were a Hebrew boy, it would now be called *ben Torah*, "a son of the Law", one responsible for himself, of age! It is just twelve years now since the School first opened. Some disappointments but many blessings have been ours, and we thank God. These twelve years have included the business depression by which the doors of many colleges were closed, but through the goodness of the Lord and the faithfulness of His people we continue. The Seminary has now the capital it started with—nothing. Set over against work accomplished, we believe that every dollar given the School is not given but invested, and that both for time and for eternity in the Kingdom of God.

The Christmas vacation is over. This week and next, and half of this School year will be through. While it is usually wisest to enter in the Fall, one may begin work at the opening of any quarter. The third quarter of this academic year begins on Tuesday, January 17th.

We believe in divine healing, that God does heal the sick in answer to prayer; we also believe in divine preservation in health, that every well day we enjoy is the gift of the Lord Himself. We are thankful, then, to record that so far the record for this year among our students has been good. A senior student did recently have a rather serious time with what should have been a minor operation, but we are glad to see him back with us to-day.

Just before Christmas closing all his old friends were happy to welcome back Pastor Donald S. Dinnick. He is home east for three months, and then he plans to return to the Swedish Baptist Church near Strasbourg, Saskatchewan. In his two and a half years there Mr. Dinnick has been used of the Lord to the salvation of souls, a good number have been baptized, a new church building has been erected—all but the interior trim and the seating—and it is paid for. During his weeks here Mr. Dinnick would be glad to supply pulpits. Exceptionally earnest in personal work, we suggest that he may well be used in special services, though we make this suggestion without his knowledge or consent. He may be addressed in care of Toronto Baptist Seminary, 337 Jarvis St., Toronto 2, Ontario.—W. G. B.

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

Exchange of Pulpits in the North

In the north, Rev. H. C. Slade of Timmins and Rev. Wilfred Wellington of Noranda exchanged pulpits for a Sunday, and we give their own accounts of this ministry. Mr. Wellington writes:

"It was certainly a pleasure to minister to the fine body of Christians at Timmins. The great congregations which assemble for all services speak volumes for the effective ministry being conducted by Brother Slade. It is not difficult to preach to those who love the Word, because they look farther than the preacher, and hear more than his voice. The spirit of prayer which characterizes so many of the saints at

(Continued on page 7)

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

CAN ANY FORM OF SOCIALISM BE REALLY "CHRISTIAN"? IF NOT—?

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

Preached in Massey Hall, Toronto, Sunday Evening, December 16th, 1938

(Stenographically Reported)

"Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made."—Galations 3:19.

"And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

"And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

"And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

"And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

"And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

"But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

"So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

—Luke 12:13-21.

"And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

"And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham."—Luke 19:8, 9.

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."—Revelation 21:2.

The discussion of any aspect of socialism may seem to some of you to be far removed from the mission of this pulpit; but I think it is necessary that Christian people generally should be fully apprised of the trends of the time, so that, without wavering, in relation to all the events of life, they may hold their faith.

Words, like persons, do not always honour either their birthplace or their parentage. Sometimes they go astray, to walk in the counsel of the ungodly, to sit in the seat of the scornful, to stand in the way of sinners; with the inevitable result that, like persons, ultimately they lose their proper influence and power. Sometimes I have thought we need a rescue mission for fallen words. Words need to be recalled from the far country; like lame Mephiboseth, to be brought back from Lodebar to Jerusalem, and from the house of Machir to the house and table of the king.

The word Socialism is one such word. It is a word that is hated by many, and almost worshipped by others. It is a word that needs very careful definition. As a matter of fact, the clarity of any man's thinking may often be tested by the accuracy of his definitions. People use words of the meaning of which they have but the most vague idea; and, beginning from a wrong premise, however flawless their argument, their conclusion inevitably must be wrong.

What is meant by the term, Socialism? What relation, if any, has it to Christianity? Naziism calls itself "National Socialism". The system obtaining in Russia is frequently spoken of as Communism—and there are many varieties and degrees of Socialism between these two. I suppose Socialism means, in general terms, a theory that the ownership and control of all the means of production, land and material, ought to be vested, not in individuals, but in the community as a whole. I say there are so

many varieties that it is important to make sure what variety we are talking about.

There is a socialism that conceives merely of the building of a Christian society, upon Christian principles, a society that will secure equality for each, and the general welfare of all. So-called Socialism varies all the way from a simple form of voluntary serviceable co-operation for the general good to the form of an inflexible, iron-clad Naziism which merges the individual in the mass, and subordinates all the interests of the individual to the state; and assumes that the individual is made for the state, and not the state for the individual.

There is little practical difference between that and Communism. They are both forms of collectivism as opposed to individualism. And any scheme of government which merges the individual in the mass, and which subordinates, and would sacrifice, the priceless entity of a human soul to any social conglomerate called a state, is distinctly anti-Christian. In fact any form of collectivism necessitating the sacrifice of the sacred right of the individual to collective interest or profit, is contrary to Christ. These political philosophies are affecting the lives of whole nations, and remaking the map of the world.

At the time of the crisis with Germany last September, when it seemed that war was threatening, the Christian churches of Germany arranged for a day of intercession. I have read the form of service used on that occasion. The form of service included the confession of sin—the sin of the people, and the sin of the nation. Because of that, the ministers who participated in that service of intercession were dispossessed, turned out of their churches; and all congregations forbidden by law to offer them help, or provide them with any kind of support. By the application of the principles of that extreme form of Socialism, multitudes of people were forbidden even

to pray; and punished because, before God, they acknowledged their own and the nation's sin.

I refer to that to show you that this subject is not alien to matters which are of supreme interest to us, for these principles have not only an economic but a religious aspect. They strike at the very root of all human liberties. We shall not settle matters by calling names. There are people who are ready to call any kind of reformer a Socialist, or a Communist, or a Bolshevik; and if you have no argument perhaps that is the most deadly thing you can do to an enemy, give him a bad name—and some unthinking people will listen to and believe what you say. But it is well for us to remember that people may be bound with a black cord as effectually as with a red one; and a man may be smothered as easily with a black, or a blue or a brown shirt, as with one that is red. It makes little difference what you call these things if they are the same at the root.

The term, Christian, needs defining. It does not mean what once it meant. Men speak of *Christian* institutions, and *Christian* movements, of *Christian* nations, of a *Christian* civilization. "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." And they were called Christians because they were Christ's men; because they were born again; their natures were changed; because they avowed allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the grace of His Spirit endeavoured to exemplify the principles of His gospel in their lives. No movement, no institution, may, accurately, be called Christian that is not, in nature and character, in quality and outward form, akin to the Lord Jesus Christ. I fear that many of the institutions that are called churches, that are called Christian churches, have nothing Christian about them.

We hear of "Christian" Socialism, and on the lips of many it means an attempt to apply the moral principles of the Christian gospel to legislation, and thus, by a principle of law, to bring about what it is assumed would be a Christian state of society. There is one of our daily papers that advocates such things in almost every issue, and people are being—I was going to say, fed on that kind of pabulum, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to get people to think clearly and biblically on any question.

It is possible to misrepresent Evangelical Christianity. I know that there are people who shrug their shoulders and dismiss every proposal looking to any kind of social action with a sneer: they think thus to settle it. They say, "That is socialism." What do they know about it? You cannot remove a difficulty that way. When you find one foolish woman spending a hundred thousand dollars on a "coming out party", whatever that is, for her daughter, making a great display, while some other women's daughters have not a hundred cents to buy shoes or coat to "come out" in, you must not be surprised if the world generally should be in a ferment of disquietude, and even of rebellion. Such foolish and wicked displays of extravagance, had some influence in precipitating the bloody French Revolution. Whether such resentment is just or not may be another question; but whether the remedies prescribed for such social and economic inequalities have any value is a still profounder question.

I believe that all these things which have been so accentuated in recent years, and which almost unconsciously permeate the minds of men, can find their solution and clarification only by a sane application of the teaching of the Word of God.

There are some, I say, who sneer at Evangelical Christianity. They represent us as a company of people who would fain sit and sing ourselves away to everlasting bliss, as people who talk only about heaven, and forget that they are upon earth, as people who have no proper appreciation of the obligations of neighbourliness. Thus Evangelical Christianity is represented as made up of people who sit comfortably in their pews and sing spiritual songs, and dream of the day when they will reach heaven, all unmindful of the wrong that is roundabout them lying; callously indifferent as to whether a man has anything to eat, or a roof over his head. I want to show you that that is not Evangelical Christianity: it never was; that it is a caricature of any truly biblical Christian.

All the law is summed up in two commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." To magnify one to the exclusion of the other, is to do violence to both. To represent people as being particularly and biblically religious, whose interest is so centred upon heavenly things that they have no interest in earthly affairs at all, is to misrepresent Christianity; and, on the other hand, to define Christianity in terms of mere neighbourliness, of a man's relation to his fellows, to the exclusion of God altogether, is equally unjust. In the scripture Mr. Brown read to you this evening we were told, that to violate one precept of the law is to violate all. The religion of the Bible, culminating in the full-orbed revelation of God's purpose in Christ, is to make it possible for men to keep the whole law, to be right toward God, and right, in relation to their neighbours too. Nothing less than that is Christianity.

I.

Look at the first verse that I read to you, where the inspired writer asks, "Wherefore then serveth the law?" WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF LAW? If Sinai cannot save a man, why was the law there given? If men are not to be justified by the works of the law, why should the works of the law be required? "Wherefore then serveth the law?"

That may be applied to the law as given by Moses, and it may be applied to the principle of law as a whole. There are some of our brethren—who call themselves "Brethren"—whom I cannot always understand. I have great admiration for much they believe, but some of them claim to be so other-worldly that they profess to have almost no interest in mundane affairs. The law, the principle of law, of compulsion, the regulation of human life and conduct, has its place. It had its place in the dispensation of the law: it has its place in the divine institution of the state; and before all that, it had its place in the smallest of all social units, the family, where law and order ought to obtain; and where the principle of compulsion must be applied. If only people could relate Sinai and Calvary, law and grace, outward compulsion with the impulsion of grace from within—if they could see clearly the relation of these two principles, of these two economies, it would save them much confusion of thought.

The principle of law is external at best. It regulates only the externals of life. Take a simple principle. A man is made outwardly honest by law. He is compelled to pay one hundred cents to the dollar, and to give sixteen

ounces to the pound—or get into trouble. That is the law. He must conform to legal standards: if he does not, he is a thief, and must pay the penalty of the violation of law. It is a good thing to have law. I am glad enough when I go to a store, that there is a law that compels a man to give me sixteen ounces. Of course I wish he could live without law, that he would do it without being compelled; but if any man owes you anything, you may be glad that an organized society requires that he pay what he owes.

But the law cannot be applied in every case, even though you do the best you can. I repeat, for emphasis, that the principle of law as an outward constraint, regulates the externals of life, and makes a man honest only outwardly. He may be a criminal at heart; he may be a thief; he may wish that he could get away with paying you fifty cents on the dollar. The law cannot make him an honest man, no matter what it does. However perfectly you legislate, you cannot make a man honest, or truthful, or sober, or generous, or even just, by law: you can only compel him to act as though these qualities were inherent. But they are not. "Wherefore then serveth the law?"

It is a restraining power. It is inevitable that we should be hated, but "he that hateth his brother is a murderer". We may therefore be glad to live in a state of organized society where that hatred is not allowed to express itself in deed. I remember being in a certain place one time when a man gave expression to vicious sentiments, and another said of me, "That man owes his life to the fact that he lives under the British flag." I dare say some of the beer-people do not like me, and the antagonism is mutual: I do not like them. If you take a stand for righteousness, you will be cordially hated. If they could, they would kill.

"Wherefore then serveth the law? The principle of law is a principle of restraint. It was divinely ordained to save the race from suicide: "It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." In whatever sphere or realm you view it, the principle of law at best is a splint for a broken bone, a crutch for a lame leg, a wall at the edge of the precipice—something that, by force, keeps a man within certain prescribed limits; but it can never touch the heart of a man. Put a man in a room that is full of gold, millions of it, and bind him hand and foot, and the shackles with which he is bound have within them a legal principle, a principle of compulsion. The man may come out and say, "I sat for hours with hundreds of millions of dollars of gold around me—and I did not take a penny." No, he did not, because he could not! He may have wanted to do so, but that principle of restraint held him in leash and made it impossible for him to do evil in the circumstances.

Any principle of law is a half-way measure at best. You could never be comfortable in the presence of one who would like to do you harm if he dared. If you could see what was in his heart, you would be afraid. You cannot establish a Christian community—that is my point—by any principle of law. No matter how socialistic your legislation, no matter what social services you may set in operation, no matter how you may compel people to pay to these social services, you cannot compel them to be socially interested or socially happy. They do what they do because they must. It is an irksome and unhappy condition of life at the best.

II.

LET US OBSERVE OUR LORD'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THESE MATTERS IN THE DAYS OF HIS FLESH. A certain man came to Him who had a family quarrel. He and his brother were at odds because his brother would not divide the inheritance. This is a very human Book. I have seen people who were quite agreeable at a funeral, but who fought like the proverbial cat and dog when the funeral was over and the will was read. This man came to Christ and said, "Speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me." He wanted his share.

That man's idea of the function of this religious Teacher was that He should so interfere in material affairs as to compel his brother to give him his just portion. That, apparently, was the limit of his interest; and there are still people who have no other religious interest than that. They used to call certain people in China "rice Christians". In my father's house we had a dog that used to beg for food, and at times seemed extraordinarily affectionate; and my mother used to define certain manifestations of affection as "cupboard love". So the interest of certain people in religion is that it should contribute to their temporal and material profit. I never dreamed Jarvis Street had so many people connected with it as would appear since we have been erecting our building. Hosts of men come to me looking for a job, and saying, "I attend your services."

There are a great many people who complain of the church—the church does not do this, and the minister fails to do that. What they really are saying is, "Speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. I ought to have a larger share of this world's goods—a better job, better wages, and a better house to live in." Perhaps that is not open to argument. Our Lord did not say that the inheritance ought not to be divided. I grant you that the world is full of social injustices and inequalities. I am prepared instantly to admit that there ought to be a more equitable distribution of the world's wealth, and I wish I knew how to effect it.

Our Lord recognized that. He did not say, "Do not bother. You do not need that division of the inheritance." There are many wrongs that ought to be righted. The question is, How can they be righted? How are we to do these things? That our Lord did not respond to his appeal was no indication of indifference on His part. The Lord Jesus was never indifferent to any sort of injustice. Where moral principles were at issue, the Lord Jesus was always concerned.

There is nothing in the story to indicate that the Lord had no interest in this division for which the man asked; and if the church of Jesus Christ does not take upon itself the responsibility of attempting to solve all the social problems of the day, it does not mean that the church is indifferent. Indeed, I fear that too many churches are attempting to be judges and dividers. Someone said—I do not know how justly—that sixty per cent. of the ministers of a certain denomination are Socialists. I know that at their great Annual Meetings there is no longer any discussion about prayer, about the salvation of the individual. All their resolutions have to do, in some form or another, with the bread-and-butter question. They are busy with the problem of dividing the inheritance—as though that were the church's primary business.

Our Lord is our Example, and He refused to touch it. He said, "Who made me a judge or a divider over you?"

He was not indifferent, I say, and yet He warned that man to "beware of covetousness". In other words He said, "Do not get that thing out of the proper place." Let us remember that when the Lord Jesus bade us set our affections on things above, and not to lay up our treasure upon earth, He was not indifferent to the needs of the body, nor to our other temporal requirements. He did not teach that we should live with our heads in the clouds. He said, "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." He said further, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

It was a question of proper order and relation. Very often the complaint against Evangelical Christianity, that it does not divide the inheritance, has its root in some form of covetousness. The Lord spoke the parable of the man who lived for time, and for the things of time; and enlarged his barns that he might have wherein to bestow his fruits. The Lord said that night a Visitor came to him and said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"

Do you see the point? The Lord said, "If you put this question of dividing the inheritance, or such matters of carnal requirement, as 'what shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? or, wherewithal shall we be clothed', in the first place, you will put them in the wrong place. You have inverted the order in respect to the importance of the things of time and the things of eternity, the needs of the body and the needs of the soul." It is another way of saying, Keep the two commandments in their proper order, and remember that your first duty is to love God, and after that, your neighbour as yourself; and to behave toward each as one who loves. The Lord said, "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." So is every man who lives on the horizontal plane, and forgets his perpendicular relationship.

III.

Now look at the other case, THE STORY OF ZACCHAEUS, and see how the Lord dealt with these matters after all.

Zacchaeus was a publican, a tax-collector. He was what we should call in our day, a grafter, a racketeer. He had been feathering his own nest at the expense of other people. He appears to have been altogether a dishonest man whom no one loved. I suppose he was held in contempt by the whole neighbourhood. When Jesus Christ passed that way, he climbed into a sycamore tree that he might see Him: "He sought to see Jesus who he was." When the Lord Jesus met him, how did He address him? He simply said, "Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house."

The Lord Jesus invited a sinner to take Him home with him. He said nothing about his dishonesty, about his ungenerous attitude toward the poor. He said "Zacchaeus, I am going home with you." How we are berated by some socialistically inclined people because we insist that the great business of the church, and of the gospel preacher, is to get the Lord Jesus into the heart of the individual! That must be my supreme concern, to get every man and woman here this evening, to take Jesus Christ home with him or her; to open the heart to Him, to receive Him. I believe they are making the greatest contribution to the welfare of society, of the nation, and of the world at large, who will spend themselves in that

primary duty of getting the grace of God into the hearts of individuals.

What followed? Zacchaeus came down "and received him joyfully". He responded to the invitation with alacrity, with heartiness and gratitude; and they went home together. What a picture! I do not think Jesus of Nazareth was a little man physically, I do not suppose He was a giant; I rather think that He was a well-proportioned, splendid specimen of physical manhood, the ideal man in every respect. Zacchaeus was "little of stature", just a little man, who could not see over the heads of people. They walked off together, and those who observed it said, with fine scorn, "He has gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner." That was their estimate of Jesus Christ. Perhaps among themselves they suggested the prophet of Nazareth wanted to "stand in" with the rich, notwithstanding Zacchaeus' wealth had been dishonestly acquired. At all events, the critics who profess to be socially-minded, lay just such a charge against those who still preach the gospel of individual salvation.

But when Jesus Christ goes home with a man, when He really goes home with him, a moral revolution is in the making. You will not need guns and armaments to bring him to duty. Though Sinai's thunders are silenced and its forked flashes no longer cleave the sky, and no law is cited, and no indictment is made out, when Jesus goes home with a man, though he is not handcuffed, he is arrested and enlisted in a moral revolution.

It is not said that the Lord Jesus lectured Zacchaeus. It is not recorded that He said, "Zacchaeus, you are a very bad character." But somehow, in the presence of the Lord Jesus, the life that Zacchaeus had lived did not look as white as it had formerly appeared; and spontaneously he said, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." Perhaps someone said as they saw Zacchaeus going with our Lord, "There goes the skinfint; there goes the liar. It would be far better if he would pay up some of the debts he owes! Far better were he to give a contribution to the poor than to take the prophet home to dinner."

Wait a bit! Wait a bit! He said, "Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor." You cannot really receive Jesus Christ into your heart and fail to become a generous man. He Himself is the Giver of all good, and a man cannot keep company with Him without learning to give. You may hear about Him, but if you actually take Him into your heart, and take Him home with you, He will make you just, and he will make you generous.

Then He said, "I will make restitution of anything I have falsely taken."

If the churches of this city were to begin once again to preach the gospel of individual salvation, the old full-orbed gospel with all the implications of receiving Christ into the heart, there would be a procession of people to the department stores, making restitution. There would be employers who would call their men about them this Christmas time and say, "I am not going to make you a present, men: I am going to give you back some of the things I have unjustly taken from you. I ought to have paid you better wages; I ought to have treated you more justly. I have taken more than my share out of the business in which we are jointly engaged." If some employer of labour, saved by the grace of God, having

Christ in his heart, would begin to do what Zacchaeus did, what do you suppose would happen to those men? They would all be in church next Sunday. They would say, "If that is what religion does, I want it. It must be the real thing that makes a man just and generous with all his neighbours, I have respect for it, and I want it in my heart."

That is the only truly Christian Socialism: individual salvation which puts God first, and then accepts and fulfills all the social obligations implied in the principles of the gospel.

That is the sort of Socialism we need; for remember it was not until after Zacchaeus had thus committed himself that Jesus Christ said, "This day is salvation come to this house." Not that his social-mindedness saved him; but his recognition and public acknowledgment of his obligations to his neighbour was the proof that Jesus Christ had been given first place.

Someone will say, "That is all very well, Sir, but do you not know the churches are full of people who are professing Christians, but who are unjust, extortioners, unfair to their employees, and in some cases, to their employers?" I know all that. I do not say that every professor will do that, but I do say that if a man really takes Jesus Christ into his heart, and takes Him home with him, He will make him both just and generous. If he has a real religion, everyone will know it. That kind of religion will bring righteousness; that will settle all the world's troubles—and nothing else will.

IV.

This word and I have done: "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." During the war I used to go frequently to Hyde Park to hear the variety of speakers, offering their economic nostrums for the cure of the ills of the world. One time I came upon a crowd of people. A man was standing on a box, evidently preaching some colour of Socialism. He inveighed against "the capitalistic system", the injustice of employers—in fact everything was wrong. To most of what he said I could say, Amen. I recognized there were many things wrong. Then he proceeded to tell how to improve conditions: people should be compelled to do this, and compelled to do that. In short he invoked the principle of the authority of Sinai. Society was to be cast into an assortment of inflexible legal molds.

Presently a woman, a comparatively young woman, stepped forward, and asked if she might be allowed to speak. "Certainly", he said very politely, "I yield the rostrum to you." She got up—I think she was almost the only woman preacher I ever enjoyed. I do not like them as a rule, but I enjoyed her speech. She said somewhat to this effect: "I have been very much interested in what our friend has said. All of us will agree with very much that he has said. We all recognize evils he has described and denounced. In fact, I am quite willing to accept his diagnosis of the situation, of our present condition. We are in a bad way. But I differ from him respecting the remedy which he prescribes. He has told us how we could have a new London, and a new England, and a new world. Well, I believe that is possible. I believe it is possible to have a holy city, and to have a holy nation. But I am sure it will not come the way our friend proposes; because you will have observed that

he has recommended the building of a holy city from the ground up. I remind you of a Book in which it is said by a certain seer, 'And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.' My friends, what this old world needs is the power that comes down from God out of heaven. If we are to have new men, the power to make them new is to come down from God out of heaven. If we are to have new cities and new nations, and if righteousness is to fill the earth, the power to effect it must come down from God out of heaven." It was a fine speech and the socialist was silenced, as the inexorability of the woman's logic appealed to the crowd.

Do you not see that in our day, in nearly every instance, we have inverted the laws of order? Men are preparing to build a holy city of bricks and mortar, of material things; we are to have a better society from which God is excluded. We shall never have it, never in the world. The way of redemption for the individual, for the community, for the nation, and at last for the whole earth which "groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now"—the way of relief for all is from above. Only as we receive God into our hearts, and are made new creatures in Christ Jesus, shall we be able to fulfil worthily our place in the family, in the nation, and in the world at large. Let us take God's way. Let us take the Lord Jesus home with us to-night, and see what a revelation He will effect, and what happiness and lasting joy He will bring! May it be so, for His name's sake, Amen.

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

(Continued from page 2)

Timmins strengthens the hands of the messenger as with the power of God he endeavours to lead men from the captivity of sin. Truly it is cause for thanksgiving that such a mighty testimony exists anywhere in these days, and especially in this needy north.

"Brother Slade's ministry in Noranda was immensely enjoyed by the good congregations which assembled to hear him. Indeed we feel that both pastors and people were profited by the recent exchanges.

"We are happy to be able to report a continual growth in our Sunday School work at Noranda. During the entire fall greatly improved attendances have been maintained. But during the last three Sundays this improvement has been even more enjoyed. As has already been intimated in THE GOSPEL WITNESS, we have chartered a bus in order to reach out to children living in a suburb of Rouyn, and whom we otherwise could not get. This venture is proving very successful indeed. Last Sunday ninety-four were present, and there is every indication of even a better number in the weeks to come. Of course this has greatly widened our sphere of witness in the home. We are being welcomed into many new places and already a number of parents of the newer scholars have been in attendance at the church service. There is every prospect of unprecedented progress in every department of our work under the mighty hand of God.

"Now I shall conclude, praying that the enterprises of the Union will greatly be owned of our Lord, and that He will richly bless your own varied ministry in His Kingdom. Yours fraternally, S. Wellington."

TIMMINS—Rev. H. C. Slade. "The work in general is progressing quite favourably. As we labour, pray for, and earnestly expect the salvation of souls, the Lord does not fail in granting this blessing. A week ago Sunday we baptized nine candidates and received eleven into our fellowship. It does indeed encourage our hearts to see the Lord adding to the church such as are being saved.

"I am also glad to hear of blessing on other fields in the north as well. The exchange of pulpits with Rev. S. Wellington of Noranda proved helpful all around."—H.C.S.

GERALDON—*Pastor G. B. Hicks.* "Shortly after the Convention in Toronto, it was found necessary for us to make another move. It has proved to be for the best, too. We are now meeting in a hall on Main Street in a good location. Though it is above some offices, the flight of stairs does not seem to hinder our attendance as an upstairs hall might in the south. Friends came to our help and gave us an organ, as there was no instrument in the hall. We are gradually obtaining more property, you see. When we get a church building of our own we shall have a little furniture and other equipment to place in it.

"Our Christmas gatherings, some call them concerts, were well attended both at Bankfield and Geraldton. I wish you could have heard the children sing the Christmas songs and recite their pieces. It was an inspiration, and more than one of the many parents present expressed their appreciation of the profitable and enjoyable time they had. We had a number of Roman Catholics out, even adults. Besides the candies and little gifts the children received, each adult was presented with a gift, a Gospel or a book of Psalms or Proverbs. The following morning one of our teachers was met by two of the mothers. Both had been reading the book of Proverbs. One said she never knew there was such a book in the Bible. Thus we were able by the messages in the Christmas pieces, and by the printed page to give out the Gospel message to a number, parents included, who never attend church.

"From time to time we hear and see things that encourage us in our work for the Lord. This is especially true in connection with our children's work. We praise the Lord that we shall be enabled to close our books with all debts met and a balance in the treasury. We appreciate and still count on your prayerful interest. May 1939 be a great year in Zion for us all!"—G.B.H.

Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 3 First Quarter Lesson 3 January 15th, 1939

NOAH SAVED IN THE ARK

Lesson Text: Genesis 8.

Golden Text: "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."—Genesis 6:8.

For Reading: Genesis 6, 7, 9, 10.

I. Noah Saved—verses 1-14.

The descendants of Adam followed him in the path of sin, and the wickedness of the men upon the earth was very great. Lest sin continue to increase, God visited the earth in judgment (Gen. 6:5-13). Yet, God acted in mercy when He restrained the moral plague of corruption. That polluted generation would perish, and Noah would be the head of a new race of men.

The flood took place approximately 1650 years after the time of Adam. Noah belonged to the ninth generation from Adam (Genesis 5).

Noah, whose name means "Rest" or "Comfort" (Gen. 5:29), found grace in the sight of the Lord. He was just and upright, and, like Enoch, he walked with God (Gen. 6:9; compare Gen. 5:22, 24). God could safely trust Noah, and could communicate to him His own Divine counsels (Gen. 18:17; Exod. 33:11).

In sovereign mercy God provided a way of escape from judgment for Noah and his family. The ark was constructed according to the plan of God: Noah obeyed God in every detail. The ark is a type of Christ Who is Himself our only way of salvation from sin (Romans 8:1).

Since Noah believed the word of God concerning the certainty of the flood and the sufficiency of the way of escape, his faith was counted unto him for righteousness (Gen. 7:1; Heb. 11:7). Salvation is by grace alone through faith in Christ (Eph. 2:8; Tit. 3:5).

While preparing the ark, Noah, "the preacher of righteousness" (2 Pet. 2:5), heralded the message of judgment and salvation, not merely in word but also in deed. His faith in God was attested by his action of building the ark. Yet only eight souls were saved; Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives. These believed, but the rest scoffed at his warn-

ing (Matt. 20:16; Luke 13:23; 1 Pet. 3:20). They refused to heed the message, and for them the day of mercy ended suddenly (Gen. 6:3; Matt. 24:37-39; 1 Thess. 5:3; 2 Pet. 3:3-7).

God remembered Noah: not that He had forgotten him any time during the flood, but He now acted in his behalf (Gen. 19:29; Psa. 98:3; Luke 1:54, 72).

The rain from heaven and the waters from the seas had been poured out over the earth for forty days and forty nights. The number "forty" is associated in Scripture with the idea of testing (verse 6; Num. 14:33; Psa. 95:10; Luke 4:2). The fact that the flood was universal is attested by the fossil remains. The water remained at flood level, and did not commence to abate till 150 days, approximately 5 months, had elapsed since the first rain fell (Gen. 7:11; 8:4). By that time the ark, which had been floating on the top of the water, rested on Mount Ararat.

What a welcome sight the mountains must have been to the eight people in the ark who had seen only the raging waters for about eight months! The sight of the mountains confirmed their faith in the promise of God. (Gen. 6:18).

II. Noah Sent Forth—verses 15-19.

God had instructed Noah and his family to come into the ark (Gen. 7:1). Similarly, God's first command is for people to come to Him for salvation (Matt. 11:28). When the waters had subsided and Noah was safe, the first commandment was followed by a second one: "Go forth out of the ark". Noah and his family were to replenish the earth with people. Likewise, they who belong to Christ are under obligation to go forth in His name, proclaiming the message of salvation and raising up spiritual children for the Lord (Matt. 28:19, 20; Mark 5:19).

Two animals of every sort had been preserved in the ark in order that living creatures might again appear in the earth.

III. Noah Secured—verses 20-22.

While two of each variety of unclean animal were sufficient to replenish the earth, Noah had been commanded to take with him seven of each of the clean animals, since clean animals were necessary for food and for sacrifice, as well as for the procreation of the species. The distinctions between clean and unclean animals were maintained under the direction of God, that the people might remember His holiness (Lev. 11).

In gratitude for salvation, Noah built an altar, that he might worship God, and offer sacrifices to Him. The offering, an offering of "sweet savour" (Hebrew "savour of rest"), was acceptable to the Lord (Exod. 29:18, 25, 41; 2 Cor. 2:15; Eph. 5:2; Phil. 4:18). We, too, should adore the Saviour, and bring to Him the offerings of praise, thanksgiving and service, with which He will be well-pleased (Psa. 50:23; 116:13; Rom. 12:1; Heb. 13:15).

God made a solemn covenant with Noah that He would never again send a flood which would destroy every living thing (Gen. 9:8-17). There would be no departure from the regular courses of nature: The seasons and the days would come and go each in its own order. God chose the rainbow as the token of the covenant which He had established with Noah and his seed (Rev. 4:3).

How secure are the sons of men who are protected by the promise of the living God, Who has made a new covenant with His well-beloved Son, to save all who put their trust in Him (Heb. 9:15, 20)!

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