

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 OXFORD GROUP" AND OTHERS

We publish herewith an article by *Watchman* in *The British Weekly* of June 29th, on the Oxford Group. It is so much to our mind that we have taken the liberty of reproducing it for the benefit of our readers who are not subscribers to *The British Weekly*.

On January 19th, 1933, we gave an address in Jarvis Street Church, which was issued in booklet form, entitled, "The Oxford Group Movement Analyzed". Three editions of the booklet, of ten thousand each, have been printed, and have scattered themselves pretty well over the world. We have found no reason thus far to change the opinions therein expressed.

We agree with *Watchman's* suggestion that no institution or organization, especially one called Christian, depending for its support on public liberality "can afford to lay itself open to any faintest whisper regarding the financial aspect of its existence". We have never for a moment supposed there was any ground for suspicion regarding the financial affairs of the Oxford Group. As we have never been asked to contribute to it, it is none of our business beyond the interest we have in a principle which should apply, as *Watchman* has suggested, to all Christian organizations, and philanthropic organizations and institutions.

We know of an institution which talks much of its missionary activities. It makes a public appeal for missions at an annual conference. Some of the services are broadcast, and the appeal is made by radio. This is perfectly legitimate. But much of what is reported as being "raised", comes in in pledges; and anybody with any experience in such matters knows that many people, momentarily stirred, will make promises far beyond their ability to fulfil. The organization to which we refer publishes no audited statement, so that one is left in doubt as to the amount which is actually paid in during the year. Such statement as this organization issues, shows certain amounts sent to China, India, Africa, and elsewhere; but with few exceptions, no particular missions are named. There is no possibility of anyone's verifying the accuracy of the report.

We do not suggest that such a report is inaccurate, nor do we imply that there is anything about the movement that would not bear the light of publicity; but we do suggest that in the interests of the cause of Christ, of all churches, missionary organizations, and philanthropic in-

stitutions, which appeal for public support, this organization ought to issue, at least annually, an audited statement, so as to place the whole matter above suspicion, even of those who are chronically critical of all Christian movements.

The organization to which we refer needs to be all the more careful because it is really an incorporated body consisting of five men whose conduct of its affairs is not subject to any public review.

In these suggestions we do but set out principles involved in the plain teaching of Scripture. In the eighth chapter of Second Corinthians, Paul writes of the grace of God "bestowed on the churches of Macedonia", and he holds them up to the church in Corinth as an example. We are therefore within scriptural practice in magnifying the grace which enables people to give liberally to the cause of Christ.

But the Apostle Paul was very careful as to how he handled the contributions which were entrusted to him, and he tells how "this grace"—by which he means the sum of the gifts of the churches—was transmitted to those for whom it was intended, saying: "We have sent with him (Titus) the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches; and not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind: avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us: providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men."

Here be it observed, Paul insists that it is necessary, in handling public funds, that we should do it in such a way "that no man should blame us", but that we should provide for honest things, "not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men". He evidently attached much importance to this admonition; for to the Romans also he said in the twelfth chapter of his Epistle: "Provide things honest in the sight of all men." The same suggestion is also contained in the fourth chapter of his First Epistle to the Thessalonians, where he admonished them: "Study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; that ye may walk honestly toward

them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing."

We are sure our readers will be interested in *Watchman's* view of the status of the Oxford Group in the article which here follows:

THE LEGAL PERSONALITY OF THE "OXFORD" GROUPS

Craving the indulgence of the *Times*, whose reports have the accuracy and thus the authority of *Hansard*, I introduce a few observations on a matter which came up again in the House of Commons on Tuesday, June 20—too late by a few hours for any reference in my notes of last week.

[EXTRACT FROM "THE TIMES."]

[HOUSE OF COMMONS.]

TUESDAY, JUNE 20.

"THE OXFORD GROUP."

Sir W. Smithers (Chislehurst, U.) asked the President of the Board of Trade whether, in connection with the licence granted to Dr. Buchman's association to be designated as the Oxford Group, he would insist on an audited balance-sheet being produced without delay, of all sources of receipts and all details of expenditure since the formation; and if he would place a copy of the audited accounts in the Library of the House.

Mr. Oliver Stanley (Westmorland, U.)—The effect of incorporation under the Companies Act, 1929, will be to place the Oxford Group in the same position with regard to accounts as any public company incorporated under the Act, in that it will be required to lay before its members in general meeting an income and expenditure account and an audited balance-sheet not later than 18 months after incorporation, and subsequently once at least in every calendar year. A copy of the audited balance-sheet is required to be included in the annual return of the company, which must be filed with the Registrar of Companies, and documents so filed are available for public inspection. I see no reason for imposing exceptionally on the association any condition beyond these statutory obligations. (Hear, hear.)

Sir W. Smithers asked if the right hon. gentleman did not think it would be advisable, in view of the criticisms which had been made in the House, that an opportunity should be given, and if possible taken, so that these criticisms could be either substantiated or refuted.

Mr. Oliver Stanley said he was not prepared to treat these people in an exceptional manner. They would have to fulfil the ordinary obligations attaching to any company. With regard to any allegations that might have been made, if such allegations were made by subscribers to their funds, he would have thought that the obvious course would be for the subscribers themselves to ask that an account should be given to them.]

The Public Discussion of the Case

The case has been before the public for quite a long time; particularly during the last three weeks. Signed articles have appeared in the daily Press and in responsible weekly journals. It was mainly due to that indolence which I was inviting to descend upon me in a short holiday in the Scottish Highlands that I withheld any observations of my own. I have been approached by many correspondents for some opinion; and that I can give almost without prejudice, from the circumstance that, even in those days when I was resolved to be lazy, and when I was assisted to a sort of balmy mood by successive days of sunshine, which made a sort of Lotus island of my place of residence, I could not completely restrain my mind from pondering things, and even making some notes.

My Notes

Spreading out these Notes, I find that many of my points have already been dealt with. And yet, on the whole, the thing that concerned me most was not at all the thing in the claim for legal status and personality which seemed to offend the majority of those who have given the public their views.

For example, "Y. Y.," whose weekly article in the *New*

Statesman and Nation one does not wish to miss who has acquired the habit of reading it, made some excellent play with the use of the word "Oxford" in the title which the Groups claimed, and, if I am up to date in this, have secured. I may even protest, with my hand on my heart, that in these private Notes of my own I had used as illustrations of the unforbidden use of a University Association such a familiar designation as "Morris-Oxford." I had even adduced, though I had scored it out, the certainly equally universal association of the name of the sister University of *Cambridge* with a succulent item on probably 75 per cent. of the breakfast tables of this country, and of a still larger percentage in the homes of our people on a Sunday, if not at breakfast then at high-tea.

Nothing to be Gained

Nothing, therefore, it seemed to me, and it still seems to me, was to be gained or is to be gained by the prefixing of the word "Oxford" to the title of a movement which claims to have a still more august foundation.

If I resented anything about the disputed designation it was that the Leaders of the Movement should have persisted in claiming it after they had learned that the use of it was warmly resented by Oxford authorities. "What do ye more than others?" is a question which Christ, we may believe, still puts to us. Now, even amongst so-called men of the world, and certainly amongst people who make no claim to an acute or thoroughgoing obedience to an absolute control in personal behaviour, I doubt whether anyone, or any group, would assume a title without first assuring themselves by inquiry in the proper quarter that they were at liberty to use it; or would persist in the claim to use such a title even to the point of controversy, which I learn, had become prolonged and embittered. That aspect of the matter therefore did not linger in my own mind. I dismissed it as being a matter of taste, and, as we know, *de gustibus, etc.*

For the Rest

For the rest I heartily support the action of the Groups in seeking legal status and personality. I have no knowledge of what advantage precisely they are hoping to secure from this new status and title; I do see for myself certain clear advantages. Later, such advantages may involve a public right of entry and liability to control such as may be irksome to an organization hitherto held together, not at all by any contractual arrangement, but by the free loyalty of its members to their leader and to methods which suit themselves. For example, no institution which depends finally upon the support for its schemes of the liberality of others, even of its own members; and, *a fortiori*, no institution which is purely Christian and even acutely Christian, can afford to lay itself open to any faintest whisper regarding the financial aspect of its existence. Neither can any institution, still less any such institution, conceal its attitude to life in general, to the life of its domiciled country, and to the main trend of our social problems.

Inevitable Changes

For men change; because if they are normal they grow. We live and *move* who have our being in God. And that is not a movement, except for a goat, which consists in merely going round and round. There is a notable curse in Holy Scripture against a people because of this very stagnation—that they had never been poured from vessel to vessel; that they had "stayed put," and so fell out of the business of life.

Now, it is *there*, where such legal status as the Groups have secured makes it possible and perhaps even necessary for the State as such to intrude. I was in the ministry of a Church which by such an intrusion of the State was deprived of property exceeding in value, I believe, one and a quarter millions of pounds sterling. We thought the decision iniquitous; and the Government of the day must have had some such uneasiness; for under the guidance of the late Lord Balfour they brought in a Bill which became an Act, which annulled the decision so far that it "restored the equities."

But there we were! And there any living organization or society is, no matter how free it thinks itself.

I could, of course, go on and on; but saying more I might diverge into matters on which I should develop heat rather than light.—*Watchman*.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

GRACE! GRACE! GRACE!

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, July 9th, 1939

(Stenographically Reported)

"By grace ye are saved."—Eph. 2:5.

Prayer before the Sermon

We would be ever mindful of our dependence upon Thy bounty, O Lord. As we are assembled this evening hour, we are aware that we are as needy as we have ever been. Without Thee, we can do nothing; but we rejoice to believe that we need not be without Thee. As Thou hast promised to be in the midst of Thine assembled people, we are sure that though we see Thee not, Thou art with us this evening. We rejoice that Thou art the same as in the days of Thy flesh, when Thou didst minister to all who came to Thee, and that still Thou dost send no one empty away.

We thank Thee for such an High Priest as Thou art. Thou hast entered into heaven itself, not with blood of others, but with Thine own blood, there to appear in the presence of God for us. Coming deeply conscious of our unworthiness, and of all our weakness, our hearts are glad as we reflect that there is One upon the throne Who understands. We come, not to a throne of judgment, but to a throne of grace.

Look upon this congregation this evening. We cannot pray as we would, for we do not understand each other's requirements—nor do we understand even the need of our own complex natures. We know not what to pray for as we ought. We beseech Thee to hear the intercession of the Spirit in our behalf, Who maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Vouchsafe Thy blessing to every man and woman in this congregation: we desire that none shall escape Thy sovereign benediction. Put Thine arms about this company of people, and draw us all closer to Thyself.

It may be that some of Thine own children need this evening further establishment in the faith. Some need to be reassured of their hope in Christ. Let some word be spoken which shall minister to their greater confidence; for grace and peace are to be multiplied to us through the knowledge of God and of Christ Jesus our Lord. Help us therefore that we may know Thee better through the ministration of this service.

It may be some are without the pale, and are still in darkness; they have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but with the eye of faith have never seen Thee. Let it please Thee, O Lord, as Thou didst command the light to shine out of darkness, to shine in such hearts this evening, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

So let Thine evening benediction rest upon all similar assemblies, upon every minister and missionary who shall proclaim salvation through the blood of Christ; upon every faithful witness to the truth of the gospel who privately or publicly, shall anywhere and everywhere, bear testimony to Thy grace this day.

As we open Thy Word this evening, we pray for the anointing of the Holy Spirit for hearers and preacher. We confess our dependence upon Thee. We ask Thee, O Lord, to let the light shine, that we may see and understand the grace of God toward us.

Hear us in this our evening prayer, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

The minister of Christ, as often as he preaches, if he would faithfully fulfil the ministry he has received of the Lord, can have but one aim, "to testify the gospel of the grace of God." His ministry need not be monotonous, for he has an infinitely varied theme. We are called to proclaim the "unsearchable riches of Christ". I do not know how often I have preached from these

words—you will find them again in the eighth verse of the chapter, "For by grace are ye saved." But perhaps we may find a somewhat varied tune for the old theme.

There is nothing more difficult for people to understand than the principle of sovereign grace; for the reason that there is nothing more completely foreign to man's thought than the principle of grace. We live in a world where grace, pure grace, is unknown.

You are familiar with the parable of the prodigal. When he got to the end of his resources in the far country, "no man gave unto him". It was not the habit of that country to give anything away. They lived to buy and sell and get gain; and he had been so long away from home that he had forgotten the idiom of his father's speech. He remembered that the hired servants of his father had "bread enough, and to spare"; and he said, "I will go home and try to get work among the servants. I will try to earn my own living, to pay my own way." He failed utterly to conceive of his father as being still ready to give him anything—for he had long ago given him all that was his due.

Sometimes you read in the papers an account of the will of some man of wealth, in which a number of the children are remembered, and the name of one son is listed as having received his portion long before, and therefore is not included in the distribution of the fortune that remains. The younger son had received his portion, and had squandered it all, and had nothing left; but it never entered his mind that his father could have anything else to give. Therefore he said, "I will go back and see if I can earn something." The best robe, the ring on his hand, the shoes on his feet, the fatted calf, and the welcoming feast of merry-making, were all over and above everything he might legitimately expect.

Oh, the surprises of grace! What wonders our gracious God performs! It is difficult to define grace—I shall not try, but rather give you a few biblical illustrations—or at least partial illustrations—of the principle. When Abraham armed his trained servants, and went to the relief of Lot who had been captured by certain enemies, when he returned a victor from the battle and was blessed by Melchizedek, priest of the most high God, someone he had helped wanted him to have a share in the spoils; but Abraham said, "I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine—I have not done what I have done for pay." It was an act of grace, pure grace, on his part.

When the brethren of Joseph went down into Egypt, they took money with them to pay for all they intended to bring home. They gave their money—only to find that there was one there of whom it could have been

said, "Sacrifices and offerings he did not desire." Their money was returned to them in their sacks' mouths, and they had to say to each other, "We paid nothing for it. Whoever the governor is, he dealt with us in grace."

When David brought Mephibosheth from Lodebar to Jerusalem, a poor lame remnant of his father's house, saying, "For I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually", it was an act of grace. Mephibosheth did nothing: David did everything.

In one of our Lord's parables, He spoke of a certain creditor who had two debtors, one owing more than the other, but both alike in that they had "nothing to pay", and "he frankly forgave them both." Their debts in their entirety were forgiven. That was grace.

Mr. Whitcombe read to you this evening the story of the Samaritan. He found the man who had fallen among thieves—there had been no grace there. They had taken all he had, stripped him, and left him half dead. But the Samaritan came and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, lifted him tenderly and put him on his own beast, and "brought him to the inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." That was grace.

To say that salvation is of grace is merely to say that it is of God. Grace is another name for God, for He is the God of all grace. To say that we are saved by grace means to say that God does it all, and we do nothing. A little Scotch lad was asked what he had done toward his own conversion, and he answered, "I kicked all I could, and God did the rest." That is true. Salvation is all of grace.

Heresies abound, such as are entertained by men who deny the authority of the Bible; but the greatest of all heresies is that which teaches that a man can save himself. If a man could save himself, he would be equal to God. God the Creator made man in His own image and likeness. Sin destroyed that image; and if, out of the wreck, it were within human power to restore the man to his original glory, man would be able to challenge God. But he cannot. In Corinthians the first and second creation are linked together, and we are told that the "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The light that shines in the heart is just as much a work of divine creation as the light which shone in the beginning.

This then is the text, "By grace ye are saved." Will you pray that the Spirit of God may make that great principle, which is the heart of the whole gospel—indeed, more than the heart; it is the alpha and omega, it is the gospel in its entirety—effectual this evening? God in infinite compassion has stooped to a bankrupt world, and devised means that His banished be not expelled from Him. That is the gospel: "By grace ye are saved."

I.

By grace we are saved **MEDIATELY**. I mean, that as God is the source of our salvation, so all instrumentalities, all media through which His grace flows, are themselves the product of His grace.

"There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Only one! The Incarnation was an act of grace. Mary was the passive instrument of it, but Jesus was conceived of the Holy Ghost: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." His stoop to the level of this earth, His robing His Deity in our humanity, were themselves an act of grace. If you follow Him through all His earthly career, you will observe His sovereign independence, how He did everything Himself. He "manifested forth his glory." He really needed no human helper, though He condescended to use human instrumentalities; but every act of His was an act of grace.

In the beginning of His ministry, in His first public utterance the people were led to wonder "at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth". Every word He ever uttered was a word of grace. He came to the cross as an act of grace, having predicted his being "lifted up", "signifying what death he should die". Nothing could deter Him; nothing could persuade Him to turn aside from His settled purpose. He went to the cross. In the garden, He "went a little farther." To Peter, James, and John, He seemed to say, "This is my task. I must tread the winepress alone, and of the people there can be none with me." He died alone. "All his disciples"—not Peter only—"forsook him, and fled."

The women came to the sepulchre saying, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the sepulchre?" But He would accept no human assistance in His resurrection. When they came, the stone was "rolled away already". It was not possible that He should be holden of death. So He returned to the Father, and, having by one sacrifice, made atonement for our sin, He appears in the presence of God—oh, hear it, will you, "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but BY HIS OWN BLOOD he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. . . . For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." It was He, He only, and unaided, Who "obtained eternal redemption for us."

The Spirit of God continues His work, and He too is "the Spirit of grace". His coming was an act of grace: "Having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." Nobody paid for it. You remember the significant words uttered by Peter to Simon, when he offered money, saying, "Give me also this power that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost"? Peter filled with the Holy Ghost, said, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money." Our God is not a merchant who buys and sells and gets gain. He is a sovereign Prince, Who gives everything away.

I heard my father tell a story—I do not know whether it was a home-made parable, or a story with what the critics would call some "historic content". But he described a little girl pausing before a beautiful garden. There was an iron fence in front of it, and behind the flowers were blooming in great profusion; and among the flowers, a young lady as attractive as the blooms—was picking some of them, and training others. The little girl pushed her face against the iron fence and

called to the young lady, saying, "Please, could I buy some of your flowers?" The young lady came to the fence and said, "What is it you want, dear?" "My mother is very sick at home, and she has nothing beautiful to look at. I have a penny here, and I thought I should like to take her some of your flowers." "Come inside", said the young lady, throwing open the gate. She took the little girl in where the flowers were blooming in abundance and said, "Now, my father never sells his flowers; but he loves to give them away. We will gather all you can carry, so that you may take them home to your sick mother." Our gracious God sells nothing. Why should He? The wealth of all worlds is His, and He delights to give.

I say, mediately, through all the instrumentalities which He is pleased to employ, His sovereign grace operates. Even the very faith upon which He seems to condition our salvation is itself a product of His grace. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." It is as though a man said, "I helped myself." How? "With my hands." Who made your hands? "I saw something." You did? Who gave you your sight? "I heard it?" Did you? Who gave you your hearing? It is all of grace. God does everything. "I was converted under such a man's ministry." I do not know anything about the instrumentality—it does not matter very much, because back of it all, is a sovereign God Who is, through these means, effecting His purposes.

II.

Let me go farther. I said, "By grace we are saved" mediately—and "by grace ye are saved" IMMEDIATELY. Without mediators, directly; for there is a sense in which, in spite of all instrumentalities, no soul is ever saved without the immediate touch of God Himself. No one else can do it. God does it.

If you look at the context, you will find that *the natural man is described as being "dead in trespasses and sins"*. The Holy Ghost never mixes His metaphors, nor uses a simile without a purpose; and when He said "dead", He meant it: "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." We are made alive by the touch of God, quickened into newness of life. Salvation begins with God in all its provisions; and immediately, when it begins in you, it is God Who does it. He touches a man into newness of life.

Martha and Mary wept, but Lazarus did not hear them. The professional mourners wept and wailed—but Lazarus did not hear them. But there was One Who came Who was different, and before He spoke to Lazarus, He spoke to His Father, and said, "Father, I thank thee that thou has heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth." That was the immediate contact of God with one who was dead.

It is always so. The soul that is dead in trespasses and sins is quickened into life by the power of the Spirit of God. Oh the folly of it! You think you are going to get people to heaven by teaching them to play badminton! You think you can save someone by a tennis court! These are legitimate games; but is a church a play-room? You think you can get God's work done by mere organi-

zation? A New Testament church is not an organization: it is an organism, throbbing with life, God dwelling in the midst of it, so that He speaks through the preacher and teacher—but it is God Who does it. It is His direct work that accomplishes the miracle.

Salvation involves *deliverance from an alien power*. "Ye walked", says our context, "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." How are we to get rid of the devil? Can you tell me? There are a great many people who do not want to get rid of him. I may have told you of a little girl who belongs to our Sunday School. One day she had done something that her mother had told her she must not do. She was very naughty, as little girls can be, as well as little boys! And mother said, "You will have to ask Jesus to take that little devil out of you." "Oh, but mamma, I like that little devil!" That is too true: there are many people who like, not only a little devil, but the big one too.

How are we to be delivered from "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience"? "The strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace" unless and until a Stronger than he shall come upon him. This our Lord does, like Abraham delivering Lot from the enemy. At Ephesus "certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. . . . And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded."

How are you going to cast the devil out of men? You cannot. There is nothing that men need more than that—and grace does it. The Spirit of God overcomes "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience". "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The context says that salvation involves *a change of nature*. "Ye were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Many use that word, nature, very carelessly. They say nature when they mean only outward form or character. It is one of the strongest words. The "nature" of a thing is of its very essence; it is what the thing is in its warp and woof—not in its outward appearance or form. Essentially, we are children of wrath.

You cannot make basswood or pine, or any other kind of wood, into oak. You can make it the same in form, you may grain it and give it something of the appearance of oak, but you cannot give it the nature of oak. You can imitate things, but you cannot change the nature of things. You cannot make an onion into a strawberry—I wish we could! The ancient alchemists devoted themselves to an endeavour to transmute baser metals into gold, but failed; and with all our advancement, gold is still a natural product that comes from the hand of God, which no man can make. We cannot lift iron and lead and other metals up to the nature of gold. We cannot change the nature of anything. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" I have heard of an Ethiopian being enamelled—and I suppose you might possibly, if you could control the beast, disguise the leopard; but it would be of the same nature. There is

only One Who can change the nature of things, and that is God Himself; for He gives to all things their nature.

If salvation involves the transmutation of these corrupt natures in which the carnal mind is enmity against God, into a mind that will bear some affinity for God, only God can do it. That process of transmutation, that change from evil to good, from black to white, from sin to holiness, is His grand prerogative; and none can in His honour share. Sinful human nature can be made partaker of the divine nature only by the direct act of God; therefore, only by an act of grace.

III.

I said mediately and immediately we are saved by grace. Just to fasten it in your mind I shall say once more that we are saved by grace INTERMEDIATELY. I mean by that, that salvation is more than the forgiveness of sin. I am saved now, but I am not in heaven; and what is going to happen between to-night and the time I ought to arrive in heaven? Who will look after me? There is One Who is full of grace and truth. He heals our wounds; He carries us to a place of safety; He pays our way and says, "I will be responsible for that man's future." It is of grace all the way along.

I remember crossing the Continent some years ago, when I got into conversation with a man from Australia, an Australian Senator. We talked about our experiences of travel, and he took a ticket from his pocket a long ticket folded up into a small volume. He said he bought it in Australia. He had been around the world, and was on his way home. He explained to me saying, "Before I left home, I paid for this ticket, and it provided me with all my hotel expense, every meal I have eaten, all my transportation—everything. I could almost have come without a cent in my pocket. I have been around the world, and under one company; they have looked after me splendidly."

I like to think of salvation as a through ticket to heaven—providing more than transportation, for there are many things to be attended to on the way. We shall need some new clothes now and then. A great many people live in religious rags. They do not "adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things." We ought to travel like princes. You ladies were very much interested in the Queen's attire when she was here. The papers were full of what she wore, told of how many *ensembles* she brought with her. There were thousands of women in this country who thought if they did not say, "I should like to have a wardrobe like that—a new or different dress for every occasion, so that I might look my best every time I appeared."

We are princes and princesses of the blood, and the wardrobe that God has provided for His children does not consist of rags, but beautiful garments. The robe of righteousness? Yes; and we are to appear even as a bride adorned for her husband. Someone said the Queen looked like a bride. Why should she not? Why should not you? Some of us need a great deal of ornamentation! The grace of God abounding toward us, we may appear with all the ornaments of grace: "The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

In my experience as a minister I have known hundreds of people in various positions, who were naturally not particularly attractive, and yet about whom there was something indefinably charming; there was something about the man or woman that spoke of converse with

another world. You have said, "No one would, by human standards, call her beautiful; but she is." Did you ever notice of a dark night when the lights were out on the street, a house, the shape of which you could not see for the darkness; but the blinds were up and the light streamed out into the night? You looked and saw within, that it was a richly-furnished house, and you said to yourself, "What a treat it would be to live there." There are some people who are a bit roughcast without, but the Prince of glory dwells within, and they let their light shine before men, that others, seeing their beautiful works, glorify the Father which is in heaven.

All the way it is of God. Sleeping accommodation? One of our saints said to me this morning, "Pastor, I am so sorry I went to sleep." I said, "Do not worry; it may have done you more good than the sermon!" We need sleep. "He giveth his beloved in sleep" He will give you rest by the way. He will carry you to heaven. You will have good meals all the way, with fine companionship. Intermediately, between here and heaven, it will be grace, grace, grace, all the way.

I said to you this morning, the first time Moses smote the rock, he did so by divine command. Thirty-eight years later he smote the rock twice in disobedience to the divine command. He was told only to speak to the rock. You do not need to smite the Rock again. Once was He smitten, and you may—

"Speak to Him now, for He hears, and spirit with spirit may meet;
Closer is He than breathing, nearer than hands or feet."

IV.

We shall be saved by grace ULTIMATELY. He saves His people eternally. It will be by grace we are saved when we find ourselves in heaven at last; and we shall understand better when we get there what grace means than now. You remember the principle of the jubilee? Land had a certain value at the beginning of the fifty years, but the nearer they got to the jubilee year, the less value the land had. The lease had more nearly run out. The nearer we get to heaven, the less value we shall attach to works of righteousness which we think we have done. The mature saint knows even better than the babe in Christ what it is to be saved by grace. Once upon a time he did think that he might be able to do something, but now at the end of the day he sees that he is infinitely indebted to the grace of God. He has done nothing, and God has done everything.

The grace of God argues eternal salvation. *God has the same reason for completing your salvation in heaven as He had for beginning it; and that reason is in Himself.* It was not in you in the beginning: it is not in you now. And as there was no reason in Him for refusing to begin to save you, there is no reason in Him to refuse to perfect your salvation; therefore, since it is all of grace, it must be eternal.

Oh, I wish we could all see that salvation is of grace, and of grace alone! This is grace: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This is grace: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." This is grace: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

Summing it up, I will tell you a story and send you home: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in pastures of tender grass: he leadeth me beside the waters of quietness. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil,"—observe that here he changes the person—"for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." That is grace.

"Grace, all the work shall crown
To everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone
And well deserves the praise."

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

Progress in the Ottawa Valley

Six years ago it was my privilege to visit our churches in the Ottawa Valley in company with the Seminary Quartet of that time. In going over the same ground again last week, I was reminded in a very vivid way of how much has been accomplished during the six years since my first visit. All the churches in this district from Montreal to Ottawa are now led by pastors who were trained in the Toronto Baptist Seminary. Moving about among our former students at work in this great field, I felt that the Seminary had been transferred bodily to the Ottawa Valley. And of every one of them we have reason to feel proud.

I was reminded at Lachute that when I was there before neither John Boyd nor his sister Miss Leila Boyd had entered the Seminary. In the intervening time they have received their training and have spent several years of most fruitful service, the one in establishing a thriving work in Sudbury, the other in teaching in a French-Canadian Protestant school in northern Quebec. The same applies to the present pastor of Lachute, Mr. Walter Tompkins, and to several of the other pastors in the district. Mr. Wilfred Cutler has been but recently called to the Gore and St. Amedee field, while Mr. Harold Charlton is summer-pastor on the Avoca field. It was a special privilege to enjoy the cordial hospitality of Rev. Charles Hardie of the Dalesville-Brownsburg field, and to have the privilege of meeting his people again. There is a good spiritual atmosphere on this field, and I was not surprised to learn of the blessing that is visiting it. In the church at Verdun, a suburb of the great city of Montreal, I enjoyed an especially good time.

One of the most encouraging things I saw on this trip was the splendid efforts being planned and carried out by Mr. J. A. Paterson, a deacon of the Verdun Church, and his son Mr. John Paterson, a graduate of the Seminary. For some years the burden of a great new suburb of Montreal has been laid upon Mr. Paterson's heart, and after much prayer and planning he has launched a tent campaign in this neighbourhood. Rev. J. Fullard had good times in the tent for two weeks, and he was followed by Rev. J. Scott of the Forward Baptist Church, Toronto. It was my privilege to hear Mr. Scott preaching the glorious gospel in a glorious way, and I thanked God for him and for those who had caught the vision of this Canadian metropolis. May the blessing of the Lord rest upon their untiring efforts. Again for my encouragement, I noted that all the preachers in connection with this campaign are Seminary men. It is in truth a Seminary missionary project in Montreal. Of course there was no design that it should be so; the Seminary men preach the Word, they are always ready to go to hard places, and hence they receive the invitation.

Quebec side of the Ottawa Valley is rapidly becoming predominantly French and Roman Catholic, and the situation presents a strong challenge to our churches. I was very happy to see that they are becoming increasingly aware of this challenge. Friends in farming communities told me that whenever a farm changes hands it invariably comes

into the possession of French Canadians. In districts that in the earlier half of the last century were settled by Irish and Scotch Protestants, many churches have been closed up and Roman Catholic churches and Roman Catholic schools have taken their places. The same is true in the towns and villages. One man told me that when he entered the employ of one of the many factories situated in the towns along the river, there were only two French-Canadian workmen employed in his factory; at the present time three-quarters of the four or five hundred workers are of that nationality, and the town that was once almost entirely English-speaking and Protestant, is now in process of becoming predominantly French and Roman Catholic. Yet these people, fanatical as they may be in their religious and racial prejudices, are not outside the scope and power of the gospel of grace. In three of the churches I met converted French-Canadians who enjoyed cordial Christian fellowship with their English-speaking brethren. Pastor Hardie introduced to me one young French-Canadian and his wife who had been converted under his ministry three years ago. This young man taught himself to read the English Bible after his conversion, by the expedient of learning John 3:16 by heart and then using it as a key to the reading of the rest of the New Testament. From this slow and painful beginning he has read carefully and with evident profit almost all the New Testament in English. It was my great privilege to read several verses to him from my French Testament and finally to present it to him so that he might learn the Bible in his native tongue. Pastor Carson of Verdun polished his French in the Seminary French classes and is able to preach in that language in the second largest French city in the world, Montreal.

I went down to the Ottawa Valley to give a word of encouragement to the pastors and churches there, but I found that I was the one who was encouraged and blessed. I give thanks to God for each one of these faithful servants of His, labouring in this great and challenging field. There is great need for our Union fellowship to strengthen their hands and to bear them up before the throne of grace.

—W.S.W.

Association Meeting at Orillia

The meeting of the Cannington and Sunderland Association of Regular Baptist Churches was held in Bethel Baptist Church, Orillia, on the afternoon and evening of June 14th. There were large representations from twelve churches, and most encouraging and gratifying reports were received from the delegates respecting the general church work for the year.

Pastor John Greening, of Scotch Line Baptist Church and recent graduate of Toronto Baptist Seminary, was retiring moderator, and the success of the convention was largely due to his fine leadership and gracious and winning personality. Mr. C. H. Harvey of Washago, the unique and inimitable Secretary-Treasurer, was called upon to introduce the guest speaker for the day, Dr. P. W. Philpott, distinguished gospel preacher, one-time pastor of Moody Memorial Church. We have no words adequately to describe Dr. Philpott's convincing, inspiring and edifying messages. To borrow a Biblical term, he is a "man of God, full of faith and the Holy Ghost".

The attendance was the largest on record and we were unable to accommodate latecomers. The entertaining committee served approximately two hundred and seventy-five people. A most generous offering was received, and by motion of the Association was devoted to the building-fund of the Norland Baptist Church, of which Mr. Frank Vaughan is the indefatigable pastor. The officers for the ensuing year are: Moderator, Rev. W. N. Charlton, Lindsay; Vice-Moderator, Pastor E. A. McAsh, Maple Hill; Secretary-Treasurer, C. H. Harvey, Washago.

A TOKEN OF APPRECIATION

This week I had a personal letter from a friend whose circumstances I know to be very moderate. She enclosed the money to pay for a book which I had ordered for her, which she had greatly wanted. But she sent an extra dollar of some birthday money recently received, and in her note enclosed a circular, saying: "The enclosed is one

reason I think the work of the Seminary very much worthwhile. I wish my dollar were five or fifty." The circular was written by one who had visited the work of one of the first graduates of this school, Miss Sydney Bonyun, in and about Jaffa, Palestine.—W.G.B.

"I had the very thrilling opportunity of seeing Miss Bonyun's work among the women of the orange groves in Jaffa, poor beyond thought, in the estimation of this world, but within their reach and in the hearts of some of them, the riches untold of co-heirship with Jesus Christ. We entered a little home of one room, built of boards of all shapes and sizes, nailed sparsely to upright beams. The floor was covered with a ragged straw matting, and the presence of flies in humming hundreds revealed its secondary use as a 'table cloth' for floor-served meals. We sat on a much used crimson quilt near the pile of bedding upon which a mangy cat was napping. Opposite us was a little rocking cradle in which the youngest member of the household was just beginning his years of hardship. Neighbours came in; all gathered round squatting in various attitudes; the mother of the house removed her shoe and commenced to rock the cradle, automatically, with her toes; several of the visitors began to feed their babies; and the meeting commenced. They sang Arabic hymns with vigour, and listened intently while Miss Bonyun told them a Bible story. Just a few more of the countless millions who drift helplessly on the current of life—but having an opportunity once again to hear of One Who is able to turn their sorrow into singing—and what a Song! Pray for these women—there are hundreds of homes like the one described—many not so comfortable."

Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 3 Second Quarter Lesson 30 July 23rd, 1939

MOSES ON MT. SINAI

Lesson Text: Exodus 24.

Golden Text: "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient"—Exod. 24:7.

For Reading: Exodus 23.

During the time that the children of Israel were encamped at the foot of Mt. Sinai, God revealed Himself to them, and had dealings with them through Moses. The Lord's servant was called up to the mountain a number of times to hear the Word of the Lord, and he would go down again to repeat to the people what God had told him (Exod. 19:3, 9, 14-25; 20:1; 32:1, 15, 30; 34:2; 35:1). On this occasion Moses remained on the mount forty days and forty nights while God gave him instructions concerning the tabernacle.

One lesson describes the worship of the people before the construction of the tabernacle. It depicts the essentials of worship, and will give teachers an excellent opportunity to put before the boys and girls the necessity of reverence for the Lord, His house and His day.

I. The Worship of the People Who Were Afar Off—verses 1-8.

Worship is the adoration of One Who is absolutely holy. The people must worship Him from afar. All who come to Him need to realize their own unfitness to appear in His holy presence, and come humbly, reverently, thoughtfully. Godly fear is becoming (Deut. 10:12; Psa. 33:8; 115:11; Luke 1:50; Heb. 12:28).

Worship was possible for Israel because of the mediation of Moses who had the privilege of direct access to God. Only through our Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ, and not by means of saints, signs or symbols, may we approach God (I Tim. 2:5). The Holy Spirit is God's Representative with us, and Christ is our Representative before God.

True worship is performed at the command of God. The Israelites were forbidden to worship, serve or reverence the gods of their neighbours. They must not even give pub-

licity to the false gods by mentioning their names (Exod. 23:13, 24).

Acceptable worship is always voluntary, and springs from the gratitude of an obedient heart (Exod. 19:8; Deut. 5:27). The people accepted God's covenant with alacrity, and promised full obedience. God does not delight in perfunctory service (1 Sam. 15:22; Luke 6:46).

The Word of the living God is the foundation of our worship (Neh. 8:1-13). Moses made a written record of the will of the Lord, and God handed to him His commandments and ordinances, written on tables of stone with the finger of God (Exod. 31:18). We, too, have the Word of God, the record of God's will written by men inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21).

The people might worship God because He had ratified by blood the covenant which He had made with them. Burnt-offerings and peace offerings accompanied the act of worship. The twelve pillars of the altar, one pillar for each tribe, signified that the whole people had part in the sacrifices offered. We may come to God in worship because of the death of Christ on our behalf, because of the blood which ratified the New Covenant, our ground of approach (Luke 22:20; Heb. 9:6-9; 10:19-22).

II. The Worship of Moses who was Near—verses 9-18.

The sons of Aaron mentioned in this chapter were later to succeed him in the priest's office, but Nadab and Abihu proved unworthy to minister in the holy things of God (Lev. 10:1, 2; Num. 3:4; 26:60, 61; Joshua 17:4).

To worship God truly is to see Him with the eye of faith. Moses, the sons of Aaron and the seventy elders saw God in representation and symbol, but not in person (Deut. 4:12, 15-20). The sapphire is one of the most precious and most beautiful of jewels. It is sparkling blue in colour. The sapphire pavement symbolized the beauty and the faithfulness of God, and the crystal clear firmament His holiness (Ezek. 1:22, 26, 27; Rev. 4:3; 21:11). We are to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness (Psa. 29:2).

Since God is a God of grace, worshippers may have communion with Him. God would have the leaders of Israel know that He was not remote or disinterested, but that He yearned to have fellowship with them. They saw God, and did eat and drink (1 Cor. 10:16; 11:23-26).

Moses represents every true and faithful messenger of the Lord. He remained on the mountain in abiding fellowship alone with God, far above the people to whom he was to minister (Exod. 31:18; Psa. 91:1; Gal. 1:15, 16). The glory of God rested upon the mountain in the form of a cloud (Exod. 19:9, 16), and Moses went into the very midst of the cloud. The one who would do service for the Lord must have His Spirit resting upon him, anointing him, infilling him, directing and strengthening him (Matt. 3:16; Luke 4:14; Acts 2:4; 8:29; Eph. 5:18; Heb. 9:14).

Moses was obliged to wait patiently till the Lord should reveal Himself to him more completely (Hab. 2:3). The servant of the Lord must often wait patiently for the Lord to manifest His presence and power. He must have a personal knowledge of the glory and the holiness of God before he is ready to teach others.

Our God is like a devouring fire in the sense that His holy nature destroys all evil. He also kindles the fires of devotion in the hearts of all those who trust in Him.

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