

The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF EVANGELICAL PRINCIPLES
AND IN DEFENCE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.
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Editor: T. T. SHIELDS

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

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MORE ABOUT "THE NEXT TOWNS"

The Home Mission news in last week's GOSPEL WITNESS brought great blessing to Jarvis Street Church. It was manifest first of all in the Saturday evening prayer meeting, when the people prayed specially and most earnestly for our Home Mission work, and gave thanks for news of progress. It was much on the writer's mind during Saturday night; and Sunday morning, after a few introductory words on the text, "As we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God", the story of our Home Mission work was told, with particular emphasis upon Sudbury (or Black Lake,) and Kapuskasing. We then proposed that what is sometimes called a "retiring" offering—which really means the taking of an offering after the regular offering has been received—should be taken, to be divided equally between Black Lake and Kapuskasing.

We told the people we assumed they had not brought much money with them, and that perhaps they would like to promise an amount to be paid within a week or ten days, as might be convenient. No pressure was exercised, but people who desired to promise something were asked to raise their hands, and a card was given them upon which they might write their name and the amount they wished to give. This occupied a very few minutes. Then the plates were passed to receive what cash might be available, and the cards. The congregation was singing the closing hymn at five minutes past twelve.

When the offering was counted, we learned it amounted to \$400.00. We therefore sent a telegram to Mr. Boyd and Mr. Brackstone, telling them we would forward them each a cheque for \$200.00 within a few days.

Mr. J. E. Jennings, who is the Treasurer of the Union, expressed the view that the evening congregation should be given the same opportunity. At the evening service, in a very few words, the action of the morning was reported, and a similar course followed, just before the sermon. Naturally, the response would be chiefly from members of Jarvis Street Church, although there were some visiting friends who joined in the contribution. But in the evening there were fewer people to draw upon, for the reason that most of them had given in the morning. The response in the evening, while not quite reaching \$200.00, we felt, justified us in sending a second telegram to Mr. Boyd and Mr. Brackstone, promis-

ing them an additional \$100.00 each. Our confidence proved to be justified by the receipt of contributions since Sunday which were not included in the pledges made.

We have since received a letter from Mr. Brackstone, which we reproduce herewith:

Box 183, Kapuskasing, Ontario,
July 24, 1939.

Dr. T. T. Shields,
130 Gerrard St., Toronto, Ontario.

My dear Dr. Shields:

When your first telegram came to the parsonage we all knelt before the Lord and gave thanks. When I read the contents of the telegram to the evening congregation the saints were overwhelmed with joy and melted to tears. It was no use trying to preach as God's people were burning with desire for the opportunity to proclaim their praise to God for the liberality of Jarvis St. and its pastor. So the sermon was put aside as the contents of your telegram was the greatest sermon ever preached here and the whole service was devoted to fervent thanksgiving and rejoicing. The thrilling message of your wire caused even the babes in Christ to testify publicly to the goodness of God.

Believe me, Dr. Shields, when I say that I never before heard our people pray, witness and sing so heartily and worshipfully. Your message loosened their tongues, inspired them to make further sacrifices, provoked them to attempt greater things for God—in all, your word afforded us a revival blessing. Last night in Jarvis St., at Black Lake, in Kapuskasing and in Heaven above, was a great concert of joy I am sure.

Then when your second message arrived announcing that in all probability three hundred dollars each would be received by Black Lake and Kapuskasing our joy knew no bounds. Although the people had gone home, word was sent around telling of your further liberality. We sang the Doxology in the church after reading your first message; but the news of your second wire caused the people to rejoice and sing the Doxology in their homes!

Dr. Shields, the gift from Jarvis St. has done a great deal for us not only financially but in many other ways. It has caused our people even more to love you and your people. In a greater sense it has made us Union conscious. It brought to us as never before the joy and privilege of being affiliated with you and the Union. It has brought the day nearer when we shall be happy to instruct the Board to administer our grant elsewhere.

Please convey to your great host the abounding thankfulness of the fellow-saints in Kapuskasing. At this point the people here join me in appreciation of your kindness bestowed upon us by your gracious words in the last issue of THE

GOSPEL WITNESS. *How happy would we be to have you visit the North in the near future!*

Thankfully yours,
(Signed) ROBT. E. J. BRACKSTONE.

P.S. Enclosed is a gift from Kapuskasing for Bro. Boyd's Building.—R. B.

The above letter, we are sure, will be read with deep appreciation by all who participated in the offering of Sunday.

It must be remembered that this is mid-July, and that large numbers of Jarvis Street people are already away. We make our appeal to every Jarvis Street member who did not share in the offering of Sunday, whether at home or abroad. If you are able to do so, we wish you would send us a contribution to be divided equally between these two causes, at your earliest convenience. Let it be remembered that \$300.00 off \$1,200.00 at Kapuskasing, would still leave them with \$900.00 to raise; and \$300.00 off the \$1,000.00 necessary to be raised at Sudbury, leaves them with \$700.00. In the case of Kapuskasing, we are not sure that they have yet been able to install their heating plant. And in a climate where the mercury is consistently below zero practically all winter, dropping, we believe, to twenty or thirty degrees or even lower, they will need some way of heating their building.

We are under the impression the cost of this was not included in their indebtedness of \$1,200.00. One thing is certain: there is no danger that any offering will be too large. We therefore appeal to Jarvis Street people to do their best. It would be fine if Jarvis Street alone could increase the \$600.00 to \$1,000.00.

We have wanted to set the other churches of the Union an example. It is known to the world the expense to which we have been put to re-erect our building, as well as the enormous extra expense to which we were subject during the time we were out of our building. Notwithstanding, we have felt that our mission interests could not be allowed to suffer, and we have endeavoured to maintain our contributions for the missionary objects to which we feel a special obligation. We now venture to appeal to every Pastor in the Union, and through the Pastor, to every church in the Union. Brother Brackstone's letter enclosed a contribution of \$10.00 for Black Lake! That surely is the right spirit.

If we never give until we have satisfied all our own domestic requirements as churches and Pastors, we shall never give at all. We must observe the scriptural admonition: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." Those who labour in Home Mission fields are spiritually among the giants, but their congregations are small. It makes it exceedingly difficult for new causes to provide houses in which to worship. How we wish we had a million or so to set aside for church extension, to be used exclusively in erecting new buildings. We therefore suggest to all our Pastors, that the reaction upon their own church life following a generous contribution to others' need, will be abundant compensation for any sacrifice that may be involved.

Let no church think it is too small, or that it has obligations at home that are too pressing. We must learn how to cooperate one with another freely and voluntarily, and thus afford justification for our spiritually independent position as churches and Pastors. We believe, if every church in the Union would do its best, there are

few churches that could not raise \$25.00—many could raise \$50.00—and these two causes could be put well on their feet. We are sure such contributions would be a magnificent investment in our Home Mission work, and would pay large dividends in the future.

We venture also to address a word to friends who may not be in membership in any church of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec, but who believe in the things for which the Union stands. You cannot but be moved by last week's report of our Home Mission work—and who can read Mr. Brackstone's letter without emotion? or without a sense of profound gratitude to God for being permitted to have a part in such a work? Brother Brackstone tells us it was a real revival meeting they had Sunday evening. We have no doubt that, could we give ourselves with greater devotion to this Home Mission enterprise, we should have revival.

Then, too, we are sure that contributions to our French work would produce a like result in the congregations of our fellow-Baptists in France, Switzerland, and Belgium:

Before last Sunday, Mr. Whitcombe had received a letter from a French-Canadian woman in Kapuskasing, who, with her husband, had been soundly converted through Brother Brackstone's ministry there. We have since read the letter, and since the writer gave permission to make any use of it we like, we publish the letter herewith.

Kapuskasing, Ontario
July 14, 1939.

Rev. W. S. Whitcomb,
Toronto, Ontario.

Dear Mr. Whitcomb:—

This is to offer sincere thanks to you and the many others who helped us in our church building fund. Our pastor and every other person whom I know feel the same gratitude that I do.

When the pastor spoke of the new project my husband and I were rather apprehensive. In the church of Rome from which we were converted a new church meant countless bazaars, raffles, and every other gamble ever invented, also a debt that never seems to decrease. It was a joyful surprise for us to see how real Christians aid one another in times of need especially when it is for the propagation of the glorious Gospel.

It took a lot of work to prepare our building for the opening service, as money had to go as far as possible, practically all the work was voluntary. This meant long hard days as the men worked on the church building after their regular day's work in the local mill. Not the least among these workers was our pastor Mr. Brackstone. This servant of the Lord's encouraged every one by his steady faith that the Lord would see us through and also by his own labour. We love our pastor because we feel that he is one of us. Not one above us, and also because he thought it not below his dignity to work side by side with the men. He always could be depended on to work anywhere, from digging in the cellar to working on the roof, which he did.

For my husband and myself this revealed to us the true meaning of a pastor. Not the conceited lazy way of the Roman priest. Mathew 23:4 describes the priest of Rome to perfection. How we thank the almighty for our deliverance from the Roman bondage. It is our earnest prayer that the Lord will see fit to use us in His service. Especially among those of our own nationality, as French evangelists are so few. But we have very little opportunity among the French Catholics as the priests have given them warning that they are not to associate with us in any way and none of them do. Even our dearest friends have locked their

(Continued on page 6)

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"LORD, IT IS GOOD FOR US TO BE HERE"—?

A Sermon by Rev. Wm. Thomas, Pastor of Cooke's Presbyterian Church, Toronto
Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Thursday Evening, July 20th, 1939

(Stenographically Reported)

"Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here."
—Matthew 17:4.

I hope I shall not occasion any disappointment by endeavouring to take the place of your Pastor.

I feel a little like the curate who was on one occasion expecting a brother-curate to take the service for him, but the Bishop of the Diocese interfered. Fortunately you Baptists, as we Presbyterians, have nothing of that to contend with. I do not know how I could obey a Bishop. He said to the curate, "I am sending away the man who was to have been with you, and am coming myself instead." That was a distinctive honour, to have the Bishop! The curate did not know how to introduce the Bishop, and this is what he said, "We had hoped to have with us this evening my colleague, the curate of such a place; but we have the Bishop of the Diocese with us. A very much worse man would have done if we could have got one, but the Bishop is here!"

I want to speak to you to-night of the Transfiguration scene—rather from one little verse in it. Peter, who was characteristically impulsive, and invariably said what first came into his mind, made a proposal which, on the surface, would seem to be very desirable. In fact, it would almost seem as though it were a proposal which everyone of us would be happy to make our own under similar circumstances: "Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." Read the whole chapter when you get home, as I shall not have time now.

There was a sense in which these words were perfectly legitimate. I have no doubt that many of us, in similar circumstances, have given expression to the same sentiments. For instance, here this July evening, to find a company of God's people gathered together for fellowship and prayer, might prompt every heart—I trust it does—to say, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." When Peter gave expression to these words, the selfishness that seems perhaps to manifest itself in these men is pardonable, for a very great experience—perhaps the greatest these disciples had ever had, took place that day.

He had withdrawn from the crowd, in the company of the favoured three—for remember there were three favoured disciples. Again and again He invited Peter, James, and John, into some very intimate and happy fellowships. On this occasion they were to pass through an experience which would never be equalled again during their earthly career. Withdrawing from the busy round of the common task as He was wont to do, our Lord ascended the mountainside; and there took place that great unveiling for a very brief time of the Deity hidden so long behind His humanity. For a brief moment or two, these disciples were permitted to see the marvel of the Lord Jesus Christ in all His glory; for we are told that His very outward appearance was changed, tremendously changed: "Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high

mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."

Not only so, but there were visitors from the other world: "And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him." There in that privileged and august company, they revelled in a glory that had never before been seen by mortal eyes—a confirmation, a divine attestation of the Lord's claim that He was none other than God manifest in the flesh. Peter, as he looked on that tremendous scene, as he saw Moses and Elias, and as he saw Jesus transfigured before them, momentarily forgot himself—or perhaps I should say, thought too much of himself; and gave expression to this word that you and I have so often used, and so frequently had in our minds: "Lord, it is good for us to be here."

It was good for him to be there. No one could doubt the validity of that statement. It was good to be in the company of Jesus Christ at any time; good to be in the company of his fellow-disciples; good to have the companionship, if only for a moment or two, of visitors from the other world, Moses and Elias, the one representative of law, and the other of prophesy—both the law and prophesy that were being fulfilled in the person of the One there before their eyes being transfigured.

I do not doubt for a moment that Peter meant well when he said, "It is good for us to be here." It was an expression of appreciation on the part of Peter of the delights of spiritual fellowship and spiritual society. I am not anxious to-night to take that statement just as we have it here, rather to approach it from a different angle. I want to shock you if I can, by pointing out that in all Peter's life, he never made a statement that was more unfortunate, never gave expression to a thought that was more foreign to the genius of Christianity, or to the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Himself.

Perhaps it may astonish you to think that a harmless—or seemingly harmless—statement like this should prove to be unfortunate; and yet I maintain that, notwithstanding the looseness of his speech, the impulsiveness of his nature, the pardonable faults that were so glaringly evident in his life, this, to my mind, is one of the most outstanding of the foolish and shortsighted utterances of this prince of apostles.

Let me point out to you what I mean. When Peter gave expression to those imperishable and memorable words, "Lord, it is good for us to be here", he was expressing a philosophy of life which, if we had had that philosophy of life adopted by the great pioneers and the great leaders of life and thought, would have impoverished the whole world, and left us tremendously the poorer. Do not forget that when Peter gave expression to this suggestion, he himself was enjoying the privilege of being in close contact with the Master, His chosen disciples, of the two men who had come back to speak with

Christ "of the decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem" for sinful men; and was quite unmindful of the fact that while expressing that desire, while luxuriating in an experience unshared by the many, the suggestion of making that luxuriance permanent—that that desire was foreign to and in conflict with the great missionary spirit of Christianity.

You were saved, not only that you might enjoy your own salvation: you were brought into a position of favour in the sight of God by the blood of the everlasting covenant, by the Spirit of His grace, not merely that you should enjoy the privilege of being a member of the household of faith, but that you, in turn, might be the medium through which the blessing of the gospel would be brought to others. If your meeting together in this place to-night does not inspire you to a greater zeal for the "other sheep" that are not yet within the fold, your coming here will be a condemnation rather than a blessing. If every Christian believer had become a Christian missionary, zealous in the power of the Holy Spirit for the propagation of the gospel, I question very much if any part of the world to-day would be unevangelized. But we have been satisfied to sit down amid the comfort and culture and joy of Christian fellowship, and to enjoy to the full, ourselves, the blessings of the gospel, and we have sometimes in the very rapture of the love of Christ, been unmindful of our indebtedness to our fellow-man.

That is exactly what took place on that mount, for when Peter was expressing this philosophy of life, giving expression to this longing of his heart and life, not very far away from where he stood, telling the Lord it was "good" to be there, there was a distracted father tremendously concerned for his boy who was mentally afflicted. Yet Peter was sublimely indifferent—perhaps unconsciously so—of the great need of that father's life. The other disciples stood helplessly by, unable to minister to the need of a man whose heart was breaking to the point of despair over the condition of his son.

I well remember going to visit a home in the city of Belfast when in mission work in that city for a little while. Seated beside a man who was ill, presently I heard a noise from under the bed; and discovered to my amazement and concern, that it came from a young man twenty-eight years of age, who was an epileptic. The father was suffering from a heart condition, and being confined to the bed, the boy who loved his father greatly, and who could not be persuaded to sleep in any other room, because it was too small to accommodate a bed large enough for both of them, slept under the bed in order to be near his father. The father was more concerned about the boy than about himself; and I could not help thinking, if only something of that great concern for the need of others would attach itself to us, we might have a different story to tell to-day in Belfast, in Toronto, and elsewhere.

Peter was satisfied to be with the Lord, and with his fellow-disciples, and with the heavenly visitors, on the mount; quite unmindful, in this case, because uninformed of another's terrible need.

On the plain below, there was a great multitude, and had Peter secured the fulfilment of his desire, that father would never have been relieved, and the multitude would never have been fed with the bread of life. Peter was thinking perhaps too much of himself. Selfishness is the taproot of all inertia. The world is unevangel-

ized not because we are without the means of doing it, but because there is such a predominance of utter selfishness among professed believers, that the church of Christ has never yet awakened to the need of the world outside her own borders.

If you look over the pages of history, you will see this truth that I am trying to bring home to you, illustrated over and over again. Suppose Moses had taken the principle of Peter's statement, as his philosophy of life? Suppose he had said, "It is good for me to be here; let me remain here"? Where was he? In a highly privileged position in Egypt, the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, enjoying every comfort, security, and advantage, that Egypt afforded. He might have been indifferent to the needs to the Israelites, his kinsmen according to the flesh, who were languishing in bondage in the brick kilns of Egypt, longing for deliverance, for freedom. Had Moses simply been satisfied with his own selfish enjoyment and culture, had he not heard the clarion call expressed by the very crack of the slave-drivers' whip, and the agony of the sob of those in bondage, history might have had a different tale to tell.

But one day as Moses marched around the palatial comforts of Pharaoh's house, his mind and heart became suddenly alert to the great challenge of his kinsmen in bondage, and in an unprecedented act of patriotism and racial loyalty, Moses made his great decision: he went out from the splendours of the palace, and identified himself with the children of Israel. And the Word of God pays this tribute to that tremendous leader of bygone days: "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible."

That is a splendid testimony to a man who refused to allow the "good" to become the enemy of the best. That is the tragedy of our day. We are satisfied with something less than the best; and God would seek to lead us to higher levels. Out from all the culture and beauty and joy of selfish pleasure that was his, into a great conflict, Moses went because he refused to allow selfishness to be the predominant motive of his life. "He had respect unto the recompense of the reward"; and he became the man, under God's hand, of terminating a bondage of over four hundred and thirty years—cruel and insufferable years, and of bringing the people of God out from under the tyranny of Pharaoh.

I wonder if you have ever thought of what would have happened if, to come to more modern times, Martin Luther had adopted Peter's philosophy of life? What if he had said, "It is good for me to be here. Why need I care about indulgences and error?" Where was he? Destined to wear a cardinal's hood to enjoy a prominent position in the hierarchy of the greatest so-called religious organization on earth. Some of you know how strong that organization is. But Luther, though he never intended to start a church in opposition to the Roman Catholic Church, nor dreamed that his protest would mean that he himself would have to leave it, courageously, in a great act of faith, came out boldly for the cause of Christ; and in that great act of devotion and self-denial, Luther built a bigger edifice than he ever

contemplated. He said when leaving the Church of Rome that he felt as though he were jumping off a planet; but in his sacrifice, in his longing to be the best that God could make him, he wielded that tremendous weapon that recovered the great doctrine of justification by faith, and was the means of emancipating the church of Christ from the bondage of a medieval ecclesiastical tyranny.

We are the heirs of that man's heroism, who dared to believe that the only thing a man might justly make the standard of his life is the will of God, nothing less and nothing more, even if it should cost him his life. The Protestant Reformation was born when Luther refused to accept Peter's suggestion as a philosophy of life; and out from his privileged position as a minister in the Church of Rome, that man of God came forth. And with what heroism and consistency he stuck to his guns, saying, as he realized his life was in danger, "Here I stand; God helping me, I can do no other."

I would to God that those of us who know the Lord Jesus, who really love Him, would be as courageous in our proclamation of the gospel and defense of the faith as was Martin Luther.

I could instance John Knox and a great many others, but shall have to content myself with reference to two others who refused to allow the good to become the enemy of the best. Take the case of William Booth. He might have argued that it was good for him "to be here", and been content to remain a minister, esteemed and respected in the Established Church. But something came over William Booth, something was born in his heart and life; and one memorable day he had a great vision, a vision that was beautifully expressed by John Wesley when he said—and I owe him a great debt for this statement—that he must have a whole cross for his salvation, a whole church for his fellowship, a whole Bible for his staff, and a whole world for his parish. That is true Christianity.

William Booth was a man whose eyes were on the far horizon. He was not content merely to reach the masses that were around him: he thirsted with a passion born of the Spirit of God within his redeemed life, that the whole world, and particularly those human lives that were buried in the dark blackness, behind the city's civic splendour where lives grow weary for want of a kind hand or the ministry of a sanctified life. William Booth refused the privileges of a settled pastorate, and out into the dark he went, bearing his cross for the Lord Jesus Christ, suffering intensely, despised and rejected of men.

But in this, our own day and generation, every ministry of that great organization is but the shadow of its founder. The soul of William Booth still marches on. Every time you and I look upon the familiar uniform of a Salvation Army officer or lassie, we can thank God for the devotion to Christ, and to his fellowmen, born in the heart of William Booth by the Spirit of God when he said, "It may be good for me to be here in the comfort and protection of the people I love, but it is a thousand times better that I be out carrying the gospel to the people who are perishing in the slums of the world in all the great cities."

One might instance a girl like Mary Slessor. She might have said, "I shall remain in Scotland. There is no need that I should go far away. It is good for me to be here in my own home. There is much to be done right here in my own land." But Mary Slessor heard

the call of God in her heart to go to Africa, and countless thousands there thank God in that dark land that she made the sacrifice and went out to the solitude of black faces, heartache and heartbreak. But those dark, dark hearts that have been made light and bright by the gospel which, by the sacrifice of her life, she proclaimed, more than justify that great venture of faith.

I have left to the last the most important, the supremely important. If Dr. Shields were dealing with this text, he could give you an hour and a half of delightful and blessed confirmation of this principle. But I have left, standing supremely and alone, that one great act of self-emptying that we shall never fully understand. Have you ever thought what would have happened to you and me if Jesus Christ had said, "It is good for me to be here"? Where was He? He was at the Father's right hand, sharing an intimacy and fellowship that He, with great tenderness, referred to in His high priestly prayer: "O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

He might have been indifferent to the need of a sin-cursed earth. He might have been selfish enough to remain in the glory, with angels and archangels ready to do His will and bidding. It was good "to be here". While He was on earth, He was homesick. It was a great sigh of relief He offered on Calvary when He cried, "It is finished." And it was with infinite joy He left this earth and went back to the place that was rightly His. He would never have come had He adopted Peter's idea and philosophy of life. Did you ever think of the consequences of such a thing? One day up yonder He walked out on the ramparts of heaven and looked out upon a world in rebellion against God, out of harmony with Him, cursed and blighted by the black enigma of sin. No power of human tongue can describe the awful chaos of this world without the light of Jesus Christ, but in a great act of love He looked, He came, He saw, He conquered. He left the heights of glory, He plumbed the deepest depths, to give His life gladly and fully and willingly, not because we deserved it, but because, as Mrs. Alexander's hymn puts it,

"There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin;
He only could unlock the gates
Of heaven, and let us in."

He came for our sake: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." He "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." "He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." I would not hurt your feelings by a recitation of the brutalities He endured because He loved you, because He longed to save you. We shall never be able to discharge that indebtedness. We shall never be able fully to express the love we bear Him for what He has done for us.

Yes, it was "good" to be there, but it was far, far better to come to earth, to all the ignominy and shame and death, that He might lead you and me back into the Father's house, and into the Father's heart. Death is

no friend of mine, for I have stood too frequently at the graveside of those I have loved: father, mother, brother, sisters, and my only child. I often wonder what would happen to us if, when we go into a cemetery, we had nothing left to us but human philosophy.

I stepped into a sort of garden of remembrance in California about a year ago, where all that the ingenuity of men could do had been done to obliterate the marks of death—no tombstones, nothing but a beautiful sward handsomely laid out, with marvellous buildings of great expense—and a great deal of human philosophy carved around in marble forms of different sorts. But not a word from the Book, not a quotation of Scripture, not a single promise for a heart that was breaking over the separation and loss of a loved one. It was beauty everywhere—bereft of comfort. If only I had had the privilege of putting a text over the entrance of that place I would have written: "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

Not a single ray of comfort can mankind give to a sorrowing heart. If Jesus had not come, you and I would have no hope of resurrection; we should have buried not only our dead, but our hope, in the grave and casket that contained the dust of our loved one. But if you have ever to stand, as I have, at an open grave, you will be glad—you ought to be—that no longer does mankind languish in the depths of despair concerning the future of his loved ones who die in the Lord, since Jesus was willing to say, No, to Himself; to leave the glory and come down to earth for us, tasting death for us, and rising again the third day, becoming the First-fruits of them that sleep. So you and I may bury our loved ones, and "sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

Are you glad about it? Was not it a great day for us when He refused to say, "It is good for us to be here"? When He came from the heights of glory, to this earth for us?

That is our problem and our challenge, you in Jarvis Street, following your Baptist traditions; we in Cooke's Church following our Presbyterian traditions—bound together by a common purpose, and I trust in a common endeavour; that is greater than our denominational affiliation and peculiarities, and in a great spirit of loyalty to Christ, go out from the comfort and security and luxury of our own spiritual culture, to grapple with the forces of sin and iniquity; to tell men and women of Jesus the Mighty to save. I would not walk the length of my finger to make a Presbyterian, but I would travel the world to get a soul to Jesus Christ. If we would stop arguing with one another about the things that do not matter, and unite in a great fellowship of faith, baptized with the Spirit of Christ and the spirit of the great martyr hosts who have made us their debtors; if we would put on the whole armour of God, and go out in the strength of the Holy Ghost, into the hedges and by-ways, compelling men to come in; snatching men from the depths of iniquity—and, if necessary lay down our lives in the fight—what honour it would bring to His name!

During the Great War, one of the British instructors had taken out six young men to teach them the art of

throwing hand-grenades. I do not know much about the mechanism of them, but I am told that if you slip out the spring, it is only a matter of seconds until there is an explosion. One of the young fellows, coming from a cultured home, in the nervousness and excitement of the moment, released the spring, and dropped the hand-grenade. Six lives were involved. The bombing instructor, a big, heavy-set man, had only a matter of seconds to make up his mind what to do—six precious lives, and his own. Without a second's hesitation, he threw his body on the deadly missile. When they gathered up the fragments of what had been a splendid piece of manhood, those six young fellows stood about and looked at the mangled corpse of one who had dared to do the big thing, and as they let their tears fall on the remnants of that body, they said, "He died for us."

Jesus Christ is standing in Jarvis Street, in this prayer-meeting; and is saying to you and to me, "I gave my life for thee; what hast Thou done for me?"

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, save us from ourselves. Save us from our narrow outlook on life. Save us, we beseech of Thee, from making the good the enemy of the best. Fill us with the power of Pentecost, that in the spirit of the early church, and in the spirit of the Lord of that church, we may go out into the highways and byways, our lips touched with the music of the gospel of peace, our hearts filled with divine love, and a supreme passion, that we may win our fellowmen and fellowwomen to the cross of the Lord Jesus.

We pray that Thy blessing may rest upon the Pastor, and upon his office-bearers, upon his deacons. May the light never be diminished, the light that shines from this great hill of Zion. Grant that the days that are yet before her, may be filled with an even greater measure of Thy power than she has known in the glorious days behind her. Grant unto us that true spirit of consecration that will enable us to do Thy will—until He come. Amen.

MORE ABOUT "THE NEXT TOWNS"

(Continued from page 2)

doors against us. So you see how hard it is to reach the Roman Catholics and unless our Heavenly Father draws them and we grasp every opportunity He gives us to enlighten them they will remain in darkness.

However, we have established a contact with some French people in a settlement about 18 miles from here and on Sunday afternoon we hope to preach to them if possible.

I believe the Lord gave me an opportunity to-day and I am so happy over it that I must tell you about it. It is the first chance I have had in a long time.

A French woman came to my door to sell me some raffle tickets on a bedspread she had made. I knew this woman by sight though she did not know me otherwise she would have passed by my door. She is the mother of twelve living children and in dire poverty. I gave her money and refused to take a ticket from her and gave her my Scriptural reasons for it. She looked at me with surprise and wonderment. One question led to another and I told her of the great peace we found in Christ and how fear of death meant nothing to us. She finally told me that she thought salvation was in bearing children according to the teaching of Rome and how she had been mentally tortured for two years by excommunication, because she refused to bear more children due to ill health and poverty. This woman and her twelve children have been on relief for years. I offered her a French testament but suddenly she seemed to stiffen with fear and appeared anxious to leave my home. She would not take the Bible I offered her, refusing under different pretences.

I must return to my first subject. I am afraid I have wandered far from it, but there are so many things that come to my mind as I write this that you will understand how hard it is to stay on any particular subject.

Our opening services were heart-warming. Pastor Slade

from Timmins was here with his wife and family, also Brother Russell Slade and their sister from Vancouver.

We had open session at Sunday school and Brother Russell Slade delivered a great message of encouragement to the children and urged every child to follow Jesus as soon as possible.

Pastor Slade spoke at the eleven o'clock service and his sermon covered so many different points that it was like an elastic hat, it fitted everybody. We had a great time of blessing during his stay with us and we were sorry to see him go after three days of special services. During these special meetings four persons professed conversion. For ourselves our faith was strengthened and our knowledge of the Word was increased. We pray that the Lord will bless these able brother-pastors with health and strength to carry on their great work in the Lord's vineyard.

We also feel now that we have a building of our own that it will mean much to the work here. We will be able to meet more freely and more often. Of course there is much more work to be done. The fall is coming soon and preparations for our hard winter will start. There is the heating system still to be installed and that will involve considerable time and money. But with the help of God and our many friends we have accomplished much and we feel sure that the Lord will see us through as "He is our Shepherd and we shall not want."

This is my first attempt at writing in this way so you may find it necessary to revise this in many ways. You may use this letter in any way you see fit.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) _____

The above letter speaks for itself. What a privilege to be permitted to have some part in delivering people from the darkness and thralldom of Rome, into the glorious liberty of the gospel, which breathes through this new convert's letter! Surely it is worth while making every possible sacrifice to preach the gospel which can produce such results. We hope that all will do their best.

Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 3 Third Quarter Lesson 32 August 6, 1939

THE GOLDEN CALF

Lesson Text: Exodus 22.

Golden Text: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."—Exodus 20: 3.

For Reading: Psalm 106.

I. The Broken Law—verses 1-6.

The sin of the people of Israel may be attributed to three causes; impatience, forgetfulness and worldly-mindedness. Moses had been absent from them for forty days and forty nights, and he was still on the mount with God, receiving instructions concerning the building of the tabernacle (Exod. 24:18). In his absence, their hearts became estranged toward him; although he had done much for them, and was the leader chosen of God (1 Sam. 8:7).

The natural heart soon forgets the goodness of God (2 Pet. 1:9). The chosen people, who had seen and heard signs of the Lord's presence, and who had experienced His saving grace time after time since He had brought them out of Egypt, had forgotten His many mercies (Psa. 78:7; 103:2). They had quickly turned aside from the way of God (Deut. 9:7-16; Isa. 53:6).

The Israelites were prone to copy the heathen nations. In their hearts they turned back to Egypt (Acts 7:39-41). They had grown dissatisfied with the spiritual worship of Jehovah, and desired to have something tangible and visible to venerate.

Apparently Aaron would not or could not deter the people, who were determined to have their own way (verses 22, 23;

Judges 8:24-27). He used the gold and the engraving tools which would have been devoted to the tabernacle (Exod. 25:3; 35:22; 36:2). The idol was probably constructed of wood, and covered with molten gold (1 Kings 12:28). The Israelites were probably imitating the Egyptians, who worshipped the bull as a sacred animal. God held Aaron responsible (verse 21; Deut. 9:20).

The children of Israel knew the will of the Lord, but they deliberately disobeyed Him. They were unfaithful to their voluntary promise (Exod. 19:8), and to their covenant with Jehovah (Exod. 24:3, 7). They had broken the first commandment, which was fundamental, and in breaking that, broke the second, and in fact, all the commandments (Exod. 20:2-5; Psa. 106:19, 20; Jas. 2:10). Moreover, they sacrificed to the idol, rejoiced in the work of their own hands, and attributed to it the glory due to Jehovah alone (Acts 7:41). It was perhaps to the idol that they made burnt offerings and peace offerings, or, if these were dedicated to Jehovah, the worship would be a mockery as being a prelude to their idolatry (1 Cor. 10:7).

II. The Broken Fellowship—verses 7-14.

The sin of the people caused a breach of fellowship between them and the holy Lord. He did not call them "my people", but "thy people". His wrath, His antipathy toward sin, came upon them (Psa. 78:31, 32; John 3:36; Eph. 5:6). God's wrath against sin is one aspect of His righteousness (Rom. 1:18).

The Lord put Moses to a difficult test (verse 10; Deut. 9:13, 14), but Moses refused to become great at the expense of the children of Israel (Num. 14:11, 12). He pleaded with the Lord on the ground that if His people should utterly perish, His honour would be at stake among the Egyptians, who would think that He had been unmerciful, and among the Israelites, who would think that He had been unfaithful to the covenant with the patriarchs (Gen. 12:7; 22:16-18; Num. 14:15-21; Heb. 6:13, 14).

God's character and purposes do not change, but His dealings vary according to the heart attitude of men. It is ever His way to have mercy upon those who are penitent (Psa. 106:44, 45; Jonah 3:9, 10; 4:1, 2). The word "repent", when used of Jehovah, denotes His actions as they would appear to men (Gen. 6:6; Num. 23:19).

III. The Painful Punishment—verses 15-29.

Moses' action in throwing down the tables of stone whereon were written the commandments of God was symbolic of the sin of the people in breaking the Lord's commands (Deut. 9:15-17). His was righteous indignation, for God replaced the tables (Exod. 34:1, 28, 29).

The children of Israel were required to taste the bitter water, in order that they might realize the bitter consequences which follow sin (Deut. 9:21; Jer. 2:19).

As a nation, Israel was in a state of childhood, and stern disciplinary measures were needed as a warning for the future. They must remember that sin brings forth death (Rom. 6:23; Jas. 1:15). They had been saved from utter destruction when Moses stood in the breach (verses 10, 14; Psa. 106:23), but the fellowship with God had not been fully restored. The chastisement would be followed by blessing (Deut. 8:5; Heb. 12:6, 11).

IV. The Powerful Intercession—verses 30-35.

Moses desired to make atonement for the sin of the people. Christ our Saviour made complete atonement for the sins of the whole world when He died upon the cross for us. Moses would have turned the wrath of God away from the people by drawing it upon himself, an illustration of the vicarious death of Christ (Isa. 53:4-6).

So deeply was Moses grieved that, if it had been possible, he would have been willing to forfeit his share in eternal bliss for the sake of those who had sinned (Rom. 9:1-5). Our Lord was not only willing, but also able, to endure the penalty of our sins (Rom. 8:3; Gal. 3:13; Heb. 9:28). He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made righteous (2 Cor. 5:21).

Every man is responsible for his own sin (verse 33; Ezek. 17:19; 18:4, 20), and especially for his rejection of Christ (John 3:18). Urge the scholars to receive Christ as their Saviour and Lord, and then their names will be written in the Lamb's book of life (Luke 10:20; Phil. 4:3; Rev. 21:27).

THIS WEEK'S SERMON

Owing to the desirability of the Editor's attending the ordination of one of the Seminary students we presumed on our mutual friendship to ask Rev. Wm. Thomas, M.A., of Cooke's Church, to preach for us Thursday evening last week. With his characteristic generosity, Mr. Thomas consented to do so. His sermon was reported, and it was put in type without Mr. Thomas' knowledge and therefore is unrevised by him.

Our readers will enjoy the message as our Thursday congregation enjoyed it. It supports our plea for missions in last week's issue and this, and, in all probability, helped to prepare the people for our appeal for an "over and above" offering on Sunday.

We are grateful to Mr. Thomas for his message of last Thursday to which we are privileged to give a wider hearing through THE WITNESS.

SEMINARY FUNDS

We hope our Seminary friends and supporters will not forget that, even when the classes are not in session, the Seminary is in need of funds. We are always most grateful for contributions for the work of the Seminary, either large or small.

We hope all our readers will live a long time, but if you have any money that you would like to dedicate to the propagation of the gospel when you no longer have need of it, remember Toronto Baptist Seminary in your will. The best time to do that is now. Leave your money to: Toronto Baptist Seminary, 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto, Canada; and there will be no possibility of any other institution successfully laying claim to it. Toronto Baptist Seminary is on Jarvis Street, at Number 337. If the money is so left, there can be no possibility of misunderstanding as to the institution to which it is bequeathed.

Another Plan

If any of our readers want to be absolutely sure that there shall be no mistake as to the money they leave to the Seminary, it would be possible for them to do as some others have done. They have said, for instance, "Here is a sum of money, the interest of which I need during my lifetime. If you are prepared to take it and pay me such interest as I now receive, I will let you have it. You pay me interest as long as I live, and at my death, your obligation ceases, and the money is yours." In such case, we do not regard such a trust as a present asset, but as a liability. That is to say, we are under bond to pay a certain amount of interest during the donor's lifetime. Therefore we take that money and invest it, so that it will produce the interest—or at least, nearly all the interest we have to pay. As long as the donor lives, we regard it as a liability, and only at the death of the giver does it become the absolute property of the Seminary.

Such a course makes it impossible that there should be any later dispute as to the intention of a will. We offer this suggestion to some of our readers who would like to leave some of their substance to carry on the gospel after they have gone.

OUGHT ROMAN CATHOLICS TO BE EVANGELIZED?

Some years ago a certain church that had a mission in a section of the city where there were many Roman Catholics, was asked what its attitude was toward Romanists. The Pastor replied that they did not believe in proselytizing. We are inclined to believe that the many conferences which have been held from time to time in different parts of the world, with a view to endeavouring to bring all bodies of people bearing the Christian name together, has had a tendency to dull the convictions and cool the missionary ardour of many Protestants.

It must be evident to any person of spiritual discernment that many organizations and institutions bearing the Christian name are more pagan than Christian. The Roman Catholic Church is not a Christian institution in the biblical sense. In its organization, in its authoritarian policy, in its usurpation of the function of the State, in its doctrine, and its practice—from beginning to end, and through and through, the Roman Catholic Church is anti-Christian. There may be individual Roman Catholics who, in spite of the superstitions in which they are enthralled, may somehow through the fog have seen Christ. But the church as such, from the Pope down, is utterly anti-Christian.

Only this week a Christian physician related to us how he had been called late one night to see an elderly woman who had suffered a stroke. On arrival at the house, he found a Roman Catholic priest there with the family. He followed the doctor into the sick room, that he might learn his verdict. The doctor told them that it was but a matter of a few minutes, perhaps fifteen or so, to the end. The priest immediately announced that he must "get to work". He opened a bag, took out a candle, opened the hand of the dying woman, placed the candle in it, and closed her fingers over it. He administered the last rites, repeated some formula too rapidly for one to follow except to distinguish the Lord's prayer, and in a few minutes the woman was dead. Then the priest remarked, "She is all right now"—in heaven or purgatory, wherever it may be necessary to be, to be "all right".

What mummery! Nay, worse: what wickedness! This is why we believe we ought to be especially energetic in preaching the gospel of grace to our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens.

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