

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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"IF THE TRUMPET GIVE AN UNCERTAIN SOUND"

There is a most valuable passage of Scripture in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, which deals with the importance of using words "easy to be understood", and of enunciating those words with such distinctness as shall make misunderstanding impossible. Here is the passage: "And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So likewise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how shall it be known what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air."

We always read *Watchman* in *The British Weekly* with great interest, and usually with much profit. He says many good things, and reminds one of good things all but forgotten. He is often suggestive, and even if we stumble upon a paragraph occasionally that says nothing in particular, it is usually said particularly well. We often wish we could clinch his nails, and put nuts on his bolts; and that he would a little less frequently leave so much at loose ends.

In the issue of July 27th, he quotes Karl Barth with enthusiastic appreciation, an enthusiasm which we share to the full. It is, we know, ungracious to say, I told you so. And it is no evidence of benignity to claim a prophet's authority subsequently to a prophecy's fulfilment. Notwithstanding, it is sometimes necessary, in defense of one's consistency, and with a view to the continuance and enlargement of one's influence, to do so. Before THE GOSPEL WITNESS came into being, and ever since its first issue, we have consistently and constantly insisted upon the necessity for religious plain-speaking. For more than twenty-five years we have warned of the danger inherent, not alone in the teaching of Modernism, but in the spirit and attitude of mind produced by it, or which inheres in it.

Modernism insists on the uncertainty of everything except this one thing: that no one can be certain about the Word of God. We have noted the drift from the authority of Scripture, and the implicit or explicit rejection of that which we are positive is an absolute essential to the Christian system, that is to say, the expiatory principle which renders the atonement of Christ effectual. We have, in a hundred ways, pointed out that the rejection of that principle inevitably makes for law-

lessness in the individual, in the home, in the state, and in the world at large.

The repudiation of an authoritarian Book paves the way for an authoritarian state; and intermediately, for authoritarian experimentations in church and state.

If we are shut up, at the best, to mere probabilities in the moral and spiritual realms, if certitude and finality are impossible in these spheres, then one uncertainty is as good as another, and will assert itself with what collective authority it may assemble. In principle, there is nothing. *Watchman* quotes from Karl Barth that we have not been saying as loudly as we have known how for twenty-five years. The principles of the Bible, involving its implicit claim for supreme authority, lie at the foundation of all true liberty, whether of the individual, the church; or the state.

The rejection of the Bible, and the cardinal principle to which we have referred, which lies at the heart of the Atonement, has given rise to the deadly doctrine of pacificism. We have recently read newspaper reports of the utterances of a certain minister from England, now in Canada, respecting national and international affairs. Our charity would like to assume that he has been at least partially wrongly reported. We should suppose he had been wholly misreported had we not learned from other sources his point of view. Such philosophical absurdities as his have enough poison in them to make them a danger to the integrity of any state, and to the peace of the world. For the sake of the world's peace, such pacificists ought to be confined within some mental institution—at least until the present danger is overpast.

The denial of the necessity of the principle of expiation, whether in the Atonement or in any legal system, national or international, involves a rejection of all sound principles of government in all realms. Modernism in the university and all lesser educational institutions, in theological halls, in the pulpit, in press and platform, and in much of current literature, is the underlying cause of the world's unrest. It is the explanation of Mr. Chamberlain. A man of such mentality could not possibly have occupied a position of responsibility in Britain thirty years ago. Why he is suffered to continue now passes our comprehension. He has been forced to release the brakes from the moral momentum generated by sound evangelical principles in generations past; and such release enables the long-established and painfully-develop-

ed highly efficient technical governmental services, particularly in defense departments, to function. But he is no more the inspiration of the present rapidly developing defense efficiency of Britain than is the man who cuts a ribbon and declares a great bridge open for traffic, responsible for the engineering skill by which the bridge has been created. If Ramsay Macdonald had had his way, there would have been no British Empire to govern. If such unwisdom as has characterized the public life of Sir John Simon, particularly in Foreign Affairs, had directed British affairs in 1914, there would have been no Britain to-day. If such folly as permitted Hitler to reoccupy the Rhineland and Mussolini to rape Ethiopia, had dominated the British Government of 1914 to 1918, we should all now have been under the heel of Prussianism. If such inexcusable moral obtuseness as conceived the visit of Chamberlain to Hitler, with the resultant Munich Pact, and the subsequent sacrifice of Czechoslovakia, had shown itself any time during the Great War years, the person manifesting it would justly have been consigned to political oblivion for ever.

Some will say, "But war was avoided, and now we are ready." War would never have taken place. We know now that Sudetenland was an excuse and a pretext; and surely even Mr. Chamberlain knows by this time that Hitler is just the unconscionable liar that nearly all the world, except Mr. Chamberlain, knew him to be. And Mr. Chamberlain ought to have known from the beginning. Britain is pouring out billions and billions of money to correct the blunders of Chamberlain, Baldwin, and Macdonald, aided and abetted by Simon, Hoare, and others; and for generations to come, the British tax-payers will be paying for the folly of trying to shield oneself from shrapnel with an umbrella. It is better to correct such blunders even at so great a price, than to continue the fatuous umbrella policy.

We should be still more deeply concerned were we not confident that an overruling Providence may avert or mitigate the evils our stupidity has invited.

Yesterday we had occasion to motor nearly three hundred miles, and we stopped at a certain place in the evening for dinner. We had observed a party of four awaiting the call for dinner, with ourselves, seated on a beautiful lawn, with a delightful prospect of flowers and shrubs and trees, and water in the distance. When seated at the table, the proprietor said to us in a whisper, "Don't look for a moment, but that party of four is Bata and his friends, the great Czechoslovakian shoe manufacturer." Just a few miles away from where we were he will spend hundreds of thousands of dollars in the erection of huge factories which will soon become the largest shoe manufacturing concern on the American Continent. But for Munich, Mr. Bata probably would still be in Czechoslovakia.

On the other hand, last week we heard of a Jewish woman, the wife of a wealthy Jewish manufacturer of Czechoslovakia who had been forced to part with his factory holdings for almost nothing, although they had been worth nearly a couple of millions—this woman stepped to the sill of a window in a Chicago hotel, on the thirteenth storey, with her two little children with her, one in either arm, and with them leaped to death on the pavement below. The distracted husband, learning of it, drew a finger across his throat and said, "To-morrow, me too." He has been carefully guarded since, to prevent his self-destruction.

Poor man! Poor woman! Types of tens of thous-

ands of helpless and hopeless refugees who owe their position to Mr. Chamberlain's "appeasement" policy. It is inexpressibly horrible! In our view, it is politically unpardonable. We should be happy to hear that Mr. Chamberlain had retired from public life, and that his place had been taken by Mr. Lloyd George, or Churchill, or even Anthony Eden; the latter of whom we always thought was weak enough to satisfy almost anyone.

We began this article merely to say that we were glad that *Watchman* had come to the position where he could fully appreciate one who insisted that, since white is white, and black is black, each must be recognized and openly named for its essential qualities. We hope we have said nothing offensive about *Watchman*. We like him. But we should like to present him with an anvil, a good blacksmith's hammer, and a pneumatic riveter.

SUMMER SERVICES

Large congregations attended Jarvis Street last Sunday morning and evening, notwithstanding the holiday weekend, and the heat of summer. In the evening practically every seat on the ground floor was filled, and two-thirds or three-quarters of the gallery. Visitors will be cordially welcomed at our summer services, including the Morning Class at 9.45. The Pastor expects to be in his own pulpit every Sunday during August.

TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY

The Seminary will begin its Fall term September 26th. Students intending to enroll should write us as soon as possible. The Prospectus of the Seminary will be sent to anyone without charge on application. Write: Registrar, Toronto Baptist Seminary, 37 Jarvis Street, Toronto, Canada. Below we print the Calendar for the year 1939-40:

September	2—Saturday	_____	Last day of application for Supplementary Examinations
September	22—Friday	_____	Supplementary Examinations
September	25—Mon., 10 a.m.	_____	Registration of new Students
September	25—Mon., 2 p.m.	_____	Registration of former Students
September	26—Tues., 8.30 a.m.	_____	Lectures begin
September	28—Thurs., 8 p.m.	_____	Fall Convocation
September	29—Fri., 7.30 p.m.	_____	Trustee and Faculty Reception for Students
November	3—Friday	_____	Lectures close for First Quarter
November	7-10—Tues.-Fri.	_____	First Quarter Examinations
November	14—Tuesday	_____	Second Quarter begins
December	22—Friday	_____	Lectures close for Christmas Vacation
January	2—Tuesday	_____	Lectures resumed
January	5—Friday	_____	Lectures close for Second Quarter
January	9-12—Tues.-Fri.	_____	Second Quarter Examinations
January	16—Tuesday	_____	Third Quarter begins
March	1—Friday	_____	Lectures close for Third Quarter
March	5-8—Tues.-Fri.	_____	Third Quarter Examinations
March	12—Tuesday	_____	Fourth Quarter begins
April	19—Friday	_____	Lectures close
April 23-May 1	—Tues.-Wed.	_____	Fourth Quarter Examinations
May	2—Thurs., 8 p.m.	_____	Graduation

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, August 6th, 1939

(Stenographically Reported)

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

"And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

"And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

"And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

"And in hell he lift up his eyes being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

"And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

"But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

"And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

"Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

"For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

"Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

"And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

"And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

—Luke 16:19-31.

It is not an unholy curiosity which leads people to desire some knowledge of the state and condition of the spirits of those who have departed. It is most natural that we should desire to know something of the present state of our loved and lost. How can we learn the truth in this matter? How can we be assured respecting the present state of the spirits of those who have left us?

Obviously human opinion is of no value. We may entertain what ideas we like about the future: as we have never been there, and have had no contact with people who have had experience of the life beyond, it follows that our opinions, whatever they may be, are without authority. We cannot reach certitude by human philosophizing, our own or others'.

Philosophical speculation about matters of this sort is surely valueless. There was a time when people speculated about the northwest passage to India, when they sought to discover the Pole—and many assayed the task of finding it. But they did not come back to tell us. The world was startled on one occasion with the report that Dr. Cook had found it, which was later denied. Then it was reported that Lieutenant Perry had found it, and it may be questioned whether either report was true. But men have similarly speculated about the future life, and in due time they have set sail for that bourne from which no traveller has returned. How far their speculations were verified, or proved to be false, we have no means of knowing. They never returned to tell us.

In this company, we shall agree that Spiritism provides no solution of that problem. It surely cannot be that we are dependent upon the mutterings of spirits or the rattling of tables for information on so important a matter as the state of those who have passed beyond the boundaries of this life.

This world has never known other than one Person Who had experience of both worlds, and Who came to this one and mingled with men. He claimed to monopolize in Himself the truth respecting the life beyond, for He said, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." We are shut up to the One Who said "I am the way, the truth, and the life." The word uttered by our Lord Jesus is the only authoritative word. No one else can know anything about it save by divine revelation. Experimentally, and from one's own personal knowledge, no one knows. Your opinion is just as valuable as that of the most learned philosopher in the world—and neither is worth anything.

The word which I have read to you this evening is the word of the Lord Jesus. It is a revelation of the future state. I have no argument with those who dissent from His teaching. You must settle your controversy with Him, if you refuse to receive the message from Him Who was "the Word made flesh". For myself, I accept the Bible as the final word on any subject. I know of no greater authority in any realm of truth than the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is a somewhat interesting passage for certain people in these modern days. Our Russellite friends endeavour to invalidate its teaching by calling it a parable. The Scripture does not call it a parable; but I think it is not worth arguing about; for whether it is a parable or a revelation of literal history of conditions beyond, it matters not, since the parable or historical statement fell from the lips of the Lord Jesus. The teaching of it is equally authoritative, however you view it. It is His word.

I have not very much to say about it—except to ask you

to follow me as we take this story line by line, and see what it has to teach us about the state of those who have passed beyond.

I.

It is beyond doubt A REPRESENTATION OF THE CONDITION OF SOULS IN THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

That there is such a state is beyond question. The Scripture teaches that there is to be a resurrection unto condemnation, and that the time is to come when evil men are to be judged "according to the deeds done in the body". Obviously, that final judgment cannot take place until after the resurrection of the dead. The same is true in respect to the resurrection of the just. The final rewards of the just will not be apportioned until they stand before the judgment seat of Christ, when He shall give to every man according as his works shall be. Believers are to have bodies in the future that are "like unto his glorious body". Nothing in this scripture which I have read suggests the possession of a body by Lazarus. That this is indeed an intermediate state, is established by the fact that the rich man is represented as saying that his father's house is still upon the earth, and that he has yet five brethren there. This therefore is a picture of the intermediate state; and in it the rich man appears as being in torment, and Lazarus is pictured as being in Abraham's bosom, in a state of rest and comfort.

What can we learn about the present state of those who have departed? My question this evening is, Where are the dead?

Both these men were in a state of consciousness. There is no doctrine of soul-sleeping taught in this scripture. Nor can I find that there is any foundation for that doctrine in the Word of God anywhere. I know that we read of those who have "fallen asleep in Christ" but that refers to their bodies, not to their spirits. Soul-sleeping, I say, is not taught in the Word of God. The former rich man is represented as being in a state of consciousness. His was a state of conscious suffering. He speaks of himself as being in torment.

You may exercise your mind, if you will, questioning whether this is to be literally interpreted. I think nothing is gained if you prove or disprove it. I am inclined to believe it is a figure of speech, for the reason that it was the spirit of the rich man, and not his body, that was in torment. It is difficult to conceive of the spirit being tormented in a literal flame. But if it be only a figure, it is still a terrible figure, terrible enough for anyone of us to seek earnestly to avoid any experience of it. I have said repeatedly that I am not concerned to understand all the horrors of the future state of the impenitent. It is my supreme concern so to preach the gospel that no one may ever know. I do not want to know any more than I now know. I hope no one who hears me this evening will ever be more fully informed, will ever have experience of the reality of these terrible things.

But this is certain that our Lord describes this man as even now being in a state of conscious suffering, whatever that may imply. There is no escape from that. I know that he prayed that his tongue might be cooled with a drop of water. Surely if this be a pre-resurrection scene, that too must be interpreted as figurative language. But I say, nothing is gained if you do away with the literalness of it, for it is a sufficiently horrible figure when you have made the very best of it.

Another thing to be observed is that *this rich man was enabled to see and recognize Lazarus.* Surely that indicates a state of consciousness and of continued identity. There was an intelligent apprehension of who that was yonder in Abraham's bosom. I think there can be no question about that, and I need not labour the matter further.

Furthermore, *he was able to speak to Abraham.* That is a very solemn reflection, but there it is, spoken by our Lord Himself. He called to Abraham that he might send Lazarus. He was bidden, too, *to remember.* An appeal was made to all his mental faculties, that he might summon them all into exercise and recall the experiences of his earthly life. He was to remember—not as one who was asleep, but as one who was very much awake.

Once more, *he was concerned about his brethren who were still upon the earth.* I will return to that in a moment, but I mention it here as one of the proofs of this man's being in a state of consciousness.

What of the former beggar, Lazarus? He is pictured as being in Abraham's bosom, in some kind of heavenly state of rest. No torment, no discomfort, no trouble, there. It is true that no speech is attributed to him: it was not necessary that Lazarus should speak. Abraham spoke for him, but Dives is represented as viewing Lazarus as capable of rendering him a service, for he prayed that he might be sent to dip his finger in water and cool Dives' tongue, obviously, therefore, Lazarus was seen to very much awake, and in a state of consciousness too. He is represented as being comforted, in a state of present enjoyment.

It would be possible to amplify and corroborate the teaching of this passage by reference to other passages, particularly in respect to those who have died in Christ. Paul expressed a desire to be "absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord". Paul lived strenuously and gloriously, and enjoyed every minute of life; and certainly he did not desire that he might be permitted to fall asleep, and to rest in a state of unconsciousness until the resurrection. He desired to be promoted to higher service, yet he spoke of the future state of the believer as being "with the Lord". On another occasion he said, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better; nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." Certainly he did not ask to be admitted to a state of unconscious sleep.

I think we have very reason to believe that those who have passed hence in the faith of Christ are with Him, consciously in His presence, enjoying His favour, in a state of comfort and indescribable felicity: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." There is also that great classic passage in which our Lord said to the dying thief, in response to his petition that he might be remembered; "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." By which surely He did not mean that "we shall sleep together in a state of unconsciousness". But, rather, it is to be interpreted literally. I have no doubt that the dying thief was just as conscious of the presence of Christ, and of the glorious reality of His abounding grace, when he found himself in paradise with his Lord, as he was conscious of His reality when he hung on the cross by his side.

II.

Look at THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THEIR PRESENT AND THEIR FORMER STATES. What had *the rich man's earthly state been*, He had been *exempt from all privation and pain*. He had never known the meaning of penury, never known what it was to be hungry. He "had fared sumptuously every day". He had known nothing of pain as others had. He had been particularly fortunate. He had had everything that could minister to his comfort and pleasure.

There are many people in this world who are similarly circumstanced now. "Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish." "They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men." "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree." It seems as though everything they touch prospers. But now Dives has nothing; he has left it all behind. A man may be a vast landowner here, but at his death he is not even the owner, but only the tenant of a six-foot grave. We brought nothing into this world: it is certain we can take nothing out of it. This rich man took nothing with him—nothing but his memories. He left all else behind him. Now he was tormented, and longed only for a drop of water.

Let us not forget that there is One Who weighs the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. There is a marvellously accurate adjustment of things in this life; and He Who has made a weight for the winds, and Who weigheth the waters by measure, will not be behind in His moral judgments. There will be a time of readjustment, of reapportionment of good and evil. I repeat what I have said scores of times: if I did not believe, if I could not believe, in a day of future retribution, I should be forced to the conclusion that this world was at the mercy of an almighty devil. There ought to be a time of re-balancing, readjusting, the conditions of life. There will be.

I know there are people who mock at the future. I know that many pulpits are busy preaching a social gospel. I know that the professing church of Christ is exercising itself in trying to get the prodigal a better job in the far country. If you could re-arrange things to-day, and satisfy everyone, it would not be long before we should all have to go and leave everything behind. We should take nothing with us but our memories of the life we left behind.

Look at *the beggar's state*. He *had suffered much*. He was full of sores. Are you troubled at the problem of human pain and suffering? I am. I have known so many, in the exercise of my ministry as a Pastor, for whose present distress I could offer no explanation. Still:

"The earth is full of farewells to the dying,
And mournings for the dead;
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
Will not be comforted."

Whatever one's explanation of this picture of the beggar at the rich man's gate, full of sores, it is true to life. Even at this late date, I think you will all admit that. He was often hungry: he desired to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. We do not know whether he received them or not, but he wanted them. That was all he had in life—full of suffering and pain; faced with long years of privation, he had had not so much as a drop of comfort to alleviate his misery.

I have known many such people who seemed to be chosen in a furnace of affliction; born to trouble, as was said in Job's day, "as the sparks fly upward". However you may explain it, it is true. Sometimes we have to face facts, and accept them, whether we can explain them or not. We cannot obliterate the facts of a case by complaining of them: there they are. I say the picture is true to life. Such sustenance as this man received, he had to beg for. Had there been plenty of work, he could not have worked. He was apparently carried to the rich man's gate. He was an impotent, helpless, suffering, creature; to whom life had been an almost intolerable burden.

But now he is in Abraham's bosom. All suffering is passed. He has no pain, he is subject to no privation. He has had his share of evil things, but now they are all behind him. Now he is comforted. That is the contrast here described.

III.

Observe now THE UNALTERABILITY OF THESE STATES. The rich man *saw what he had missed*. That is a terrible reflection, that he was able to look into heaven. Were you ever away from home on a stormy night? You passed other people's homes where the shades were undrawn, aglow with light and warmth and comfort—and you envied them their security and said, "I wish I were at home." It made you feel the storm and the loneliness of the night, because you were able to look in upon someone else in comfort.

I did not say it: the Lord Jesus said that the rich man saw Lazarus. I do not know that he ever saw him on earth. He was laid at his gate, but it is doubtful whether he ever noticed him. Some of us do not amount to much now, but I believe we shall count for something some day. If we are true to the Lord Jesus, we shall be reckoned as among Heaven's aristocracy by and by. It would have been beneath this rich man's dignity to pay any attention to Lazarus here, but he was glad to ask of him some service yonder; he prayed him to bring him a drop of water. These are pregnant sayings. Our Lord Jesus only touches it, puts it all in a sentence: "Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." The ministries which are offered here will not always be despised. There is a solemn word in the Book of Proverbs, the Voice of Wisdom which says, "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord."

But you will note that *Dives was told of an unbridgeable gulf that separated the two*. He was able to see across it, and so to speak as to be heard by Abraham; but he was told that it could not be crossed from either side—uncrossable from hell to heaven. Whatever it be, there is no doctrine of future probation taught here. Our Lord Jesus never taught it. Some kind of universal salvation, seems to be generally assumed now-a-days. But this is the teaching of the Lord Jesus, and He put into the mouth of Abraham these words, "Between us

and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence".

There is, in the life to come, no opportunities for the rectification of the blunders and sins of this life. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Not by and by!

Equally was it impossible to pass from heaven to where the rich man was. That is significant. It was possible for Jesus Christ to come from heaven to earth. I say it solemnly, that by the teaching of the Lord Jesus, it will not be possible for Him, beyond this life, to extend grace to those who have rejected the overtures of mercy here. That is the teaching of our text. It is now or never for all of us. Now is the time to receive Christ. Now is the time to have this all-important matter settled. It cannot be changed once life is past.

IV.

Let me ask, HOW WERE THESE UNALTERABLE STATES DETERMINED? What made the difference? Why did the rich man go to Hades, and the beggar go to Heaven? Wherein lay the difference of character and quality that fitted the one to go down, and the other to go up? Was it the rich man's wealth *per se*? Just because he was rich, was he therefore a bad man? It is "the love of money" that is the root of all evil, not money itself. Many of the heroes of faith in the Old Testament were, by God's blessing, made rich—and they were not thereby made evil. It was not Dives' riches that sent him to hell.

Was there any special virtue in Lazarus' poverty? There are people who imagine there is virtue in poverty—like the poor, filthy, devotees of India and other countries who lie upon beds of spikes, thinking to earn merit by their poverty and filth. There is no justification for that view in the Word of God. It was not by the riches of the one, nor the poverty of the other, that their respective states were determined.

Yet I cannot help believing *there was something wrong in the contrast that the two afforded*—plenty on the one hand, and hard-by, the greatest destitution. It cannot be right, whoever is to blame, that there should be poverty in the midst of plenty. I have no apology for the inequalities of the present social order. I only differ from the preachers of the social gospel as to the kind of remedy that should be applied, or rather, as to what would really effect a permanent change.

I remember some years ago when men were destroying the wheat, and killing cattle and hogs in the United States, in order to produce a scarcity, some public man—I forget who it was, I heard him over the radio—said, "We all admit the wrong of the situation, that there should be abounding plenty, and side by side with it, the deepest poverty. But you will never destroy the want by destroying the plenty." Neither can you. It might temporarily be alleviated by some form of redistribution, but it is beyond my capacity to suggest any way by which even that could be done. We may however find some indication of what caused this separation if we examine the story. Read it for yourselves.

This man suddenly manifested a concern for his five brethren. He was anxious that someone should go to them, and warn them of their peril. What do you make of that? Was there compassion in hell? Was he more

considerate of his brethren when he was in hell than when he was upon earth? If I were forced to believe that, I should be forced to believe in the possibility of universal restitution.

Who is this rich man? Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees, the false teachers of His day, whom He represented as unjust stewards, who were reducing the standards, and promising their lord's debtors a discount on their bills: "Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty." The Lord Jesus said, "I have authorized no one to discount my bills. You will pay one hundred measures of wheat, one hundred measures of oil. I know what you are doing: you are making to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. You are currying favour with my debtors." I am not a preacher to classes, much less would I ever try to set one class against another. But I am forced to the conclusion that when the man in the street, who has turned his back upon all religion, and upon all religious institutions, tells us that the church is concerned mainly to profit itself by the wealth of the rich man, he nearly tells the truth. I know whereof I speak. I know the price a preacher must pay for freedom to declare the whole counsel of God, and tell the Lord's debtors they must write one hundred not fifty or four-score. I dare to say there is no living man who knows it better.

What were the Pharisees doing? Making themselves rich by lowering the standard of the law. Jesus said, "Very well. Go on. Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when you are put out of your stewardship they may receive you into their houses, into everlasting habitation. But do not then come knocking at my door. When you have had your good things on earth, do not expect to have them in heaven too. Do not come knocking at my door." "And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him." Our Lord pointed to them and said, "Ye are the men I am talking to. Ye are they which justify yourselves before men, but that which is highly esteemed among men is abominable in the sight of God." Then He went on to say, "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail—I have never authorized you to offer a man twenty per cent. or fifty per cent. discount on his obligations to the law".

What is involved in the setting aside of the great central verity of the gospel, the atonement of Christ at Calvary? What is it? It is man's declaration that God does not require full payment. "Fifty per cent. will do. Eighty per cent is enough. Be not righteous over much. Why shouldest thou destroy thyself?" Let me say a hard thing: I am forced to say it. I believe that very largely the blight that has fallen upon the modern church is due to the fact that it has, for the most part, an unconverted ministry. There are many men in this city, in Christian pulpits, who do not know Christ who do not know the alphabet of the gospel of salvation, who are saying to their people, "Sit down quickly and write fifty."

No Christian preacher or teacher will put a premium on wrong-doing in the name of the Lord. We cannot tell men that they may serve the world, the flesh, and the devil, and still be Christians. We must show we are

saved. Many preachers will have to get back to the gospel, if not to save their hearers, at least to save themselves.

When Christ had said that, that which follows I believe implied: "You Pharisees, do you know what your future is? Here it is, in the picture of the rich man." It is a picture of those who falsify the revelation of God—the present-day Modernism; the Roman Catholic Church, if you like, the richest corporation on earth, which still makes merchandise of the souls of men, and is getting rich at the price of someone's damnation. That is the picture.

Said this man, "Send Lazarus to my father's house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." Said Abraham, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent." Then Abraham said this remarkable thing, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Study your preacher. When he pours contempt upon the Old Testament, and tells you that Moses did not write the Pentateuch, that the Old Testament is unreliable, you will invariably find that he will not believe though One has come to him from the dead. Ultimately he rejects the whole Christian revelation, and substitutes some theory of his own. I have never known a higher critic who denied the authenticity of the Old Testament, who did not equally deny the New—the Deity of Christ, His actual resurrection, and all that goes with it.

Why was Dives concerned about his five brethren? He did not want them to come where he was. I pray God that He may never let me live to utter one word that would mislead a soul. I would rather that this should be my last public utterance on earth than I should be suffered to live to encourage people to hope for salvation in any other way than God's way. There is only one way, through the blood of Christ.

But what of those who have done so? Why was Dives afraid lest his brethren should come there? Not because he was compassionate, I think. I will tell you a story. In a certain American state there was a man who had been District Attorney for twenty years. He had been a vigorous prosecutor of law-breakers. He had prosecuted thousands of men in that district, and half the population of the local penitentiary had been sent there by him. After twenty years he himself was charged with some offence in office. He was convicted, and sentenced to a term in the same penitentiary. The authorities did not know what to do. They said, "If we send this man to the penitentiary where these men are, they will tear everything to pieces to get at him. They will tear him limb from limb." And they had to build a separate strong prison for this lawyer-convict, to save him from the vengeance of his own victims.

I think if there is one place in hell hotter than another, it is reserved for the men who, for their own profit, and for their own temporal advantage, have misled men in spiritual matters. They may not be concerned for the salvation of souls now, but in hell they will lift up their eyes in torment and say, "Do not let them come here, eternally to accuse me of having been the author of their ruin!"

The sixteenth chapter of Luke's Gospel, taken altogether, is the most terrible chapter in the Word of God. Let us be warned.

On the other hand, there is Lazarus perfectly satisfied and secure. And who was he? A beggar. He paid for nothing. The unjust steward said, "To beg, I am ashamed." This man was not ashamed to beg; neither must we be ashamed to beg; for we shall all get through only by becoming beggars. We pay nothing; we can be saved only by His sovereign grace. Are you willing to be a beggar? Are you willing to beg mercy at His hands? That is the way home—the only way. Beg for mercy! Tell Him you have nothing to pay—and He will save you for ever.

As for you who mourn the loss of some who died in Christ—you may be sure they are with Christ, "which is far better". I have said little in amplification of the text. I entreat you to read that chapter again, and again, and again. Study it until its tremendous message burns its way into your soul. May the Lord bless us every one, for His name's sake!

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

The Ordination of Rev. Duncan Macgregor

"I was brought up on porridge and the Shorter Catechism." These were among the opening remarks of Pastor Duncan Macgregor at his ordination in the Stouffville Baptist Church, Wednesday, August the second, 1939.

Representatives from a number of Union churches gathered in solemn assembly, listened with deep joy to the story of how a Scottish lad and his lass found Christ as Saviour on the eve of their departure for Canada. But before they could get away the wise pastor cautioned them, in seeking a church home, to be sure to see a certain Doctor Shields in Toronto. Under the ministry of the pastor of Jarvis Street, Mr. Macgregor was baptized. He began his work for the Lord in the Bible School. Feeling that God had called him to preach, he began his preparation for the ministry in the Seminary. After graduation he spent several years at the Hillcrest Church in Toronto and from there he came to his present pastorate. Pastor Macgregor's confession of faith was a model of brevity, clarity, and spiritual discernment. So well did he deliver himself that the council had few questions to ask.

In the ordination service, Rev. A. C. Whitcombe presided in his usual amiable manner. Pastor McAsh led in the song service, bringing our hearts into the spirit of devotion. Rev. W. W. Fleischer, the former pastor, in the charge to the church asked them to continue the kindness which they had shown him. Rev. W. S. Whitcombe charged the candidate to preach the Word of God in season, out of season. It was fitting that Rev. John Knight, who had gone out from, and been supported by, the first Markham church, should offer the prayer of ordination. Rev. B. Jeffrey, who had known and loved the candidate for many years, gave him the right hand of fellowship into the ministry.

Dr. Shields preached the ordination sermon from the text, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

The whole Union family will pray that the blessing that has attended the labours of the Rev. Duncan Macgregor will be but the foretaste of greater days to come.

Bernard Jeffrey, Clerk.

French Slides

A fine set of thirty entirely new slides illustrating the French work is now ready. Mr. Dubarry collected the material and it has been arranged by the writer. There is a very complete manuscript describing the pictures.

This set of views has been arranged with a view to giving visual demonstration of two things: *First*, what has already been accomplished in France, Switzerland, and Belgium, by the faithful preaching of the gospel in the churches of the French Evangelical Association; and *Secondly*, to give some idea of the number of men and women who are tried and trained in the work and who only need additional funds to set them free for a larger ministry. These pictures are full of interest and information regarding our French work.

May we suggest that pastors and Sunday School superintendents who would like to have these pictures during the coming three months, write to the Union office without delay, suggesting the date for which the slides are wanted, and giving an alternate date in case they should not be available for the first date. It is important that we should have these requests *at once* in order to save time and expense and to make the best possible use of these slides.

Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 3 Third Quarter Lesson 34 August 20, 1939

THE LORD'S COVENANT REMOVED

Lesson Text: Exodus 34.

Golden Text: "Observe thou that which I command thee this day."—Exodus 34:11.

For Reading: Exodus 35, 36.

I. The Second Commission—verses 1-17.

The grace of God gives pardoned men a second chance. Although the people had been stiff-necked and rebellious, and had broken His laws, God in His infinite patience was willing to make another covenant with them, after fellowship had been restored through the advocacy of Moses. His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting. Moses hewed out two tables of stone like the first ones which he had broken in token of the broken covenant (Exod. 32:19).

Had the people realized the holiness of the Lord whom they had promised to obey (Exod. 24:3, 7), they would not have sinned so lightly. Consequently, God proclaimed His Name and nature to their leader, Moses. Moses must teach the people that the Lord Jehovah was a God of mercy, grace and long-suffering, but also a God of goodness and atonement has been made, but He cannot overlook sin, or clear the guilty one until the sin has been dealt with justly. Sin is a moral disease which must be purged away. If allowed to continue without rebuke it keeps on producing sorrow and death, and its evil effects are transmitted from truth. He is ever willing to forgive transgression for which one generation to another. Moses understood the lesson, and bowed before God in humiliation and worshipped Him. He acknowledged the sin of the people, and interceded on their behalf.

Conviction and contrition for past sin were followed by a renewal of commission (John 21: 15-17). God promised to demonstrate His power in a unique way, giving His people ground for confidence in Him (Deut. 4:7; Matt. 28:18).

The children of Israel were to make no covenant with the people of the land, who were virtual enemies so far as their spiritual relationships were concerned (Joshua 23:12, 13; Psa. 106: 34-38). God would drive out their enemies, but Israel must not become involved in the idolatries of the land (Exod. 23: 23-33). God will not give us victory over sin in our lives, so long as we tolerate it. We must make no compromise with evil (2 Cor. 6: 14; 2 Tim. 2: 20, 21; Jas. 4: 4).

Compromise with the inhabitants of the land would implicate Israel, drawing upon them the punishment which God would bring upon those who sinned (1 Tim. 5:22). Also, association with idolatrous nations would make obedience to God more difficult. Point out to scholars the importance of choosing as friends those who will help us in the way of godliness.

II. The Solemn Convocations—verses 18-28.

God repeated to Moses His instructions concerning the solemn feasts which the people were to observe (Exod. 23:14-19; 31:13-17; Lev. 23:4-44). They had shown their disposition to forget the Lord's commandments by breaking the first and second commandments (Exod. 20:3-5; 32:1-4). We are so prone to forget God's holy laws (2 Pet. 3:1).

Verse 20 is a splendid illustration of redemption through the blood of Christ. The first-born was to be dedicated to God in order to perpetuate God's grace in saving the first-born of every house of Israel (Exod. 12:29; 13:2-16). The ass as a beast of burden was most useful in the East, and a lamb might be sacrificed in its stead. Christ devoted Himself as an offering to God in our room and stead (Heb. 9:13-15).

The feast of unleavened bread was a memorial of redemption from Egypt (Exod. 23:14, 15; Lev. 23:4-8), and the sabbath was a memorial of creation (Exod. 31:13-17; Lev. 23:1-3). The feast of weeks typified the joy of the Lord's redeemed people (Deut. 16:9-12). The feast of first fruits was held as a token of the coming harvest, and illustrates the resurrection of Christ and the believer (Exod. 23:19; Lev. 23:9-14; 1 Cor. 15:23). When the harvest had been gathered, the people met in a convocation of holy thanksgiving (Exod. 23:16, 17; Psa. 126:5, 6).

The Lord promised to restrain the enemies of Israel while the men attended the appointed feasts. If we make the Lord's service our delight, our wants will be His care (Matt. 6:33; 1 Pet. 5:7).

III. The Sacred Communion—verses 29-35.

One cannot behold the Lord in faith without being transformed into His likeness (2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Pet. 1:8). Moses was privileged to have a glimpse of the glory of the Lord, and we may behold Him in the Word of God. The transformation wrought by the Spirit of God is not an outward, formal, forced change of action, but is an inward, spontaneous renewal of life (Rom. 12:2). Moses did not know that his face shone.

The Revised Version of verse 33 reads: "And when Moses had done speaking with them, he put a veil on his face." This reading seems to fit the passage where the spiritual meaning of this incident is explained (2 Cor. 3:6-18). It would seem that Moses put the veil over his face, not to dim the glory of his countenance, but to prevent the people from seeing that the glory was already diminishing. God seemingly did not wish them to see, even in symbol, the end of the covenant (2 Cor. 3:13), or sense that it would be superseded by another.

The glory of the first covenant of law was great, but the glory of the second covenant of grace is still greater. The first covenant was temporary, but the second covenant is eternal.

Moses removed the veil when talking with God. So is it our privilege to approach the Lord with unveiled faces. As the face of Moses reflected the glory of the Lord, so may we reflect as in a mirror the glory of Christ, and be changed to be conformed unto His image (Rom. 8:29).

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