

# The Gospel Witness

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

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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

### THE BIBLE AND THE WAR

(Eighth and final in a Volume of Sermons on "Revelations of the War", published in 1915)

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, March 7th, 1915

"I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth."—Daniel 10:21

My subject this evening is, "The Bible and the War". And my task is to try to clinch the teaching of the seven preceding addresses; for I have already repeatedly affirmed that by the disclosures of the war the truth of the Bible is more firmly established than ever.

In the first address I endeavoured to prove that the doctrine of Scripture with respect to the depravity of human nature, and its measureless capacity for evil, finds the strongest possible confirmation on Europe's fields of blood. Following upon that we tried to test the theory of the evolutionary origin and progress of mankind by the moral standards and achievements of German "kultur"; and I hope it was made apparent, at least to some minds, that, however plausible the evolutionary hypothesis may appear as an explanation of physical phenomena; the war shows the theory utterly to have broken down as a law of progress in the realm of morals. And in this connection I sought to prove that the principle of divine intervention, of the miraculous, of the presence of the supernatural in human life, of which the appearance and power of Jesus Christ in history is the supreme and comprehensive example, is the only principle by which the moral and spiritual regeneration of the human race can be effected.

The third address was on, "The Virtue of Hatred"; and in that it was observed that the mind is naturally disposed to be tolerant of evil in the abstract; but that the war has disclosed something of the potency of abstract ideas, illustrating the necessity for our learning to hate evil in the germ as well as when full grown. And of this view we found abundant confirmation in the Scripture; notably in Christ's own teaching concerning the spirituality of the law and the divine attitude toward abstract evil.

Growing out of this, in the address on Expiation we observed that that which is noted in the scripture of

truth, the necessity of expiation—which is the heart of the doctrine of the atonement—has received general recognition in the light of the revelations of the war. And in the next address on, "Future Punishment", which was the logical complement of that on Expiation, by a great text which gave us a glimpse of the immeasurable reaches of moral evil, we saw clearly the reasonableness of future retribution; and that that which was noted in the scripture of truth, in the lurid light of Germany's fearful crimes, is instinctively felt to be a necessity of justice.

In the two addresses following, on the personality of Satan, and the sovereignty of God, we found the war strikingly illustrating these plain truths of the Bible; and in the latter of these we saw how conflicting wills and motives are always sovereignly over-ruled and made to accomplish the divine purpose.

I affirm, therefore, that the Bible is not contradicted by the war; that there is no single truth of Scripture, and no single aspect of truth which the war does not illustrate and confirm. I shall try to gather up these confirmations in three or four comprehensive propositions.

#### I.

THE WAR IS SERVING TO REVEAL THE BIBLE'S SUPREMACY OVER ITS CRITICS.

Within the last few years we have read much about the menace of the possible European predominance of the Slav; and we had come to look upon a certain highly cultured nation as the bulwark of European liberties. Now we know where that warning originated: the hands were Esau's hands, but the voice was surely Jacob's. We have heard, too, not a little about the decadence of Britain and the approaching dissolution of the Empire. We now know that our apprehensions were caused by an

enemy's diagnosis, who planned to attribute to disease the dissolution he hoped to effect by poison. The war has already brought the British Empire to a moral and political renaissance; it has resulted in a discovery of her moral and material resources; and in a clarified vision of her possible ministry to the welfare of the world.

But parallel to these political revelations, the war has effected unveilings of still more important aspects of truth. You are familiar with the story of Goliath's bullying all Israel's army into a trembling and paralyzing fear of his military prowess. But have you considered the psychology of the Philistine's bluff? In it you will find a principle which accounts for much of the success which great criminals have achieved in their undertakings; a principle, also, which is legitimately employed in successful advertising. It is, that that which is most boldly and frequently asserted, is most readily and generally believed. The best sellers of certain commodities do not always owe their popularity to any superior intrinsic merit; but to the fact that people have been told a hundred thousand times that they are superior. And the story has been told so often that it has gradually gained acceptance as being true. It was thus Goliath threw his spell over Israel: he asserted his superiority so boldly and frequently, and with such contempt for all others, that the men of Israel at last accepted his own estimate of his powers: "And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days."

I recall an instance in a certain western Ontario town of the criminal use of this principle. A gentleman of fine address arrived in town at the head of a company of surveyors. They were surveying a new railroad. The engineers found it necessary to bring the road into the city through the best residential district. It happened to cross the corner of many a fine lot; and in some cases the stakes were driven on either side of a fine mansion. The owners of the property were among the most representative people of the city; people, please to observe, who could not be trifled with! A careful observer might have wondered why the surveys were so often changed; but he never would have guessed that a prominent lawyer, and banker, and business man, had whispered to the railway promoter, each in the most confidential way, that it would be worth a great deal to him if he could conveniently turn his survey in another direction, and leave his property undisturbed. And the work went merrily on. The promoter spent money freely, or, to be strictly correct, he freely incurred financial obligations to the townsfolk. The newspapers vied with each other in lauding the new enterprise which was to be such a boon to the city.

The business and professional men of the town honoured the promoter at luncheons and banquets. A prominent banker gave a garden party in his honour, to which all the leading social lights of the city were invited. And they all went. Among them was a certain young lady. When she was introduced to the great man, there was a noticeable lack of warmth in their greetings. Within an hour the promoter was in the cells. He had been identified as one of the cleverest criminals of the day. His whole railway scheme was a gigantic bluff. The next day nobody wanted to see his or her name mentioned as having been "among those present" at that garden party. It never was possible to ascertain exactly

to what extent he had swindled the city; for the men who had paid their good money to the swindler were ashamed of their folly, and kept it largely to themselves. But the promoter went to the penitentiary for seven years.

In the realm of religion, the bogey of German Biblical "scholarship" is the most gigantic bluff which has defied the armies of the living God since Goliath's day. And Israel has feared before it. The major part of the army of Israel has fallen under its spell. A few have critically examined it, and have been unafraid. Others have critically observed, and though armed with sword and shield, have feared to trust their own judgment, and thus have fallen under the spell of the giant's bold and contemptuous challenge. But the majority, unknowing, have been filled with fear, and have refused to go forth to the battle.

But the war has disillusioned us. We know now that Israel has been afraid chiefly of an helmet of brass and a loud voice. A "scholarship" which has subscribed to such flagrant immoralities and injustices as Germany has been guilty of, henceforth will speak with little authority on matters requiring such refinement of spirit as is essential to right judgments of spiritual values. The time is not far distant when Biblical Scholarship in particular, and Christian Opinion in general, will be ashamed to have it known that they were "among those present" at the German garden party. The war will have accomplished much if it fully discloses the Jesuitical working of the German mind, its arrogant assumption of superiority, and its contempt for contrary opinion in all realms of human thought.

I think it is not too much to say that God has arisen to plead His own cause. He is vindicating His own word, and putting its enemies to shame. The German giant whose contemptuous boastings of "assured results" filled Israel with alarm, has been answered in an unexpected way; and it will henceforth for many a year be the reverse of popular to determine our judgments of the word of the Lord by the standards of Philistia. This is a great day for the Bible; and I predict with confidence that one of the "assured results" of the war will be seen to be the vindication of the Bible in the face of all its foes.

## II.

My next proposition is this: THE WAR IS REVEALING THE AGREEMENT OF THE BIBLE WITH THE ARBITER OF HUMAN DESTINY.

I tried to make it clear to you last Sunday evening, that when all has been said that can be said about the human causes of the war; when responsibility for its outbreak has been duly apportioned, so far as our fallible judgment can apportion it; when the turpitude involved in that responsibility has been justly estimated and acknowledged; there still remains an element of inevitability which the statesmen of Europe recognize though it cannot be defined.

And students of ethics, of which true lovers of the Bible are the most expert, must watch the working of these elements in Europe's seething cauldron, as a chemist analyzes a compound in his laboratory. And the enlightened observer will be constrained to say, "The laws which I see in operation there, are the laws which are revealed in this Book: the will which is the predominant element there, is the will which is revealed

as sovereign here: thus the Scripture is being fulfilled."

You will ask, Do you mean that in the war explicit predictions of Scripture are being fulfilled? I answer that I have no doubt that such is the case; and that we might know it to be the case if we fully understood all that is written, and the far-reaching effects of the events of the day. But of this I am certain, that in a larger and more comprehensive sense, the Scripture is being fulfilled. For the Scripture is but a name for the revealed will of the supreme and sovereign Arbiter of human destiny. And when the moral principles of this Book are put to the proof, and found to be true, the Book is as truly honoured, and its words as really fulfilled, as when any specific prediction comes to pass. In human experience, whether in individual instances, or on a large scale such as the war provides, you may observe moral principles in action and reaction; and in this particular instance the world is afforded a most spectacular demonstration of the outworking of the moral formulae of this Book. For this is a text-book on moral chemistry. It tells how individual and national character must be compounded in order to endure in the face of certain disintegrating influences from which nothing human can escape. The war is showing us how some things crumble away; and how some things, contrary to all human theory, endure; how the vainglorious and proud are abased, and the humble are exalted; how righteousness exalteth and sin becomes a reproach. And it is not according to Darwin, or Spencer, or Nietzsche, but according to Moses, and Daniel, and Paul. And while the devout soul observes the inexorable operation of these moral laws, he becomes conscious of a spiritual Presence saying, "I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth."

I can well believe that many a prophecy is being literally fulfilled. One cannot but wonder at the change of British European policy. It has long been a cardinal principle of our foreign policy that neither Russia nor any other power was to be permitted to possess Constantinople. It has been a kind of British Monroe Doctrine to which the Turk has long owed his immunity from punishment. Now the world has been informed that Britain is in full accord with Russia's ambition in this direction. Is there another part of the agreement as yet unannounced? Are we to witness the British occupation of Palestine, the British flag flying in Jerusalem, to be followed by the repatriation of the long-exiled race to whom it was given in perpetuity by solemn covenant in a very ancient day. And what power is smashing its way through the Dardanelles to Constantinople? Is it British, or French, or are the mighty engines of war only the instruments of that irresistible Will which uttered itself in this word, "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captives into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled"? And will the spade of the archaeologist, so long forbidden or restricted in that holy land, at last be set free to work? And in that day what confirmations of the written word will be found beneath the accumulations of the centuries? Whether this be so or not, of this I am sure, in the remaking of the map of the world we shall see the working of the will of Him Who hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us. And when the map is completed we shall hear our divine Monitor saying, "I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth."

### III.

And we shall learn at last, more perfectly than we yet have learned, and the war will teach us, **THAT THE BIBLE IS THE TIMELESS WORD OF THE ETERNAL.**

With the destruction of Germany's physical power many a modern conception of life will be dissolved. I venture to believe that thousands of books which were in vogue a year or so ago will never be read after the war. The war will revolutionize the world's thinking. Many views of a year ago will be found too absurd to print, or, being in print, too ridiculous to read. Books on the war will be no longer read. I saw a list of fifty books on the war advertised only last night at less than half price. But the Bible will not go out of print. No one has been foolish enough to propose that soldiers be supplied with books summarizing the alleged "assured results" of the Higher Criticism, for their guidance in reading the Book of books on the field of battle. But millions of copies of the Book itself have been supplied the soldiers in the trenches; and still it is proving fresher and sweeter than a letter from home. Can you tell me why this war, which has turned the world upside down, which has poured confusion upon all human planning, which has obsoleted many a witty invention, which has neutralized our philosophies, and has revolutionized most modern conceptions of life, should find the Bible absolutely unsurprised, and the one and only book whose message is relevant to the "unprecedented" situation? There is only one answer, It is the timeless word of The Eternal.

"A glory gilds the sacred page,  
Majestic like the sun;  
It gives a light to every age,  
It gives, but borrows none."

After all that men have said and written against it, it is still the one Book which is worth reading at such a time as this. And it is all because it enshrines the person of the universal Man, Who is also the universal King. On Him the Christian statesman will rely, and to His word of counsel he will look for guidance in the gravest crises in the experience of the state. And, like Joshua, the Christian commander on land and sea will listen for this word's assurance of the presence in the battle of the Captain of the Lord's hosts. The soldier will read it in the trenches, and the sailor who must battle on the sea. And the Book will speak to them as no other could of home and friends and of all sweet influences which make life rich and beautiful. Even as I speak to you, some of our own boys will perhaps be reading it in far-off France or Belgium; and as the shell of the ocean shore seems to echo the murmur of the wave, so this Book will speak to them as the echo of all sweet music and of all holy voices which have ever spoken to them of their Father in heaven. And the wounded will breathe his fervent "Amen" when it is softly read to him and pillow his head on its promises, and find them hospitable as his mother's breast. And the dying will listen to its sweet assurance of pardon through the Saviour's blood, and resurrection by His life. And as the mariner, when the storm rages, and the night is

unrelieved by a single star, keeps his eye upon the gleam from the lighthouse on the far-off shore, and at last drops anchor in the quiet haven of his desire, so the departing spirit will follow this shining light, and find it shining more and more unto the perfect day. And in the house of mourning, whose threshold will never more be crossed by the feet of some brave spirits who have died in faith, the widow and the orphan, the mother, and the maiden lover, will find its precious promises magnified by their tears, and their sorrows solaced by its consolations.

And in the sphere of human activity, this Book will be restored to its place. And men will return from their speculations to the life of faith, and from their philosophical vagaries to the verities of revelation. And the army of the Lord will go forth to battle armed with the weapon tried and true; and where human pride would fain have ruled, this Sceptre of Truth shall prevail. And thus, may we hope, that even the land of Luther shall learn afresh to love the word of God; and other lands shall hear as never before, the wondrous story of redeeming love. And when the fulness of time is come; when the appointed hour of the King's coronation shall strike, and He of Whom the whole Book speaks, Whose death and resurrection and coming again, it proclaims, when He shall be manifested, and shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, we shall see in His coming, as now we see in the preparation for His coming, only that which is noted in the scripture of truth.

"Almighty Lord, the sun shall fail,  
The moon forget her nightly tale,  
The deepest silence hush on high,  
The radiant chorus of the sky;—

"But fixed for everlasting years,  
Unmoved amid the wreck of spheres,  
Thy word shall shine in cloudless day,  
When heaven and earth have passed away."

### NAZIISM IS AVOWEDLY ANTICHRISTIAN

And should be steadfastly resisted by the Confession and Intercession of the Church of Christ

From the current issue of *Our Outlook*, published by Rev. John Willmott, of Highgate Road Baptist Church, London, England.

[It was Archbishop Usher who said that the Church, having already encountered two great persecutions, first from Paganism, next from Popery, would yet have to meet the most terrible of its persecutions from Infidelity. Nothing, indeed, can be more certain. It is certain because Scripture declares it. Nor is the evidence of facts altogether wanting.

What is Truth if it be not aggressive? Soldiership is an essential characteristic of servanthip to Christ in a world like this. Christianity, if faithful, cannot cease to be aggressive" (B. W. Newton, 1859).

The following extracts, just a fraction of the evidence, culled from various sources, I have arranged in their relation to Christian faith and practice. What an indictment, "even our enemies themselves being judges"!—J.W.]

#### God

Adolf Hitler—a man who believes himself to be a prophet sent by God, and receives his inspirations direct from the "Germanic God".

(Edgar Mowrer in *They Betrayed Czechoslovakia*.)

Hitler is a phenomenon of nature. He is a mask of the collective unconsciousness of the German people. He might be compared with Mohammed. For Hitler, no human obligations, no ethical laws, and therefore, no such things as promises which are to be kept can exist. Hitler feels himself far above human methods and institutions.

(Professor Jung, Swiss psychologist at Zurich.)

Hitler "hears voices" telling him what to do, consults astrologers and crystal gazers and indulges in ascetic practices.

In the September (1938) crisis risky things were done. We had luck because we had the trust of the people. God helped us. He would not have helped us if we had not deserved it. *I believe rather in a Germanic God than a Christian One.* We are not working for the next world, but for this. We believe in force.

(Dr. Goebbels, German Minister of Propaganda.)

Europe does not understand the danger of National Socialism. Why not? Because it does not understand the First Commandment ("Thou shalt have none other gods before ME"). Because it does not see Nazism means the conscious, radical and systematic transgression of this First Commandment. Because it does not see that this transgression, because it is sin against GOD, drags the corruption of the nations in its wake.

(Prof. Karl Barth.)

#### Jesus Christ

That belief in Herr Hitler is being substituted for belief in Jesus seems to be clear, and the subsidiary members of the Nazi hierarchy will no doubt eventually be substituted for the saints.

(*World Digest*.)

Germany's fate is the fate of the world. God fulfils His will through peoples, through a chosen people. The saviour whom He has sent will fill the German people with His salvation.

(*Christ in the Third Reich*.)

The following is an excerpt from a "Scripture Lesson" that has been in force in Nazi schools for some years. It is called, "Twenty Questions":

Q.—Who, children, is it in these days who most reminds us of Jesus, through his love of humble people and his readiness for self-sacrifice?

A.—The Fuehrer.

Q.—Who most reminds us of the disciples, because of their loyal attachment to the Fuehrer?

A.—General Goering, Dr. Goebbels and Captain Roehm. (In later editions, since the bloodbath, Roehm has been deleted.)

(*The New Statesman and Nation*, quoted from *School for Barbarians* by Erika Mann.)

#### The Holy Spirit

As Christ in His twelve disciples raised a stock fortified unto martyrdom, whose belief shattered the great Roman Empire, even so in Germany today we are experiencing the same thing—Adolf Hitler is the true Holy Ghost.

(Hans Kerl, German Minister for Ecclesiastical Affairs.)

#### The Bible

Through this tribulation the Church in Germany has been enabled to make a discovery: the discovery of the glory of the foundation on which the Church stands—the glory of the Word of God. There awoke the understanding for what the National Socialist, in anger, but quite correctly, called, "the totalitarian claim of the Bible": of the claim of the Word of God which must possess us completely or not at all. There awoke the understanding for that which the Reformers in the sixteenth century had uttered in tongues of fire, *Grace alone! Holy Writ alone!* The more the heretics raged from without, shouting, Not God alone, but man too! and finally, Man, man alone! the more powerfully, though in all stillness, that other voice spoke, "Glory to God alone in the highest."

(Prof. Karl Barth.)

Everybody in the camp knew Pastor Niemoeller and all spoke of him with respect. Few ever saw him; he was kept prisoner in the "bunker", in solitary confinement, under continual observation, and allowed to walk for half an hour each day in the separate yard. The only reading material he was allowed, besides the New Testament, was National Socialist literature, such as Hitler's *My Struggle* and Rosenberg's *Myths of the Nineteenth Century*. To date Niemoeller has only availed himself of the Bible, which is always in his cell—a concession granted by the Government. The Camp

Commandant is determined to make Niemoeller "lose faith". For this purpose he placed a convinced atheist and communist in the next cell and allowed him to talk to Niemoeller and take his daily walk at the same time. The atheist was a very intelligent man used to arguing. He had been promised all sorts of advantages if he could "convert Niemoeller". Actually both prisoners enjoyed discussing their different viewpoints. The communist, however, begged Niemoeller to lend him his Bible, which he said he had not seen since the day he was confirmed, but which now assumed a quite different importance for him! The same day Camp Commandant Barabowski had the atheist removed! As punishment for Niemoeller the Black Guards devised a spectacle for him. During his half-hour's exercise they placed an empty beer barrel used as a pulpit by a seemingly drunken prisoner in what seemed clerical garb. In a filthy obscene manner he abused the pastor in blasphemous language while in the background stood rows of Black Guards roaring with laughter. Niemoeller completely ignored the scene. (From a refugee's account of experiences when prisoner in Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, given in the *News Chronicle*.)

### Christianity

He who believes that he can bring into line Christianity and National Socialism is neither a true Christian nor a true National Socialist.

(Dr. Ernst Bergmann, Prof. of Philosophy, Berlin.)

The Nazi revolt is against the fundamental truths of Christianity and not merely against the political influence of ecclesiastical authorities.

(Dr. N. Micklem, Oxford.)

We begin with the child when he is three years old. As soon as he begins to think he gets a little flag put into his hand. The worship of the State as an absolute is a religion not uncongential to the German mind or to German tradition. Heine, more than a century ago, predicted that Germany would one day renounce Christianity.

(Rosenberg.)

The following are some of the fifty points contained in a leaflet circulated among children of the Hitler Youth in Austria:

Christianity is a religion for slaves and fools.

Christianity is equivalent to Communism.

Christianity puts niggers on an equality with Germans.

There is no Christian culture.

Christianity has corrupted the Germans, acquainted them with conceptions, such as theft and adultery, which were previously unknown to them.

Jesus was a Jew.

How did Christ die? Whimpering on a cross.

The Ten Commandments are the expression of the lowest human instincts.

A good people does not need a Saviour.

No more churches are being built now. Nobody thinks of doing such a thing. It shows the obvious decadence of Christianity.

(*The Church Times*.)

Even worse than pure-blooded Judaism is the intermingling of races and culture brought about by Christianity. The introduction of this religion (Christianity) was a great misfortune for Germany, causing a great loss of good Nordic blood and confusing the true ethical values which are based on the ancient history of the race. For blood and race represent a complete spiritual world. These alien elements must be eliminated in the springtide of the revival of the German consciousness. If there is a Heaven the way to Heaven is only by Germany.

(Quoted by Dr. Micklem from *The Philosophical Basis of the National Socialist Programme*.)

### The One Church

Various attempts have been made to achieve a solution of the Church problem. Now eleven Church leaders, headed by the president of the Prussian Supreme Church Council, Dr. Werner (the lawyer whom the Hitler Government has put in control of the Church Ministry), who is also head of the Church Office of the German Evangelical Church, have openly and unequivocally declared themselves to be in agreement with the principles of the "National Church" (that is the German-Christian Church, or Church of German

Christians). They have thus proved themselves to be the enemies of the one universal Church of Christ.

What the National Church stands for has just now been made plain in the laws passed that non-Aryans may not be members either of the clergy or the congregation. Pastors may have no official dealings with non-Aryans, and may not utilize Church buildings or equipment for the purpose. Thus shall non-Aryans be excluded from the churches.

Through the new decrees the above-mentioned Church Governments prevent people redeemed by Christ from listening to the comforting Word of God in the Christian congregation. They exclude people in need of salvation. They seek to do away with that which Jesus Christ has bought by His bitter suffering—for Christ has created of Jews and Gentiles one holy body, the one Christian Church. Now they re-erect the wall of partition broken down by Christ, and thus turn the Christian Church into a pharisaical sect.

Each one of us will be able to judge what these latest "Decrees" imply for the Church and the Gospel. The hour has come once more for us to make public confession of our faith. By keeping silent we should become accomplices in the destruction of our Evangelical Church. We reject the application of political standards to the life of the Church. By issuing these laws the men responsible for them show themselves to be the enemies of the Cross of Christ. We beg the Pastors and congregations not to keep these laws, but rather to maintain Christian community with all those who submit to this yoke. We would rather bring suffering upon ourselves than share in the guilt of destroying the Body of Christ. We will remain faithful to the Word of the Scriptures which tells us, "For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Eph. ii. 14.) Jesus Christ is the Lord of our Church, and blessed is he who keeps His commands!

(From a letter reproduced in *The British Weekly*, signed by The Council of Brethren of the Evangelical Church of the Old Prussian Union.)

### Liberty of Worship

By a Government interdict of April 28th, 1937, all meetings of the "Christian Assembly" gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus (known in England as "The Brethren") were forbidden in Germany. The greater part of the Brethren, under pressure of events, accepted the unscriptural organization of assemblies, established in accordance with the statutes of a new community—a compromise between the State and the Truth. Many, however, refused to enter the less difficult way of disobedience to the Word of God.

In the new organization, the essential truths of the assembly of God according to Scripture are not only distorted and debased in principle, but destroyed in practice.

The new organization is called "The Union of Christians not attached to the Churches", and among its "Statutes" are the following:

To support the Hitler Government absolutely. Entry into the Union is through the local community with the approval of the local official. The management of the Union is vested in the State mandatory, assisted by the Council, composed at first of the founders of the Union. Afterwards it will be elected by the assembly of the district mandatories, as also will the State mandatory. The State mandatory is president of the Union, and will arrange its procedure and watch its interests. The local mandatory may be overruled by the State mandatory. The State mandatory or his mandatories manage the financial arrangements in each community.

Further, it may be observed that members of the community are enjoined to conclude all their business letters with the words, "Heil Hitler", as well as those letters relating to the interests of the communities and the children of God. There is no appeal to any higher authority than the German State. The organization is pledged to yield unqualified obedience to the State, and submission to the permanent control of its affairs by the State.

(*A Few Papers relating to Assembly Affairs in Germany*.)

### The Reformed Faith

The Confessional Church in the Old Prussian Union is an illegal organization within this Church. It consists of those loyal ministers and congregations who cannot recognize Government Departments and heretical Government nominees as exercising any binding authority in the Church of Christ.

Hence they have banded themselves together to train and ordain ministers and to exercise an interim Church Government that shall stand *loyal to the principles of the Faith as recognized in the Reformation*. They claim to be alone legitimate (even if irregular) on the ground that they alone are loyal to the principles of the Church that existed before the Nazi Revolution. The position of this provisional Church organization has now become almost impossible. It numbers amongst its leaders many of the most outstanding, as well as the most godly, of the German clergy. Hardly one of the leaders is now at liberty to exercise his ministry, and Dr. Niemoeller is still in a concentration camp. They are forbidden to write or speak in Germany; scarcely one of them can get a passport. Police raids, the confiscation of their typewriters, cyclostyles and funds have been frequent. Most of them are not allowed to leave Berlin, while those outside are not allowed to visit Berlin. Congregations are forbidden to make collections for their support. Never did our brethren more urgently require our prayers.

(Dr. N. Micklem in *The British Weekly*.)

### The Christian Ordinances

Details of the "Nordic Naming Ceremony", devised by the Neo-Pagan Movement in Germany to take the place of Christian baptism are published in a Berlin weekly religious magazine. The ceremony is carried out by the father. There is no mention of God, and a sacred and eternal character is attributed to earth, water and fire.

After the singing of Nordic songs the child, which is old enough to perform certain actions, is made to hold a bowl of earth; then a bowl filled with water; then made to look into the blazing fire. At each act the father intones and recites certain deifying attributes of these elements connecting them with fate and, finally, the father receives the child into "the ring of our faith and the community of kindred people and race".

(*Daily Telegraph*.)

The text of the Holy Communion had to resist distortion and destruction by the "German Christians". Luther would have expressed still more strongly that "the words of Jesus Christ remain firm" had he lived today to see evangelical pastors celebrating the bread as the symbol of the German earth, and the wine as the symbol of German blood. This is where the blasphemy in the new "National Church" became evident. Against this Pastor Niemoeller protested in word and in deed. He put the Holy Communion into the place in the Service to which it belonged. There was represented the source of his strength to fight—the triumph of Jesus Christ. The sentimental words and tunes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were strongly disliked by him, and in their place resounded the hymns of the Reformation, those by Luther and Paul Gerhardt, songs of the Cross and the Resurrection, of faith and of promise.

(*Niemoeller and His Creed*.)

### Christian Ethics

At the root of it all is a new philosophy: a paganist ideology which regards abstract ethical principles, like honour, truth and righteousness, as "symptoms of degeneracy". In their place are enthroned "the concrete realistic facts" of brute force, means-justified-by-end, grabology, thuggery, steal-first-and-explain-after, in other words, godlessness.

(*The British Weekly*.)

The completely amoral régime of National Socialism steadily ignores the fact that this resort to the worst of human motives, to the extreme of brutality and violence, to hatred, vengeance, envy, ill-will, to licentiousness, to robbery, to lying in principle, its resort to all these motives and methods has set in motion a ruin of the national character on a scale hitherto unimaginable.

(*Germany's Revolution of Destruction* by Herman Rauschning, formerly President of the Danzig Senate; retired in disgust and became a refugee.)

### The Jews

When that occurs which is now in Germany notoriously resolved upon and already put into practice, namely, the "physical extermination" of the people of Israel, the burning of synagogues and Scriptures, the rejection of the "Jew-God" and the "Jew-Bible", as being of the very essence of

all that which ought to be an abomination to the German "man", then it is thereby, and thereby alone, decided that there the attempt is being made to strike a mortal blow into the roots of the Church. Can anyone so much as want to close his ears to all the unutterable misery caused by this anti-Semitic pest, crying to Heaven in every German country? But how is it possible that our Christian ears do not tingle in view of what this plight and malignancy mean?

How can Christians bear to see and hear what this distress and villainy means, and remain unmoved? He who scorns and afflicts the Jews scorns and afflicts Him Who died for the sins of the Jew first, and then for our sins. A Jew-hater is, in principle, a hater of Christ. Anti-Semitism is sin against the Holy Ghost, for it means rejecting the Grace of God.

(Prof. Karl Barth.)

### Foreign Missions

English people are only now beginning to realize what Hitlerism involves and what its world-expansion would mean to the human race. There is a passage from *Mein Kampf* which has its bearing on Foreign Missions and African Colonies: Hitler writes, "One hears from time to time that a negro has become a lawyer, teacher, tenor, or the like. This is a sin against all reason; it is criminal lunacy to train a born semi-ape to become a lawyer. It is a sin against the Eternal Creator to train Hottentots and Kaffirs to intellectual professions."

(*The Baptist Times*.)

### The Issues

The two main charges against National Socialism are, that it is and has the features of a Church in radical opposition to the Christian Church; and that, as a political institution, it appears as a State that totally destroys law. On its political side it is a dictatorship totalling and absolutely claiming man and men in body and soul, removing humanness, curbing and annihilating freedom. On the religious side it assumes that the Dictator is necessary for all men, for body and soul, life and death, time and eternity.

The real function of the secular State is to give room and opportunity for the proclamation of the Kingdom of God whose King is Christ. The Christian's "right" is based in his King; the "crown rights of Jesus" are to be seen in the content of the message of "Justification" to proclaim which is the Church's task. That is why Christians have to "intercede" for Rulers in order that they may lead a calm and tranquil life in which they may proclaim the Word to all men (Titus ii. 2). The Church's submission (Rom. xiii.) can in no wise mean that the Church must subserve the undertakings of the secular State when these are turned against, instead of protecting, the preaching of God's righteousness.

The Church is a society confessing Jesus Christ as God's Messiah, in union with the people of Israel, though Israel rejected Him. As Christians they confess that Jesus Christ is the one hope and stay both of the Church and the world: without Him the world is lost. Christendom's service is to repeat incessantly Who Christ is, what He did, does and will do. Christians are to witness to Christ's sovereignty. The Church is a confessing Church, or, if it ceases to confess, Christendom has missed its way.

The Church cannot remain "a dumb dog" in view of Naziism. On many other problems she may remain neutral, but not on this. To compromise here is to please the Devil who knows no more welcome confederate than a Church that is ever in silence, always meditating and discussing about its good calling and tidy costume, and not at all bothered about the transcendence of the Kingdom of God. Such a Church has become a dumb hound. Where stands Christendom? Neutral? FOR or AGAINST ANTI-CHRIST?

(Prof. Karl Barth.)

### JARVIS STREET LAST SUNDAY

Rev. W. S. Whitcombe preached in Jarvis Street last Sunday morning, and Rev. W. Gordon Brown at seven o'clock. There were good congregations at both services—and good sermons. Dr. Shields, who was ill, expects to preach at both services next Sunday.



## NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

## AN UNCHRISTIAN CALENDAR

Just before each Convention of our Union there is always a great inflow of money into the treasury. It is like the swelling of Jordan, or should we rather say of the Nile, for it irrigates and fertilizes in preparation for the harvest of the coming year. But after the Convention is over, our churches need a little time to recover from the special pre-Convention effort, and the Union treasury has always been low the month after Convention. After that comes Christmas, and Santa Claus must be a Regular Baptist for he pre-empt's our claim on the treasury. After Christmas the January thaw brings a lull in general business conditions. The coming of Spring revives our hope, but alas this is a time of sowing and not of reaping, and credit not cash is in demand. In summer, of course, vacation time empties both churches and treasuries. And then, at last, comes the fall and the Convention. But remember, it comes but once a year, and our bills come every month. Notwithstanding, we have never yet written to our Home Mission pastors and said, "No cheques this month". Every month we have written saying, "Enclosed you will find a cheque . . ."

But how does the Union do it? The answer is simple. All of our churches, fortunately, do not observe the unchristian calendar outlined above. In summer's heat and winter's cold, during the mud of spring and the rain of autumn, they keep the common cause ever before the people and pursue a systematic plan of regular giving. From time to time they forward their contributions, and so the work goes on. May we make a special appeal to all our churches to avoid being so occupied in observing the wind and regarding the clouds that they have no time either to sow or to reap. But let us rather follow the sage advice of the preacher, which surely must have been especially written for Regular Baptists of Ontario and Quebec: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand."

## MR. SLADE IN MONTREAL

Rev. H. C. Slade is now on his way to Montreal to hold special services in the new undertaking in Notre Dame de Grace, a suburb of that great city. His itinerary for a month's visitation of the churches is rapidly taking its final shape, and we look forward to having further news from him for succeeding number of THE GOSPEL WITNESS.

Regarding Timmins, Mr. Slade writes: "Our church is enjoying the blessing of God in the salvation of souls at present. Last Sunday night two husbands and their wives walked the aisle to confess Christ as Saviour. One couple was Roman Catholic." During Mr. Slade's absence Pastor W. C. Tompkins of Lachute, Quebec, will supply the pulpit at Timmins. Let us remember in prayer all the churches and pastors involved in this special undertaking.—W.

## Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 3 Fourth Quarter Lesson 49 December 3rd, 1939

## THE CITIES OF REFUGE

Lesson Text: Numbers 35.

Golden Text: "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."—Matthew 5:7.

For Reading: Numbers 30 to 34.

## I. Residence for the Levites—verses 1 to 8.

As the children of Israel approached the Land of Promise the Lord gave Moses final instructions concerning the distribution among the tribes of the land of which they should gain possession. The tribes were named after the sons of Jacob except in the case of Joseph, whose sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, represented him.

The priestly tribe of Levi was not assigned a portion of the land, as were the other tribes. They belonged to Jehovah, and Jehovah belonged to them; He Himself was their inheritance (Num. 18:20, 21; Joshua 18:33; 14:3-5). In a similar manner the Christian esteems the Lord Jesus Christ as God's greatest gift; He Himself is more to be desired than any of the blessings which He can bestow (Song of Sol. 2:16; 1 Cor. 3:21-23). The Levites were also to consider that their priesthood was their inheritance (Joshua 18:7). What a privileged class they were! They might stand before God, and minister for Him to the multitudes (Num. 16:9; Deut. 10:8; 2 Chron. 29:11). The Lord has chosen us to be priests, that we may stand in His presence to receive His messages, and then to deliver His word to the people (1 Kings 10:8; 17:1; Jer. 15:19; Ezek. 83:7; 1 Pet. 5:3; Rev. 1:6).

Although the Levites had a spiritual inheritance, rather than a material one, they were to be given cities in which to dwell (Joshua 21:1-42). The principle of grace is illustrated in the provision that the suburbs of the cities were to be theirs also. The suburbs of these cities belonged to the priests perpetually, although they might sell the cities and the houses (Lev. 25:32-34).

The six cities of refuge were to be selected from the cities belonging to the Levites, and hence they were holy cities, cities of God. It is the prerogative of God to offer mercy to unworthy and sinful men: salvation is a gift of sovereign grace (Lam. 3:22; Dan. 9:9).

Each tribe must give for the benefit of the Levites, but not all the tribes contributed an equal number (Num. 26:53, 54). The Scriptural method of giving is proportionate, according to one's ability (Mark 12:41-44; 1 Cor. 16:2).

## II. Refuge for the Homicides—verses 9 to 29.

The cities provided safe places of refuge for the ones who fled to them for protection (Joshua 20:1-6). Men in danger of death should flee from Satan, the Avenger, (Matt. 3:7; Rev. 6:16). They will find safety and security in Christ (Psa. 32:7; 119:114; Isa. 32:2).

The cities of refuge were available, not merely for the children of Israel, but also for the strangers who sojourned in their midst. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes (Rom. 1:16), and salvation is free to every one who will come through Christ and take advantage of God's overtures of mercy (Isa. 55:1; John 3:16; Rev. 22:17).

The protection offered to the slayer in these ancient times was but temporary and uncertain. He was safe in the city of his refuge only so long as the High Priest who was in office at the time lived (Joshua 20:6). One can imagine such an hunted one watching anxiously lest the High Priest should sicken and die. Our salvation, on the other hand, is eternal and secure, since our High Priest ever liveth. The Lord Jesus Christ was not made after the law of a carnal commandment, but according to the power of an indissoluble life (Heb. 7:16, 23-25).

Should the man whose life was threatened venture outside the boundaries of the city, he would be responsible if harm should ensue. No safety from the penalty and power of sin can be found outside of Christ. He is the only ark to Whom the sinner may repair lest the floods of judgment overwhelm him (Gen. 6:17, 18; John 14:6; Acts 4:12).

## III. Retribution for the Murderers—verses 30 to 34.

The congregation of Israel must decide whether the suspected man had been guilty of homicide or of murder. Circumstances alter cases, and the motive of an action determines its character (Exod. 21:12-14; Deut. 19:4-13; Matt. 5:21, 22; 1 John 3:15). The laws given to Israel form the basis of modern jurisprudence, since they were founded upon eternal principles of justice and kindness. They were the laws of God.

The establishment of the cities of refuge did not conflict with the existing laws concerning the punishment for murder; the sentence of death for purposeful killing still held good (Lev. 24:17-22). God's mercy is never extended in opposition to His holiness, and in pardoning the sinner He is just as well as the justifier of the one who believes in Jesus (Rom. 3:23-26). Divine justice was fully satisfied when Christ died as a substitute for sinners.

Two witnesses must testify before the charge of murder could be sustained (Deut. 17:6, 7; 19:15; Matt. 18:16; 26:59-61; Heb. 10:28).

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\*NOTE—The titles given in italics are of sermons preached in 1915 and published in a volume entitled "Revelations of the War," and reprinted in successive issues of "The Gospel Witness" as being as applicable to the present war as to the last one. Of the War Sermons therefore Nos. 5, 7, 8, 9 and 11 contain two sermons each, and Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 10 only one. The remaining sermons in "Revelations of the War" will appear successively in "The Gospel Witness."

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