

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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INTERDENOMINATIONALISM

The last two weeks we have written respectively on denominationalism and undenominationalism. This week we offer a few observations on the related subject of "interdenominationalism".

There is an interdenominationalism which is not only legitimate, but altogether praiseworthy. It is a principle which operates in certain organizations which render service to, and greatly augment the powers of really Christian bodies.

This principle is conspicuously illustrated in *The British and Foreign Bible Society*, and its auxiliaries throughout the world. It is an organization that is neither denominational nor undenominational, but interdenominational. The end of all its operations is to circulate the Word of God without note or comment. In the exercise of that ministry, for more than a century, it has been the right-hand of every Christian missionary organization, of every name, throughout the world. It has published the Holy Scriptures, and portions thereof, in somewhere near seven hundred different languages and dialects.

As the missionaries of various societies have learned the language of the people, and reduced it to a written form, and then translated the Scriptures into the native tongue, the British and Foreign Bible Society has always stood ready to print and publish the new version. It is difficult to see how many missionary societies could have put themselves in a position to circulate the Scripture in native tongues at all without the aid of the Bible Society.

This work is always done at minimum cost—indeed, one of our earliest recollections is that of a glossy-covered Bible in Sunday School, bearing the name of The British and Foreign Bible Society, together with the words, "Sold under cost—eight pence." All this has been made possible, of course, by the fact that the Society has received the support of all Christian denominations. It is recognized as a worthy and faithful servant of all the churches, and merits and receives their support. We can think of no worthier object to which money can be dedicated than to the support of a society that exists solely for the circulation of the Word of God.

For such interdenominationalism we have not only the profoundest respect, but the most grateful admiration.

This interdenominational principle finds many worthy

exemplifications in religious journalism. We shall not mention any particular paper, but we know of not a few which are absolutely true to the great essentials of evangelical Christianity, and provide a medium for the circulation of religious information among churches of all names. Without prejudice or distinction, they report the activities of all evangelical bodies, and publish articles by their various representatives. Such journalism involves no compromise of principle. It recognizes that there is truth in all the various bodies, and assists in the dissemination of the truth of the gospel.

There are also book and tract societies which restrict their publications to those which are loyal to evangelical principles; and endeavor by the publication and circulation of Christian literature, to render assistance to the cause of Christ in general. For all these, we are grateful, and appreciate their great ministry.

The principle also is illustrated in some interdenominational missionary organizations. This writer confesses himself a Baptist, and feels it is his duty to put his scriptural convictions into every form of Christian activity in which he may be permitted to engage. But we hate Pharisaism with perfect hatred. While we believe that the people called Baptists, who are true to their historic heritage, more nearly approximate the scriptural, apostolic position, than others, we are not foolish enough to suppose that we have all the truth; nor uncharitable enough to assume that others have none. For example: we could not be comfortable if shut up to Anglican ceremonialism. Notwithstanding we have often felt in Anglican assemblies that worship was being offered to God in spirit and in truth; and we have entered into the services with great spiritual profit and delight. We have preached in pulpits of nearly every denomination, including both the Established Church of Scotland in Scotland, and the Established Church of England in England.

Many of the noblest Christians we have ever known, men and women who manifestly unmistakably daily walked with God, we have found among people who were not Baptists; and therefore, though we have the profoundest convictions of truth in respect to baptism and other principles distinctively held by Baptists, we rejoice greatly in the fellowship of all who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity and in truth.

It is because of that we are forced to recognize the

value of such interdenominational missionary societies as we have referred to. Of course, we wish they were all Baptist! But we recognize the place and value of missionary organizations which foster missions of all denominations, and help support missionaries of many names, insisting only and fundamentally that they shall be true to the Word of God as they understand it, and preach only salvation through the blood of Christ.

Such a missionary organization as we have in mind is *The China Inland Mission*. It supports missionaries of many denominational affiliations, but accepts none who are not true to the gospel of saving grace. It requires no missionary in its service to compromise his principles, or to abandon his particular denominational affiliation; but exists to provide an outlet for the missionary passion and obligations of all denominations.

Again we say that while we love sound evangelical Baptist missions best of all, we prefer, and would support, an interdenominational mission like *The China Inland Mission* before we would support a missionary society untrue to the faith which, notwithstanding, calls itself Baptist. In fact, when we were doing battle against the Modernistic heresy of Professor L. H. Marshall in McMaster University, the Foreign Mission Board of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec made itself one of the biggest battalions in support of Professor Marshall's heresy, and one of the bitterest opponents of the evangelical positions for which we stood.

It then became impossible for us to continue our support of the Foreign Mission Board of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec, and until we had a foreign mission work of our own we put the *China Inland Mission* on the Jarvis Street budget. We refer to it now only as an illustration of legitimate and worthy interdenominationalism.

There is also a kind of interdenominational co-operation which is not only lawful and expedient, but really necessary. We have counted it a privilege to co-operate with men of all denominations in matters of temperance and moral reform. We have spoken on such matters from the same platform with a Roman Catholic priest with whom we had nothing in common ecclesiastically, and almost nothing in common theologically, but with whom we found ourselves at one in his desire and purpose to make the neighborhood in which we worked as clean and wholesome as possible. Indeed, we would co-operate with people of every race and creed, to put out a fire; and in doing so, we should feel we were not in the least compromising our religious convictions.

But there is a kind of interdenominationalism which, in our view, is most reprehensible. It finds exemplification in some group or organization which maintains a separate existence; and is independent of any corporate control—yet calls itself "interdenominational"—perhaps a tabernacle or mission, or something else; and claims the right to appeal to, and even to prey upon all denominations for its support.

Years ago we were summer supply in what was then a large and important church. The Pastor was away from home, and we were substituting for him; and we were asked to meet the deacons of the church to discuss a certain matter with them. A certain missionary society which claimed to be "interdenominational", although it had a distinctive name, and was independent of all but its own control, had asked permission to use the church building for a three days' "missionary con-

ference." The deacons asked us if we could offer any advice in the Pastor's absence, to which we replied something to this effect.

"We know something of this organization. It has in its ranks not a few able and attractive men. They will come to your church, and preach what they call their "fourfold gospel"—it was before Pentecostalism came into view—"They will specially emphasize the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and the obligation of all believers to preach the gospel in the regions beyond. They will urge upon their hearers the duty of Christian liberality, and specially the duty and privilege of giving to foreign missions. They will urge their hearers to be very careful, however, where they give their money, and to be sure to give it to organizations that recognize the ministry of the Holy Ghost, so that their funds may be administered by spiritually-filled men."

Then we told them, "Before they leave, they will have made the acquaintance of certain men and women in your congregation whom they will appoint as their agents to circulate their literature, and to receive contributions for the funds of this missionary organization. When your year's end comes, you will probably find that your missionary givings for your denominational missions have been cut in half, or perhaps still more seriously reduced; and the rest will have gone to this organization which asked the hospitality of your church, in order that it might undermine your work and all but destroy your missionary effort."

The deacons accepted our advice, and refused admission. When the leader of that society died at a later date, great confusion obtained in the mission funds. No one suggested—or believed—there had been any dishonesty, but it was made abundantly evident that however Spirit-filled these men may have been, some of them were very poor administrators; and had failed to obey the scriptural admonition to "provide things honest in the sight of all men".

We may displease some by what we write, but we cannot refrain from writing it: we hold that that kind of interdenominationalism is wholly parasitical in its very nature; and however strictly they may conform to the letter of Scripture in their evangelical teaching, they know very little about the essence of Christian ethics.

We have written enough, we hope, to have made a very clear distinction between legitimate interdenominationalism and its opposite.

THE INEPT SPEECH OF THE ONTARIO ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Following is a statement read by Dr. Shields before the sermon in Jarvis St. Church, Sunday evening, April 7th, 1940.

Canada and the Empire are at war with the most ruthless foe of all history; and all the nations of the world are in daily fear of its spreading. It is not an exaggeration to say that there is not a spot of earth, nor an individual on such a spot, that is unaffected by the war.

At issue in this war are all the chief values of life, comprehended in the one word, liberty—liberty of thought, of speech, of action, and involved in these, liberty of conscience. By which we mean the moral

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"AS THEY WENT THEY WERE CLEANSED"

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

Preached in Jarvis St. Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, April 7th, 1940

(Stenographically Reported)

"And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed." Luke 17:14.

The miracles of Jesus were intended to be "signs". They were manifestations of the outgoing of divine power, and of its operations in the material world. They should, therefore, be subjected to the closest examination. Thereby we may learn how we may be helped by the divine Helper.

When Jesus entered into a certain village "there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: and they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy upon us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests." He made them no promise explicitly; He did not even touch them: but told them only to shew themselves to the priests; "and it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed."

I want you to look into *the great principle involved* in these words, and consider *its application to ourselves*.

I.

Look at THE PRINCIPLE here set forth. You remember what importance Jesus attached to words: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh". "For every idle word that man shall speak he shall give an account." Words express personality. Behind the words are desire, and purpose, and will. Thus the words, "Let there be light", had in them the purpose and power of the Creator. So, too, the words of Jesus had in them recreative power, because they were the expression of the desire and purpose of a divine personality: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Out of the abundance of His heart, His mouth spake, and His heart was the power-house of the universe.

And the power resident in the divine word ceases to be inactive when it rests upon an obedient spirit. These lepers would never have been able to discern any potency in the word of direction, "Go shew yourselves unto the priests", by any intellectual analysis of it; the profit of obedience could never have been demonstrated by any sort of philosophy. The elements of this simple formula could never have been made to divulge their relative potency. But when met by an obedient spirit, the words became a healing power. "As they went, they were cleansed."

The preciousness, the priceless potency of the promises and precepts of Jesus can never be determined by any mere intellectual analysis of them. The value of the Bible, the riches of grace, the power of the gospel, the superabounding wealth of Christ, are not to be theoretically apprehended and appraised, but experimentally proved and enjoyed. Our glorious Lord Jesus is the Fountain of healing, and health, and power, and joy, and life, abounding and eternal; but He can be known only as He is obeyed: His virtues flow to the touch of obedient faith: as they go, they are cleansed.

II.

And now let us see HOW THIS PRINCIPLE MAY BE APPLIED TO OURSELVES.

And, to begin at the beginning of all Christian experience, it may be said that *Christ's promise of deliverance from the guilt of sin is to be proved by obedience*. It is enough that a sick man knows that he is ill, and obeys the doctor's orders. It is not necessary that he should be versed in all branches of medical science, in order to follow the doctor's instructions. It is well that one should know that sin is humanly incurable, and that Christ is the sinner's Saviour, but that is knowledge enough to be saved by. You may be tempted to take a morbid pleasure in self-examination; and, by the use of a clinical spiritual thermometer, so agitate yourself as to increase sin's consuming fever. You may so critically examine your divine Physician's credentials, and discuss His probable ability to heal you, as to aggravate the soul's distemper. The promise of the gospel must be obeyed to be enjoyed. You may use your microscope and telescope to the end of time; you may reason until your brain reels, and pray endlessly—in unbelief. Christ demands your faith, and faith is only proved by obedience. If you would prove Him, do as He bids you. You can never reason yourself into a conscience void of offence, nor argue yourself into peace. Salvation does not lie at the end of a syllogism. Here is a passage by which the principle may be submitted to a test as conclusive as any laboratory demonstration: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

I once knew a woman who had long been anxious for salvation, but was unable to find peace. I met her at the close of a service, as I had done scores of times before, and she assured me that she did trust that Christ died for her, and had sought His pardoning grace, and believed that sometime and somehow He would save her, but she had no peace, because she had no assurance of her present acceptance with God. I told her I feared she was expecting to get well by studying the physician's prescription instead of by taking his medicine. I quoted the text I have just repeated to you, and said, "Now if you really believe in Christ, confess it." She enquired how she should confess. The congregation had left, but two or three women were standing in the aisle at the front of the church. I said, "Go and tell those women what you believe in your heart concerning Christ." She took a few steps, and then literally ran down the aisle to make her confession, exclaiming, "Oh, ladies, I am saved!" As she went she was cleansed, and the peace of God filled her soul. Years afterwards in a fiery trial I saw her, and she proved that Christ was a Saviour indeed.

In the same way *the gospel's promise of salvation from*

sin's power is to be realized. It is an unspeakable blessing to be sure our sins are forgiven, to know that we are out of debt because, "Jesus paid it all"; but the responsibility of the future cannot be ignored. We cannot forbear to pray, "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe." But neither can we help wondering, How will He hold me up that my footsteps slip not? It is clear that God has sent His Son to bless us by turning away every one of us from his iniquities. But we shall not be turned away from sin by theorizing about how it is to be done: "Go shew yourselves unto the priests"—"as they went, they were cleansed." To hear His direction, and set about obeying it is to find that we have the power. "Stretch forth thine hand", said Christ to the man whose hand was withered. And in making the attempt he found he was able to obey. And so if we "watch and pray lest we enter into temptation", the voice of the Deliverer will be distinctly audible above that of the tempter, and if we so much as try to do His will we shall triumph in the trying. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you", sounds almost an absurdity in the ears of weak and tempted human nature. But as surely as we resist Him with the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel as our weapon—as we resist, he will flee; as we go, we shall be cleansed. But we must resist; there must be no attempt at appeasement, no Munich pact.

The principle holds, too, when applied to *the discovery of the well-springs of true joy.* "The pursuit of happiness" is unquestionably an inalienable human right; but the possession of more than happiness, of unfailling joy, is a Christian's privilege. "How to be happy though a Christian" is a matter which some would feel it were pertinent to enquire, but difficult to show. But surely all things which God hath made, the brightness of the sun and stars, the lambs gambolling in the fields, the hind of the forest in its rapid and graceful flight, the birds in their tuneful rest, and on restful wing; the little children in their merry laughter while innocent of conscious wrong—all things in this big and beautiful world which is so like a flowered playground made for every one to play in, speak of the divine intention, that God's creatures were made to rejoice and be glad.

I know there are springs of sorrow and sadness. I know it is often easier to weep than to smile. But Jesus came to cast salt into the spring of our woes, as Elisha did at Jericho. His mission will never be quite complete until God, with a wounded hand, "shall wipe away all tears from our eyes". And, therefore, I say you are not to think of any Christian requirement as lessening the joys of life. Even the forbidding path of self-denial and sacrifice leads to the well of joy unspeakable and full of glory. When Christ spoke so searchingly on the same night in which He was betrayed, when He said He was the Vine and we the branches; when He had talked about purging or pruning, and urged the necessity of abiding in Him, and giving heed to His word—and He never spoke more searchingly than then—even then He said, "These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

But fulness of joy will never be ours by the closest study of the fifteenth chapter of John. Like Nicodemus, you may ask, "How can these things be?" but you will never so learn that there is more real joy to be had in the ways of the Lord than in all the merry haunts of worldly

pleasure the world can provide. You must "taste and see" that the Lord is good: no advertisement of His goodness can ever convey the truth.

When Jesus had washed His disciples' feet, He said, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

It will be our wisdom to seek out the commandments of our Lord, to abide in His will, to go where He sends us; and as we go, we shall find ourselves possessed of the happiness we have so long vainly pursued.

The principle applies also in another important direction. *Our conviction of revealed truth is deepened with every obedience to it;* as we go, we find it true. No one of Israel's military experts would have approved of David's proposal to meet Goliath with sling and stone. The best proof of the wisdom of his reliance upon these weapons was in his successful use of them. And for ever the best way to prove the word of God will be found to be to use it, to obey it, to rely upon it. Doubt may flourish in the study, but will die in the open field. The study is the place to hear the word of God: the field is the place to prove it by obeying it.

The keystone to the arch of revelation is the resurrection. If that be true, all is true. But have you ever considered how the truth of the resurrection was proved? No mortal saw Jesus Christ rise from the dead. And when His disciples came to the grave they found it empty. But they were told that Christ was risen—that was all. The only proof was, "Come see the place where the Lord lay." But they were told also to "go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead." "And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet and worshipped him." The truth of the resurrection was proved in the telling of it. They were permitted the confirmation of faith which holding His wounded feet brought to them, because their own feet were swift in the way of His commandments, bringing glad tidings, and publishing peace. And some of us would be surer about many things if we would go and tell what we know about Christ. There is a sense in which the truth of the gospel is more surely established by willing feet than by enquiring and analytical heads. Whoever goes to tell that Christ is risen, is sure to be met by Christ Himself. As we go we are cleansed; as we preach we find the gospel true.

And every service Christ requires of us is proved to be possible in its very performance. Christ's commands must never be answered by "I cannot". His every precept, and every principle of His teaching is eminently practicable. What He requires you to do, you are able to do. Do not stop to reason about it. The course prescribed may appear to be just as unreasonable and impossible as walking dryshod through Jordan. Do you set about doing what He requires, and as you go, you shall be empowered. The disciples who were sent to bring a colt to Jesus had but one way of verifying His promise in that respect. They did as they were told, and found the colt waiting for them. So also, they who went to prepare the passover, had only Christ's word. But they met the man with a pitcher of water, and followed him as they had been told. So let us address ourselves to

our task, and as we go, we shall be cleansed; in the doing we shall receive power and verification of the truth.

And when the day's work is done? Ah, do you fear the nightfall? You have heard that death has no sting, and the grave no victory. But are you disposed to philosophize about that? You will get no comfort by so doing. The fog may thicken, as it did about our ship when I was returning one autumn from Europe. It may become denser with the falling of the night, as it did for us, until all becomes black and starless; and the ship will stand still in silence in the black and dark night! But you will sleep, as we did; and waken to behold a perfect morning, with the sun shining upon the shore of the homeland, and never a cloud in the sky.

"When sinks the soul, subdued by toil, to slumber,
Its closing eye looks up to Thee in prayer;
Sweet the repose beneath Thy wings o'ershading;
But sweeter still to wake and find Thee there.

"So shall it be at last, in that bright morning,
When the soul waketh, and life's shadows flee;
Oh, in that hour, fairer than daylight dawning,
Shall rise the glorious thought—I am with Thee!"

I cannot prove that death has no sting, and the grave no victory. But the Saviour has promised His presence in that hour; and as we go, we shall find the promise true.

THE INEPT SPEECH OF THE ONTARIO ATTORNEY-GENERAL

(Continued from page 2)

freedom to determine our relation to men and God. Perhaps never before was the line of demarkation so clearly drawn between right and wrong, between liberty and libertinism, between light and darkness, between Christ and Antichrist.

At such a time every person of intelligence, with a sense of responsibility, will endeavor so to orient his thought and speech and conduct to the circumstances of the time as to avoid spreading sparks to adjacent power-magazines, and to extinguish such sparks as the unwisdom of others may have kindled.

Such duty of caution, I say, applies to everyone of moral sense and responsibility. We have the highest authority for saying that there can be no just law against the fullest and freest expression of such principles as are rooted in those spiritual qualities which are ingredients in all true peace, which is only another way of saying that it is of the very essence of true liberty that a man must be his own censor and policeman, and prove his worthiness to enjoy such liberty by their constant and faithful exercise.

Such duty of caution, however, is especially binding upon men in official government positions. I may, at all points, be a policeman's equal, but his direction of traffic must be more effective than mine because of the authority with which his uniform clothes him.

Unfortunately, few people know much about the constitution of other countries than their own. Neither in Europe nor the United States does the average man know anything about the limitations of Canadian Provincial authority. It is enough that a man holds an official governmental position of some sort, for press and people to attach importance to what he says. Hence, the recent senseless fulminations of a certain Mr. Mitchell F. Hepburn were broadcast over the world as though they were

the utterances of an authoritative voice. Whereas his Hitlerian ravings had less effect upon the Canadian electorate than my own moderate and considered counsel! For you see, Canada accepted my advice rather than Mr. Hepburn's, and elected Mr. King!

And now one of Mr. Hepburn's ministers has been guilty of a similar indiscretion. His remarks have been communicated to millions of people. They have afforded a topic of discussion in the United States Congress; they have provided a text for every anti-British element in the United States to preach from; they have supplied matter for editorial dissertation; they have sounded a note of discouragement in British ears—already trained to catch the drone of enemy aircraft; and, worst of all, they have misrepresented Canada to the enemy as a trembling people sending an S.O.S. to their American neighbors. And all this, not because a certain Oshawa lawyer named Conant made a speech in the village of Cannington, but only because the Attorney-Generalship of this great Province clothed the utterly inept, not to say politically inane, speech of an international layman, with official authority. No one objects to Mr. Conant's expressing his opinion on any subject he likes as Mr. Conant—then his words will carry only such weight as his personal reputation may give them; but we do object as Canadian citizens in general, and as electors of Ontario in particular, to the officers of the Premiership of Ontario, or Attorney-Generalship of Ontario, or any other Provincial office, being used to credential and circulate ideas which serve not only to bring the Province of Ontario into general contempt, but which inevitably must embarrass the Governments of Canada, and the Empire; while giving comfort to our enemies.

Britain and the Empire are unafraid. We are as sure of winning as of the rising of to-morrow's sun. But it will be—must be—a costly victory. Therefore it were folly unnecessarily to multiply enemies, or to do or say anything that might annoy or irritate nations now neutral. The United States will justly resent any suggestion from outside as to what their course should be. There are without doubt, broadly speaking, three bodies of opinion in respect to the war in the United States. A great many Americans are benevolently neutral toward the Allies; others are positively antagonistically neutral; and a third, middle body, are indifferently neutral. Each of these admits of many subdivisions. Of the benevolent neutrals, all want us to win. Some would give us all possible material aid short of men. Others would go farther, and come immediately wholeheartedly to our side. Among those who are anti-British and anti-Allies are German and Russian sympathizers and petty politicians of the Hepburn type, who think of no one but themselves. Such speeches as Mr. Conant's will inevitably complicate a delicate international situation.

In appraising American opinion, it is well to remember that pessimists, and denunciators, and croakers in general, always make a noise out of all proportion to their importance, and receive attention commensurate with the disasters they predict. Mr. Conant, I have no doubt, has made many speeches of merit of which the wide world has never heard; but this one speech of unwisdom is published everywhere.

We are good customers of the United States albeit they limit us to C.O.D. orders. But we need all the material help we can get, and are glad to receive such valu-

able assistance from the United States, even though we must pay cash on delivery.

While it would be an advantage to have the United States as a fellow belligerent, even if she were never to send sailor, soldier, or airman, overseas, I believe we shall manage without her. And if and when we do, Allied prestige throughout the world as preservers of the world's liberties will be higher than ever before in history. Let us get on with the war. Meanwhile, let us leave our great and valiant Southern neighbor to solve her problems without our advice—even as we may have to win the war without the aid of American money or men.

But something should be done to prevent a recurrence of the Hepburn-Conant-Drew international nuisance. For some reason the Ontario Legislature has become the rendezvous of petty office-seeking politicians of both parties. They have proved by multiplied exhibitions of political unwisdom that in the national interest, as well as the Province's interest, the seals of office ought to be taken from their hands. Surely the time is ripe for some men of calibre of all parties or of no party—real "dollar-a-year men"—to organize themselves to rid our Provincial public life of the present aggregation of irresponsible politicians, and thus restore sanity to our legislative councils, and honor to our public life, and a good name to the Province of Ontario.

"THE CANADIAN BAPTIST" ON A REDUCING DIET

The Evening Telegram, Toronto, on April Fourth published the following note:

Canadian Baptist To Cut Paper Size

The Canadian Baptist, which, in its 86th year is now published twice a month, announces that its retrenchment program will involve a change in the style and formation of the paper. It will have 12 pages of larger size than the present 16, and will employ newsprint instead of a toned paper. Type will be set in Toronto, but printing will be done at the Midland Free Press plant. A saving of \$30 per issue will be effected.

We are always sorry to observe the decline of any worthy work. *The Canadian Baptist* at certain periods during the eighty-six years of its history rendered fine service to the cause of Christ. Its establishment was assisted by the benevolence of the late Senator McMaster who was an honored member of Jarvis Street Church, and whose fortune was left for the establishment of McMaster University. The paper has had a succession of sound evangelical editors.

There was a time, indeed, when it was a very weighty paper. Notwithstanding the place given to denominational appeals and denominational news—these items of necessity bearing the varied stamps and standards of their writers—one could be sure in those days of finding some useful article with enough body in it for one to get his teeth into; there was always a bit of strong meat on the table.

In those days sermons were published with discrimination—that is, they were published because they were worth publishing, and not merely to please their authors. But there came a time when *The Canadian Baptist* forsook the faith of its fathers. It became a defender of modernism. It was *The Canadian Baptist* that precipitated the denominational controversy in 1919. Later it became the enthusiastic and zealous supporter of Profes-

sor Marshall and the whole modernist movement, which issued in the division of the Ontario and Quebec Convention.

In those days of controversy, *The Canadian Baptist* played a most unworthy part. It exemplified a most contemptible form of journalism. It viciously attacked, but would never publish a reply. No secular journal that we have ever known would stoop to such depths of unfairness and injustice as characterized *The Canadian Baptist* week by week. We compelled it at last to hold its peace by meeting its challenge in this paper. *The Canadian Baptist* was available Wednesday evenings, the night of our make-up. We have often obtained it as late as eight o'clock in the evening, and scrapped everything in THE GOSPEL WITNESS but the sermon, and begun all over again—and had THE GOSPEL WITNESS in the mail before *The Canadian Baptist*, so that very often people had time to read our reply before they read *The Canadian Baptist's* attack. Then they gave orders that not a copy of *The Canadian Baptist* was to be released to THE GOSPEL WITNESS until Thursday. We made no effort to get one; and were we put on the stand under oath, we should have to say we had not the slightest idea how it reached us. But after that ban was put on, *The Canadian Baptist* came to us unfailingly every Wednesday and we were naughty enough, if naughty it was, in those days always to make some slight reference to *The Canadian Baptist* in order to let the management know that their blockade of THE GOSPEL WITNESS was not effective.

However, the poor old *Baptist* has gone from bad to worse. It has lost about half its circulation, we are informed. It was some time ago floundering in a financial sea. Then it became a bi-monthly instead of a weekly—and now it is to be still further reduced in size and in the quality of its paper. Poor old *Canadian Baptist*!

What *The Canadian Baptist* needs to learn is that paper and ink does not make a paper, religious or otherwise. If a paper says anything worth reading people will buy it.

THE GOSPEL WITNESS is nearing the end of its eighteenth year. We have no great denomination behind us to help circulate it. No sort of a "board" constituting a "brain trust" to help us run it, but, like Topsy it "just grew".

A Chinese evangelist told us that the articles were not infrequently translated into Chinese. That he had met with it in many places including BORNEO. A little while ago a man came into our service who was a tea man. He came because he had read THE GOSPEL WITNESS in CEYLON. A traveller in remote places called to say that he had first read THE GOSPEL WITNESS on the borders of TIBET. So without capital it has spread itself over the world and to the praise of God we say; (and this for our GOSPEL WITNESS helpers throughout the world) we have maintained our record this year and once more closed our GOSPEL WITNESS books with a balance on the right side.

We are not inclined to blame the Editor of *The Canadian Baptist*. Some years ago we were invited to sit with a very considerable body of editors of religious papers in the United States and someone referred to a certain paper as an "organ". The editor rose immediately and facetiously said; "Don't you dare call my paper an organ. It is not an organ that anybody can strum upon, it is a little trumpet I toot myself."

Of course it is that which makes a paper; for then the trumpet will not give an uncertain sound. But a denominational paper that becomes a little organ that everyone claims a right to play will soon be wasting its sweetness on the desert air.

We were specially interested in observing that the paper is now to be printed at the *Midland Free Press* plant. The owner of that paper, and the late Dr. Frank Sanderson, were principally responsible for the Marshall campaign and the Denomination's wreck. They did not injure Jarvis Street Church, though they tried with all their might to do so. There was something wrong with their torpedo's rudder, if torpedoes have a rudder, for it turned around and blew themselves up—what is left of *The Canadian Baptist* is part of the wreck. It is quite fitting therefore that the publisher of the *Midland Free Press* should now be elected to the life-boat crew.

During the controversy from time to time we received scores of letters and telegrams quoting a particular verse of scripture for our comfort. We never publicly referred to these kindly messages; nor, so far as we can recall, did we ever once in that connection quote the passage, but as we read this item reporting that our Church Street contemporary had gone on a rigid reducing diet the passages referred to came to our mind. Here it is: "No weapon that is formed against these shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."

WHAT IS NEUTRALITY?

It is always difficult to steer a neutral course between clearly defined and sharply expressed opposing principles. Where moral values are concerned, such neutrality is achieved only at a cost of compromise, and in the end produces an attitude or position of acquiescence.

In wartime, neutral nations have always a difficult part to play, and especially such neutrals as may occupy territory adjacent to the theatre of war. Neutrality in such cases cannot be defined with verbal accuracy. Such international laws as regulate neutral conduct have gradually been evolved from time to time out of the circumstances of war. The purpose of such vague and somewhat varying practices is to keep the non-belligerent from becoming involved in the conflict; and such accepted practices are supposed to restrict the acts of war to belligerent territory.

There were in days of old people called Pharisees who were in the habit of invoking certain laws for the promotion of everyone's discomfort, and the law which was supposed to be a means to an end was made an end in itself. A certain kind of Sabbatarianism was regarded as an infallible badge of sanctity; but the Maker of all laws laid down most clearly an abiding and universally applicable principle when He said, "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath."

That is the function of all law. Hence laws of neutrality were designed to be applied impartially to all belligerents. They were never intended as a high and unscalable wall of separation, smooth on one side, with a ladder on the other.

Germany recognized no violation of neutral rights in the sinking of neutral ships, and the general destruc-

tion of neutral lives and property; but claimed on the other hand the right to use neutral waters to further her belligerent aims, while pharisaically insisting that Britain and France would be international criminals if their ships should cross the invisible line which separated the three-mile limit of neutral waters from the sea.

The variability and flexibility of the whole conception of international neutrality was illustrated by the rather absurd suggestion put forward at the Pan-American Congress that a three-hundred mile strip of water, the whole length of the North and South American Continents, should be considered neutral. That would have provided a very considerable sea in which unscrupulous neutrals could hide, and from which they could pounce upon their foe.

But no law, national or international, is of any value except as an ideal, that is not enforceable. Which means that behind such law, if it is to have any value, there must be power adequate to enforce obedience to it.

Norway did the best she could, but it was impossible for her to compel Germany to respect the neutrality of her waters. Any attempt at such compulsion would immediately have involved her in war. As Germany therefore was lawlessly using the neutral waters of Norway for the furtherance of her belligerent purposes, and Norway was powerless to compel respect for her neutrality, it was impossible that Britain and France should continue to allow such an abuse of the asylum of neutral waters: and there was nothing for them to do but to make it impossible for Germany to continue to use a neutral nation for her own ends.

Mr. Churchill stated the case succinctly when he said something to the effect that Britain would in future be guided by considerations of humanity rather than by legal pedantry. German violations of neutrality cost hundreds of Norwegian lives, and millions of dollars' worth of Norwegian property. Britain's action in compelling Germany either to respect Norwegian neutrality or come out and fight, did not sacrifice a single Norwegian life.

Neutrality in such circumstances never pays. If the Scandinavian countries had immediately united when war was declared, they and Finland might have been spared war's horrors, and the whole course of the war shortened. Notwithstanding, when we have written all our *buts* and *ifs*, it remains true,

"There's a Divinity which shapes our ends,
Rough hew them as we will."

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES

REV. W. H. FREY IN THE UNITED STATES

Rev. W. H. Frey of Switzerland, the present deputation secretary of the French Bible Mission, plans to spend the months of May and June in the United States, visiting the churches which received Mr. Dubarry and Mr. Buhler during their stay with us in the United States and Canada. To a large number of such friends THE GOSPEL WITNESS has brought news at regular intervals of the work of our French brethren. Already letters telling of Mr. Frey's plans have been sent to some, and a number of cordial replies have been received. As the time is now getting short, we would urge all of our interested readers to write *at once* to Mr. Frey at 337 Jarvis Street, Toronto, if possible giving the approximate time you wish to have him come.

Mr. Frey has proved to have unusual linguistic gifts and during his two years at the Toronto Baptist Seminary as student-professor in French has acquired an excellent command of English. In addition to that he can speak fluently

the three official languages of his native Switzerland—French, Italian, and German. For nine years he was pastor at Bienne, and during the last year and a half has visited a number of United States churches and almost all of our Canadian churches. His warm personality and cordial smile have made him friends everywhere. Mr. Frey will have several special attractions with him: An unusually fine set of lantern slides illustrating the actual work in Europe, and in addition a number of beautiful coloured slides of his native Switzerland kindly lent through the courtesy of the Swiss Government. These latter have been widely used in Toronto and vicinity and never fail to receive the highest commendation. Mr. Frey will also have several phonographic recordings of the very songs that Pastor Emile Guedj, now an adjutant in the French army, teaches his Roman Catholic and Atheistic soldiers.

Do not fail to write at once to Mr. Frey so as to facilitate his plans.

ORDINATION AT SARNIA

The Temple Baptist Church, Sarnia, has sent out invitations to its sister churches to send delegates to a council to be held on Tuesday, April 23rd, at 2 o'clock for the purposes of considering the official recognition of the church and the ordination of their pastor, Mr. W. Hal MacBain. This church is not more than four years old but has already made rapid progress. We should like to urge friends from our entire Union constituency to enjoy this day of fellowship at Sarnia and see for themselves what has been accomplished on one of our former home mission fields.—W.

Bible School Lesson Outline

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

Vol. 4 Second Quarter Lesson 16 April 21st, 1940

PETER CONFESSES CHRIST

Lesson Text: Matthew 16.

Golden Text: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"—Matthew 16:16.

I. The Conduct of the Pharisees—verses 1 to 12.

Read also Mk. 8:10-21.

The Pharisees with their ceremonialism and the Sadducees with their formalism were united in their antagonism to Christ (Compare Lk. 23:12). Instead of trusting Him, they tempted Him, demanding that He prove His claims by performing a miracle for their benefit. They were jealous of His powers and popularity, and resentful of the way in which He rebuked their sins, yet they pretended to be open to conviction. The human heart is deceitful and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9).

Our Lord perceived their hypocrisy. It was not an evidence of His Deity that they needed, but eyes to see and hearts to understand the manifest tokens that He was the Son of God. They had no difficulty in interpreting the signs in the natural heavens, but they refused to accept the signs of the spiritual world.

The desire of the Pharisees for a special sign indicated their faithlessness, wickedness and duplicity. They were of double mind (Jas. 1:8), and double heart (Jas. 4:4). Christ had already given them a sign, the experience of Jonah, which was an illustration of His death, burial and resurrection (Matt. 12:38-40; Lk. 11:29, 30).

Our Lord warned His disciples against the evil doctrines and wicked deeds of the Pharisees and Sadducees which resembled leaven in their rapidly-spreading, corrupting influence (Lk. 12:1; 1 Cor. 5:6-8; Gal. 5:9). People in our day need to beware of the many false teachers who are spreading abroad their pernicious doctrines (2 Pet. 2:1-3; 1 John 4:1).

The disciples need not have feared they would lack food (Matt. 6:25, 26). How slow they were to trust the Lord, even although He had miraculously provided for them on two recent occasions (Matt. 14:15-21; 15:32-38)!

II. The Confession of Peter—verses 13 to 20.

Read also Mk. 8:27-30; Lk. 9:18-21.

The people of our Lord's day differed widely from one another in their estimate of His person and mission. Some

thought He was John the Baptist (Matt. 14:2; Mk. 6:14; Lk. 9:7); others that He was Elijah (Mk. 6:15; Lk. 9:8); others Jeremiah; others, one of the prophets. So few accepted His own testimony. It would seem that people are disposed to believe anyone or anything sooner than take the Word of the Lord at its face value.

The personal relationship of each individual to Christ is a matter of supreme importance (Rom. 14:10, 12). We may entertain various opinions on a thousand other subjects, but our attitude to Christ is a question of life and death (Matt. 22:42; 27:22). "Whom say ye that I am?"

Peter's confession will be repeated by every earnest Christian. Jesus of Nazareth is indeed the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matt. 14:33; John 6:69; 20:28). The knowledge of Christ as the Son of God cannot be attained by the natural mind (1 Cor. 2:9-12), but comes as a revelation from God through the Holy Spirit (Lk. 10:22; 1 Cor. 12:3; Gal. 1:16).

After Peter had made his noble declaration, the Lord blessed him (Matt. 10:32; Lk. 12:8), and unfolded His own purpose concerning the future of His beloved disciple (John 1:42).

In verse 18 there is a play upon words; the Greek word for Peter is *Petros*, and the word translated rock is *petra*. In the Aramaic, which was the spoken language of Palestine, the words *Petros* and *petra* are represented by the same word *Cephas*. In this passage our Lord, the Builder, seems to refer to the primacy of Peter as a human instrument in the building of His Church. Peter was the first of the foundation stones in the living Temple (Eph. 2:20-22; Rev. 21:14), as by faith and labour, under the power of the Holy Spirit he was used to a greater extent than the other apostles in the formation of that spiritual building (Gal. 2:9; 2 Pet. 2:4-6).

The same metaphor of a building is used in other passages to describe the Divine origin of the Church (1 Cor. 3:11). Since Christ is the foundation Rock upon Whom Peter and every other individual believer rests, and upon Whom the Church as a whole is built, many are of the opinion that in this passage also our Lord was referring to Himself.

In either case, the promise was given to Peter personally, and there is no suggestion that it was to be handed down to any real or supposed successors of Peter, as the Papists declare, or that Peter was infallible (Note verse 23), or that Peter was the Bishop of Rome. He claimed no superiority over his fellow-apostles; he was a leader, but not an over-Lord (1 Pet. 5:1-3).

The Lord's Church will never cease to exist; the gates of Hades (the unseen world) shall not be able to swallow it up, for death has no longer dominion over Christ (Rom. 6:9; Rev. 1:18). Nor can the bars of death keep the people of God from rising again (1 Cor. 15:12-22; 1 Thess. 4:14). It may mean that the power of Hades will not be strong enough to overcome the Church, which will ultimately be victorious (1 Cor. 15:57, 58).

Peter was given "the keys of the gate without, but not of the doors within." In those early days he was the chosen vessel to give the Gospel in a large way to the Jews (Acts 2-4), and to the gentiles (Acts 10, 11). He was not given authority in his own name to admit or exclude anyone from the Church or the Kingdom (Isa. 22:22; Acts. 11:17, 18; Rev. 3:7), but he and the other disciples were to declare the Divine conditions of forgiveness of sins (Matt. 18:18; John 20:23).

III. The Confusion of Peter—verses 21 to 28.

Read also Mk. 8:31-38; Lk. 9:22-27.

Lest the disciples continue to look for an immediate Kingdom of power and magnificence, our Lord again spoke to them of the humiliation which would precede His exaltation (Matt. 17:22, 23; 20:18, 19; Mk. 10:32-35; Lk. 18:31-34). Notwithstanding the revelation given to Peter concerning the Christ he could not understand that the Messiah was also the suffering Servant of Jehovah. The cross was an offence to him, as it is to every one who is worldly in outlook (1 Cor. 1:23; Gal. 5:11, 24; 6:14).

In seeking to turn the Saviour from the path of suffering he actually allowed himself to be the mouth-piece of Satan the Adversary, who had put forth every effort throughout the ages to oppose the redemptive work of the Son of God. How quickly Peter turned aside from the place of blessing! The cross as an instrument of death was indispensable for our salvation, and the principles of the cross is also essential to discipleship.