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

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IS ONE RELIGION AS GOOD AS ANOTHER?

A Sermon by Rev. W. S. Whitcombe, M.A.

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, July 27th, 1941.

"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

"Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

"I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

"I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."—Luke 18:9-14.

Human nature is naturally religious. Wherever the record of past ages has been preserved it tells the same story of man's innate longing for communication with the Unseen. The pyramids of Egypt, the temples of Greece, the mounds of Babylonia, all bear silent witness to the large part that religion played in the lives of the ancient peoples. The earliest literature of which we have any record is a religious one, and since the dawn of history men have thought and written more on this subject than on any other that falls within the ken of the human mind. In our day, it is true, nations have risen up that profess to deny the very existence of God, but in reality such systems and their fruits offer a fresh illustration of the Scriptural principle: "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things." (Rom. 1:22). Like the children of Israel at the foot of Sinai, modern nations have grown tired of the old ways and cried, "Up, make us gods, which shall go before us." And some modern Aaron has never failed to appear on the scene to take their gold and make for them a molten calf, saying, "These be thy gods."

But if all men are religious, that does not mean that one religion is as good as another. If these two men of whom our text speaks are types of all men, who go up to their temples to pray, it is also true that only one of them went down to his house justified; the prayer of the other was but "words, words, words", heard on earth but not in heaven. We are often reminded that "compari-

sons are odious", but our Lord emphasized the truth He sought to teach in this parable by comparing the prayers of two men: "This man went down to his house justified rather than the other." His meaning is plain: there is a true religion and a false religion. The publican's prayer touched the throne of God, the Pharisee "prayed with himself", as the parable puts it; his words went up, his thoughts remained below.

In a day and generation that preens itself on toleration and broadmindedness such rigid distinctions between false and true, especially in religious matters, are looked at askance. The popular thing is to say that it doesn't matter what we believe or to which church we go; it is assumed that we are all heading for the same place and somehow we shall all get to heaven together. But pious sentimentalism of that sort is far removed from the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ. He never tolerated error nor excused sin. With a doubting Thomas He dealt gently, and to repentant sinners He graciously gave His pardon, but He never treated sin in any of its forms as a light thing easily to be glossed over. While He received sinners and ate with them, to the most religious sect of His day He uttered those terrible words of condemnation: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves." (Matt. 23:15). Do not forget that it was religious people who crucified our Lord; it was not the unbelieving Romans, but the chief priests and the scribes and the elders who taught the people to say, "Away with him, crucify him, we have no king but

Caesar." Truth has ever been wounded in the house of its friends, and in our day, as all down through the history of Christianity, the fiercest enemies of the Gospel are not found among the ranks of the unbelievers and the outlaws but within the pale of organized religion.

One of the first religious services of which we have any record was conducted by a man whose worship was not acceptable to God. The Book of Genesis puts it this way: "And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect." (Gen. 4:4). The Book of Genesis records not only the beginning of the heavens and the earth, but the beginning of many other things also, and here you have the beginning of false religion. And the inspired historian is careful to tell us its outcome: "Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him." One man's religion made him a murderer, the other man's religion made him a martyr.

In New Testament times the Apostle Paul found the city of Athens, the intellectual capital of the ancient world, filled with temples and altars, so that when they conducted him to Mar's Hill to tell of his new doctrine, he was able to say with truth, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are very religious." It does not seem to me that the Apostle's word was meant offensively, as the phrase "too superstitious" of our Authorized Version might lead us to think. Paul simply recognized the evident fact of the piety and devotion of the Athenians, and made it the starting point of his explanation of the Gospel. We might have supposed that these extremely religious people would have welcomed the message of the one True God, but "when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter." (Acts 22:32).

In the Old Testament the prophets did not preach against irreligious people, but against those who went after the strange gods of the nations round about Israel, or against those who, without forsaking strict adherence to the exercises of outward devotion, had failed to offer a spiritual worship to God. In the New Testament the anti-christ of whom the Apostle John speaks is not an antireligious power, but a form of religion that is opposed to Christ. And in the last book in the Bible the great political world powers so vividly depicted making war against God and His saints, have as their confederate the menacing form of organized religion.

It is not enough then to be religious. Both of the men who went up to the temple uttered the name of God in prayer, both were found in the place of worship, but only one went down to his house justified. What was the difference between the two? I think we may say in truth that there are but two religions in the world, if we reduce them to their essential principles: that of the Pharisee and that of the publican. The one touched God, the other used empty words. Let us examine the prayers of these two men that we may see the marks of true religion and of the false.

I.

IN THE FIRST PLACE WE SEE THAT THE PHARISEE JUDGED HIMSELF AND HIS CONDUCT BY HUMAN STANDARDS. "I thank thee," he prayed, "that I am not as other men

are." And in saying that, he was no doubt quite sincere. Our Lord did not accuse him of hypocrisy. As one of an honoured and respected religious sect this Pharisee merely gave expression to the general opinion of the day respecting him and his fellows: they had gained a reputation for sanctity and he was no exception. No one could point the finger at him in accusation of the grosser sins which he mentioned, and all the world of that day made a great difference between this respectable citizen and the outcast publican. Compared with other men, measured by this publican, here was one who by every recognized standard of human judgment stood before his fellows as a good man. But what of his standing before God? Ah, that he had not reckoned on, and therein was his great error. He had forgotten the Old Testament principle: "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." (I Sam. 16:7). All his thinking about God and man was distorted and wrong because he used a false standard of judgment; measuring himself by his fellowmen, he fancied that God did likewise.

Do you tell me that you are as good as your neighbour, or as good as the deacon, or the preacher? I grant you that, but what of it? If the Lord Jesus stood here on this platform to-night would you dare to stand up beside Him, and measure yourself by His perfect, holy manhood? You know that you would not. Before Him you would stand silent, condemned. He, the One Who did no sin neither was guile found in His mouth, is the Divine Standard, not the "other man" or "even this publican" with whom the proud Pharisee compared himself.

Simon Peter learned that lesson on the morning of the miraculous draught of fishes. All night the disciples had toiled but had taken nothing, nevertheless at the Master's word they let down the net again and took so many fish that their net broke, and they were forced to summon their partners from the other ship to help them. But Peter's thoughts did not run to the great price they might obtain for their unexpected haul; there was a new wonder in his mind, for he looked on the Lord Jesus with new eyes, he saw Him as he had never seen Him before. "And he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord." (Luke 5:8). Peter saw himself as he had never seen himself before, and he recognized that his sinfulness and the perfect holiness of the Saviour could not exist side by side. That is the attitude of every awakened soul in the presence of a Holy God:

"Eternal light, eternal light,
How pure that soul must be
That shrinks not, but with calm delight
Can live and look on Thee."

In the shop and the factory correct weights and measures are considered to be of the greatest importance. The government at Ottawa, like the government of every civilized country in the world, not only maintains an accurate model of the weights and measures in use throughout the country, but a special department of the administration is charged with the duty of seeing that in everyday transactions a ton means two thousand pounds; and a yard, thirty-six inches. And that is scriptural, for the Bible tells us that "a just weight and balance are the Lord's" (Prov. 16:11) while "divers weights and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the Lord." (Prov. 20:10). If in the market and the counting-house God requires a just

measure, how much more will He require it in spiritual matters! Let me ask you, How good are you? Do you reply, "I thank God that I am not as other men are." If that is your standard of measurement, it is a false one, an abomination to the Lord. Ask God to forgive you for that self-righteous pride, and falling before the Perfect Man, God's standard, confess that you have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

II.

AND AGAIN, YOU WILL NOTICE THAT THIS PHARISEE'S RELIGION WAS AN OUTWARD ONE, CONSISTING OF EXTERNAL ACTS. "I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." Here was a man who was in dead earnest about his religion. For it he suffered the pangs of hunger and gave largely of his substance. I have great admiration for anyone whose piety goes down deep enough to affect those two most sensitive human organs: the stomach and the pocket-book. Of this man, the world to-day would certainly judge that he was worthy of salvation. But our Lord, who is the sole authority in such matters, did not say so. And there again is a fundamental difference between the popular misconception that salvation, like some commodity, can be bought and paid for, and the teaching of Jesus, that they that worship God must worship Him in spirit and truth.

In the very nature of things it is impossible that material commodities can be bartered for spiritual blessings. "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." (Acts 17:24). He cannot be won by material offerings; He delights not in the sacrifices of bulls and goats. We cannot gain the gift of eternal life for our immortal souls by making our stomachs suffer for it or digging deep in our pocket-books. "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God," the prophet of old asked. "Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" (Micah 6:6). To ask such a question is to answer it. The physical and the spiritual belong to two different realms. You cannot buy human affection for dollars and cents, nor can you purchase treasures of the mind for money, how much less can eternal salvation be paid for with the things of this world.

Our Sunday-school lesson of this morning, the story of the taking of the ark, provides a good illustration of how men may perform outward acts of piety without bowing their souls before God. The army of Israel had been defeated by the Philistines, and when they returned from the battle they asked, "Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us to-day before the Philistines?" (I Sam. 4:3). They recognized clearly that their defeat was the result of divine displeasure, and they determined to win the favour of God by carrying into battle the ark of the covenant, the symbol of the presence of the living God. And so the sacred ark was moved from its place at Shiloh and brought into the place of battle. "And when the ark of the covenant of the Lord came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again." And on the other side of the lines there was equally great consternation among the Philistines, for they feared the presence of the God of the Israelites.

But when the battle was joined, the overweening pride of Israel fell before the enemy. There was a great slaughter, the ark of God was taken, and the two priests who accompanied it, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain. The meaning of the defeat is made clear by the rest of the story: the priests who bore the ark of the covenant to the camp were evil men who had brought reproach on the worship of God by their wicked deeds. Eli their father had not restrained them, the people in their indifference had allowed these abuses to continue. There was no repentance and sorrow for sin in their hearts, though they had the outward symbol of God's presence in their midst. And so the holy God who requires that they that bear the vessels of the Lord shall be clean, allowed His unrepentant people to go down in defeat before their enemies.

The Pharisee likewise bowed the knee in prayer, he had suffered the pangs of hunger in order to win the divine favour, he had given of his substance, but he had never known what it was to bow his spirit before a holy and righteous God in true dependence on His mercy.

III.

FINALLY THIS MAN'S RELIGION WAS CENTERED IN HIMSELF. Have you noticed how many times he used the first personal pronoun? "I thank thee that I am not as other men are" . . . I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess . . ." His prayer was a glorification of self, of his own sufficiency to save himself apart from the grace of God.

I once read those arrogant words of W. E. Henley in his poem, "Invictus", to a farmer-theologian who was a deacon of the church where I was then pastor. I wanted to hear his comment because he had more shrewd insight of human nature and knew more theology than many a university professor. I repeated the words of the poem, in which the poet speaks of his "unconquerable soul", and ends:

"I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul."

After sitting in silence a while, the better to digest the thought of those proud, defiant words, my good deacon stroked his chin whiskers and chuckled as he said, "Well, now, he was a bit cocky wasn't he?" It was the best comment I have ever heard on the poem. The same could be said of the Pharisee's prayer. There is the same self-sufficiency, his recognition of God is almost supercilious. Though he took the Divine name on his lips, yet actually the prayer was addressed to himself and his fellow-men. His conception of salvation was much akin to the idea of the man who tried to emulate the flight of the eagle by tugging at his boot-straps. The Pharisee went down to his house highly satisfied with himself and his devotions, but in the sight of God he was not justified.

IV.

The publican's prayer was totally different from this both in word and in spirit. HERE IS A DEEP SENSE OF SIN. "Standing afar off he would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." This man made no attempt to excuse his sin, he did not plead extenuating circumstances, he did not point out that he was no worse than many another, that after all there were many good things about him that might offset the bad. There was nothing of that attitude. Seized with an overwhelming sense of his moral pollution in the sight of God he calls him-

self "the" sinner, as though in his view the universe was devoid of all but a holy God and his sinful soul. All others were left out of sight, he sees but himself, a poor lost sinner, and a righteous God upon whose mercy he dares to cast himself.

This is the first step in the spiritual biography of all the saints of God. We read in to-night's lesson Isaiah's prayer of repentance: "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips." (Is. 6:5). And immediately the gracious cleansing followed, the coal from off the altar was laid upon his mouth and the assurance of pardon was given: "Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." So David cried, "Against thee, thee only have I sinned and done that which was evil in thy sight." (Ps. 51:4). The great apostle to the Gentiles called himself the "chief of sinners". If you would have the commendation of God rather than that of men, then you must pray the publican's prayer. Not that there is any value in a particular form of words, for God looks not on the outward appearance but on the heart; He hears not the words but the attitude of the soul that they seek to express. Once when I was preaching in a certain place a little boy came to me at the close of the meeting seeking the way of salvation. I explained it to him as simply as I could and then I asked him to speak to God for himself. In a very boyish fashion he said, "Now Lord, you know that I am not saying this for saying's sake, but because I really mean it." A prayer like that is heard in heaven. You may not be able to use the language of a master of assemblies, nor to employ the idiom of the prayer-book, but if you bow in true repentance before God, He will hear your cry. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." (Ps. 51:17).

But how do I know that He will be merciful to me? Because He has disclosed Himself as a God that delighteth in mercy. He calls Himself the God of all grace, He is "rich in mercy for His great love wherewith He loved us."

"Who is a pardoning God like Thee
Or who hath grace so rich and free?"

It is the testimony of His Word that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life."

The cross of Calvary is the proof that God will forgive our sins. There "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." (Ps. 85:10). The poor publican caught a glimpse of the great Sacrifice, for this word for mercy means literally, "Be propitious." And in the Cross, God was propitious; there He dealt with our sins that "He might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Then the poorest sinner can meet with the Judge on redemption ground.

"Come ye sinners, poor and needy,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore:
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love and power.
He is able,
He is willing: doubt no more."

All of us assembled in this place of worship are praying one of these two prayers, either that of the Pharisee or that of the publican. As you leave this church to-night you will go down to your house justified as did the repentant sinner, or you will go as the proud and self-

righteous Pharisee did. Which will it be for you? Let me beseech you, take this prayer of the publican as your prayer and cast yourself on the divine grace and mercy that have been brought to us in Jesus Christ, as you say with me, in your heart, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

"Cast Down But Not Destroyed"

Such is the scriptural phrase that our good friend Mr. F. M. Buhler employed when visiting Switzerland, to describe the present position of the Baptist churches in France. A little while ago this brother was granted permission to spend ten days in Switzerland to see the churches which he had served as pastor for a year before the outbreak of the war. We learned the news of his visit from a member of one of the Swiss Baptist churches, who wrote of it to a relative living in this country. From that letter we translate the following extracts which will be of the greatest interest to all those who have been praying for Brother Buhler and the other French believers, even though we have had no news of them for a long period of time. But though we are no longer able to communicate with these sorely tried churches and their faithful pastors, we know them well enough to be perfectly confident that they are carrying on business for the Lord as usual. The items of news in the letter we print here will give some idea, incomplete though it be, of the difficulties that beset our brethren as they continue to preach the Word in season and out of season, and above all it will serve to remind us of the continuing need of constant prayer for them and their labours.

The letter from Switzerland is as follows:

"The Sunday evening Mr. Buhler preached at Cour he read us the first five verses of II Corinthians, chapter four. He remarked that these words were very fitting for the present circumstances of the friends in France and especially verses 8 and 9: 'We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.'

"Mr. Buhler also told us a little bit about the problems of life in France at the present time. The restrictions imposed upon the French people in these tragic times are very severe. When he arrived at Geneva in Switzerland, he was struck with the sight of shops filled with customers, of butcher stores with sausages displayed for sale, but above all he was amazed at the liberty with which we are allowed to speak on political subjects in the street and in the tramway. In order to get into Switzerland he had to have the trousers of his military uniform dyed. Happily he found here some of the civilian clothes that he had left when called up for military service at the outbreak of the war. He remarked again and again on the good things that he had eaten in this country of abundance.

"Pastor Gross of Brussels remains at his post, but that is all we know of him at the present time. Pastor Mafille and his family are continuing their work in northern France in what is now occupied territory. They are encouraged by the addition of new members to the church. Pastor Guedj of Paris was called to his post in the army at the outbreak of hostilities and commanded a section composed of soldiers from Brittany. He was stationed at the very front of the first line, in a sector where there was much activity. Later he received orders to return to the rear, as his age gave him this privilege. However, he was so much attached to his men to whom he had preached the gospel and taught hymns that he requested permission to remain with them, thus risking his life for the cause of Christ. This was granted, and later on when the French army was hard pressed and

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Shall Britain be Led by Rome?

Why Protestants Object to the New Movement Led by the Priests

(Lest any be tempted to think "The Gospel Witness" is alone in its stand concerning Rome and the machinations of Romanists in the present war, we reprint herewith an article from "The Christian Herald", June 12, 1941. This magazine under the able and aggressive leadership of Dr. Percy W. Hicks, has the largest circulation of any religious paper in the world. This article shows why Protestants must not yield leadership to Rome in any formation of a new order for Britain.—B.)

Britain has been suddenly faced with a new peril, insidious and powerful. While our Forces are fighting for our national existence against the merciless and unrighteous minions of anti-Christian powers, there has been brought into existence a subtle organization threatening the citadel of the Reformed Faith within our borders.

The age-long policy of the Papacy is to secure temporal power over the nations, and as Britain with its stalwart Protestantism has always been recognized as the greatest obstacle to progress in this design, the famous words of Cardinal Newman—that the purpose of Rome was to subjugate and subdue the imperial race of Britain—have been the key-note of priestly activities in many directions.

The Romish Church, with its gilded superstructure of superstition and idolatry, is the greatest political system on earth, and according to expositors of Scripture prophecy, it may be expected that one feature of coming fulfillments will be an amalgamation of Christendom under the leadership of the Papacy: It is to this consummation that the much agitated re-union of the churches is tending, for while at one time the dream was for the organic union of the Protestant churches, now the plans are enlarged for the inclusion of Rome.

There are already in existence organizations formulated to unite all the religions of the world under one head.

But now Rome is using the present chaotic condition of world warfare to inaugurate a new movement, under the presidency of Cardinal Hinsley and with the daring title of the "Sword of the Spirit." Claiming to make "A United Christian Lead," two meetings were announced to inaugurate the movement at the Stoll Opera House, London, one to be presided over by Cardinal Hinsley, and the other by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and apparently it had the support of a section of the Free Churches, seeing that the name of the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council is associated with it. It is interesting to note on the official programme that the stewards of the meetings were to be sixty members of the "Catholic Police Guild".

The primary purpose of the movement seems to be the advocacy of the Pope's "Five Points for Peace", endorsed by the two Archbishops and the Free Church Moderator. Doubtless there is much in the "Five Points" that is admirable, containing principles which will appeal to all lovers of righteousness and must obviously be faced when the war is over and victory is won. So far as Britain is concerned we all agree with the opening statement of the manifesto that "the present evils in the world are due to the failure of nations and people to carry out the laws of God." We have no quarrel with peace-loving citizens who are members of the Roman communion, but we wonder how many of the priests are hoping and working for British victory in the cause of

righteousness and liberty, for we have read in the newspapers of the priests "blessing" the Italian troops as they were sent out to kill and destroy, and there is a covert attempt to make all the nations appear as equally guilty. Mr. Kensit in a reply-manifesto issued by the Protestant Truth Society quotes the Bishop of Chelmsford's reminder that "the papacy is now and indeed always has been in the past 400 years, anti-British and anti-democratic." The Roman priests still consider our Protestant Kingdom as "heretic" and imposes a ban on her followers to avoid even united prayer with Protestants, following (as Mr. Kensit states) the declaration of the late Cardinal Bourne "we will not pray with you and you shall not pray with us" (*R.C. Tablet*, August 22, 1931).

The World's Evangelical Alliance has also issued a serious warning to Protestants not to be misled by this new movement, stating "the position of the Protestant Churches in various countries of Europe at the present time, and notably in Spain, is sufficient evidence of the intolerance shewn to the Protestant Faith by the Roman priesthood." "This matter," says Mr. Gooch, secretary of the Alliance, "is too serious to be overlooked and it is the earnest hope of my Council that representatives of the Evangelical and Protestant churches of this country will carefully weigh the dangers of union with an unreformed Church of Rome, and act accordingly."

In a leading article in *The English Churchman* newspaper, the editor "regrets that our Archbishop should seek the aid or acknowledge the position of Romish ecclesiastics in any united project for a national Christian Order, or should seem by doing so, or in any other way, to acquiesce in Romish claims."

There are doubtless many people who will ask why there should be this militant Protestant objection to the new movement. They will contend that it is surely an excellent idea to seek a definitely Christian basis for the future life of nations and of our own nation in particular. That is true, but a knowledge of history with its record of persecution and martyrdom and the well-known opposition to the evangelical teaching of the Scriptures in every land where the Roman Church has predominance, has aroused a profound distrust in the hearts of enlightened Protestants of any movement in which the priests have a leading part.

There is a longing desire among true Christians of all sections for unity of spirit and operation, and we believe that multitudes of Roman Catholic laymen are not only loyal to our national cause today, but are ready to associate with Protestants in all good work if they were permitted to do so, but everyone knows that the "Catholic" spirit is not in harmony with the spiritual fundamentals of the Reformed Faith founded upon what Mr. Gladstone called "the impregnable rock of Scripture," and when the real spiritual fellowship is not permitted, it is difficult to visualize any real unity that is God-ward.

To demonstrate the impossibility of united action with unreformed Rome while standing steadfastly to the faith once delivered unto the saints, *The English Churchman* has set out the radical differences which inevitably separate the two sections of organized Christianity, and we quote the following points from our contemporary to shew the lines of demarcation which cannot be remedied without a return to the evangelical truths of the Bible and a departure from those dogmas which are opposed to the spirit of true Christian teaching enshrined in God's Word. "The Church of Rome," it says, "subordin-

ates Holy Scripture to her own traditions and her own interpretations; she adds to the one perfect and Divine Sacrifice of Calvary an alleged propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead, known as the Mass; she claims that 'in the most holy sacrament of the eucharist there is truly, really, and substantially the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ' by an act of transubstantiation dependent on the words of a priest; she insists on the doctrine of Purgatory; she exalts the Virgin Mary to a position which Mary herself would be the first to disclaim and deprecate, and which has no scriptural authority; she encourages her people to seek unto the mediation of countless mediators of her own appointment; she encourages image and relic worship; she claims that the Church of Rome is 'the Mother and mistress of all churches,' and that outside her faith no one can be saved; she insists on the dogma of Papal Infallibility as decreed by the Vatican Council in 1870; she holds that the Pope is the Vicar of Jesus Christ, the father of princes and the ruler of the world, wielding the two swords of spiritual and temporal authority; she denies the validity of Anglican ecclesiastical Orders and has established her own hierarchy in our land; she claims for her priests sacerdotal power not only to offer the sacrifice of the Mass, but to sit as judges in the Confessional; and by her army of priests, monks and nuns, and by the many activities of 'Catholic Action', she constantly strives to reduce the British Empire to her obedience and to destroy the Protestantism which ousted her from domination over these realms."

For these reasons, and many others, all true evangelical Protestants deplore yielding to Rome any claim to leadership in the formation of a Christian Order for Britain, not because they doubt the sincerity of her representatives in their desire to propagate such a system, but because the religious principles they maintain are contrary to Scripture and therefore destructive of national and individual liberty and well-being.

Mariolatry

Nominal Protestants who are not acquainted with the teachings of Rome, sometimes suspect that opponents of Roman Catholicism misrepresent that system in order to make it appear worse than it is. Such tactics are not necessary. Judged by its own official statements, Romanism stands condemned in the eyes of anyone with a modicum of scriptural knowledge.

The following open letter issued by certain "Missionary Sisters" in Ireland is a case in point. We publish it in full, in order that the idolatrous practices of these nuns may be unmistakably established out of their own writings. Mary is "our Heavenly Mother", they say, she is indeed "the Queen of Heaven"! And they tell us that "no one has such influence with God as she who was the Mother of the Incarnate Word"!

There is no word here about that "one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Indeed, His intercessory ministry is in effect denied since Mary is the one to whom these nuns "turn with confidence". Likewise, there is no mention of that "one sacrifice for sins forever" which is cardinal to all Christian teaching. This "one sacrifice" is superseded by the so-called sacrifice of the Mass.

But if there is no message of a free salvation through the grace of our Lord Jesus, large place is given to

shameless begging for money—the purchase-price of "21,000 Masses a year". And "deceased persons may be enrolled also"! What pitiable superstition!—W.

Following is the circular:

Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, Killeshasdra, Co. Cavan.

October—The Month of the Holy Rosary.

A CHARA,

The month of October is fast approaching—that month so beloved of all lovers of Mary's Rosary! When did we need so much the intercession of our Heavenly Mother as we do now when the dark clouds of war and dissension have closed out the sweet light of God's Love from our shrivelled earth? When did we so much need a Mother's sustaining love to help us to face the dark days which inevitably follow in the train of war and destruction? When did we need so much some common prayer to bind all peoples together, as we do now when discord and uncharitableness are the most marked features of our poor world which has strayed away from God?

Mary's Rosary the Prayer of the Ages

Let us turn with confidence to the Queen of Heaven in our distress. No one has such influence with God as She Who was the Mother of the Incarnate Word! No one is so well aware of all we need to sustain our courage in these anxious days; and She can and will help us. No one is so well able to dispel discord and uncharitableness among men as She Who is the Mother of Fair Love. Let us turn to Her with hearts full of confidence, and let us ask Her to be our intercessor with Her Divine Son, especially now in this month specially dedicated to Her Holy Rosary.

The Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary have a very special devotion to this beautiful prayer of Our Blessed Mother. Out in Africa, among the primitive people of the Tropics, our Sisters have proved for themselves what a force for the uplifting of a people is the Holy Rosary! School children there walk in the "Rosary Procession" during this month of October and recite aloud in their Ibo language the "Ekene Maria" and "Maria di aso"—the Hail Mary and Holy Mary, as we do here at our Mother House during each day of the Month of October. The hospital wards in our African hospitals each evening have their Rosary—and all the poor weary patients are refreshed by the thought that their Heavenly Mother has a care for them—even for them—the abandoned ones of this world! What a joy to the heart of the Missionary Sister to join each evening with these poor black people in the praises of our Common Mother! Such a joy may be yours if you unite in spirit with your brothers and sisters in Africa and pray to the Queen of the Holy Rosary for the advance of the Kingdom of Her Son, and the conversion of all poor pagans.

Our Warfare Is For Everlasting Conquests

Among the African peoples our Sisters strive for spiritual results. Their war is for the advancement of our Holy Religion, and this, not among indifferent people, but among the simplest and most approachable of primitive pagans—who are anxiously awaiting the messengers of God's truth.

We need more Convents, more schools, and more Hospitals in order to get in touch with more souls. Your part lies here! We can do our share, but only if our people at home do theirs by providing us with the necessary material means. For this reason we call on your charitable alms during this Month of the Holy Rosary. Give, and give generously and joyfully, for God loves the cheerful giver! He Himself will be your reward. It is His Work you are helping when you help the Missions.

Each day during October, Holy Mass will be offered, and the Sisters recite daily the Fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary for all those who send an offering during the month. You can send your petitions in the enclosed envelope, to be placed at the Shrine of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary. Please do not enclose your offering in the Petition envelope, which will be burnt after having being placed at the Shrine. All offerings will be gratefully acknowledged. Those who contribute 5/- and upwards will receive an Indulgenced Rosary.

May Our Lady Queen of the Holy Rosary, watch over you and your household, and obtain for you every blessing.

Yours very gratefully in Jesus Christ,

THE MISSIONARY SISTERS

P.S.—An Alms of £3 to our Missionary Union entitles a person during life and after death to share in 21,000 Masses a year. Deceased persons may be enrolled also.

Roman Catholic Canon Law

The following editorial from the *Toronto Telegram* of July 25, deals with the recent marriage "annulments" granted by Mr. Justice Forest in the Province of Quebec, a matter which we discussed in these columns last week. Since that time the same gentleman has "annulled" three more marriages, basing his judgments, the daily press informs us, on the Canon Law of the Roman Catholic Church. If this divorcing judge continues his nefarious activities unhindered at the same pace, it will not be long before the only marriages recognized as legal in Canada will be those authorized by the Roman hierarchy. That is doubtless the doctrine of Canon Law, but shall all the rest of Canada meekly concede to Quebec the privilege of nullifying our laws and replacing them with the law of a foreign power which has its seat in Rome? As the *Telegram* remarks, "It is absurd to pretend any concern for national unity in Canada, while a judge in one province is permitted year after year to demonstrate his contempt for the laws of another province."—W.

ONTARIO LAW DISREGARDED BY JUDGE WHO PREFERS CHURCH LAW

"If Mr. Justice A. Forest, of Montreal, were merely an ignorant man whose lack of familiarity with the law resulted in his giving judgments which could not be supported in any court of justice, his frequent indiscretions might amuse rather than shock those to whose attention they come. The appeal courts could be counted upon to put him right and to see that justice is done.

More serious, however, than the errors of Mr. Justice Forest is the toleration with which his performances are viewed by the Department of Justice. No man has done more than he to use public office for the exaltation of church above state. He has declared that he is not bound by Privy Council decisions where the ecclesiastical law demands his allegiance. In his court the church laws take precedence over the law of the land. It is absurd to pretend any concern for national unity in Canada, while a judge in one province is permitted year after year to demonstrate his contempt for the laws of another province.

His most recent outbreak has been in the annulment of a marriage celebrated in Toronto in 1917 by a minister of the Anglican Church. He based his judgment on the fact that no banns were published "and no dispensation from the publication of banns was obtained from the Roman Catholic church." Further, he objected that the marriage was not performed "before a Cure of the parish of the parties or by a priest delegated by him." None of the grounds put forward by Mr. Justice Forest as reasons for his judgment have any force in Ontario. Here, even if the officiating clergyman were not authorized to celebrate a marriage and there were other failures to comply with required formalities, a marriage otherwise invalid is valid after three years.

That Mr. Justice Forest should tamper with marriages performed in Ontario is going too far. What Quebec does with regard to Quebec marriages is its own affair so long as they do not affect Ontario people. But when its judges misinterpret or disregard Ontario law where it affects marriages which have been celebrated according to the law of this province, it is time that the Government in Queen's Park voiced a vigorous protest. The Anglican Church, if it has any self-respect, cannot permit this decision to go unchallenged."

REV. MORLEY R. HALL

In recent issues of this paper we have given all the news concerning Mr. Hall that we could obtain. The latest number of the *Regular Baptist Fellowship* which is edited by our brother, gives the details of his accident. Mr. Hall himself prepared the manuscript for this number of his paper while lying flat on his back in a cast extending from his armpits to the toes of his right foot. He is now at his home in Calgary after a long trip across the Rockies by Pullman from Victoria where the accident took place. Our readers will recall that the purpose of Mr. Hall's visit to the churches of British Columbia was to present to them the work of the Western Baptist Bible College of which he is the founder and president.

The accident took place while Mr. Hall was at Victoria. Some friends who were entertaining him took him on a tour of their beautiful city, including a drive to Mount Douglas in their trip. On the way down the side of this small mountain the brakes of the car failed to respond, and the car rushed down the steep road out of control and hurled its occupants over an embankment of a hundred and twenty-five feet in height. The following are Mr. Hall's words:

How the Accident Happened

"It would appear that the car plunged about 25 feet before striking on its top for the first bounce. Here we all received head injuries which dazed some and knocked others of us unconscious. The car continued to bounce and roll sideways, throwing its passengers out through the top, finally stopping about 100 feet down the bank.

"In piecing the records together it appears that I must have been thrown through the top when the car revolved upwards, as I was found lying about 25 feet further down the bank from the spot where the car stopped. After remaining about 25 minutes in unconsciousness my first recollection was to awake with blood flowing freely from head and face lacerations. Then I felt sharp pains in my back and right hip which later proved to be the displacement of five vertebrae and a fractured hip.

What Profit Is There In It

"Firstly I have proved the reality of His grace and "that this is the true grace of God" (1 Pet. 5:12). Not many moments after I regained consciousness and as the pain was becoming severe these words, "The cup which my Father gave me, shall I not drink it?" came to my mind. Following the first few moments on the hospital cot came the words "The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me." There have been a few sleepless nights but in a very literal way I have enjoyed "songs in the night." For many years the Psalms have proved precious spiritual food for my life, but some of these came with a refreshing such as I had never before experienced.

"Secondly I have proved the sincerity of Christian love. While visiting the Regular Baptist Churches in British Columbia I was deeply impressed with the warmth of grace in the hearts of the Lord's people as they welcomed me into their midst. Their annual convention was something to which I was looking forward with great anticipation. Being deprived of the privilege to attend was a sad disappointment to me. However when Dr. J. B. Rowell came back to Victoria with a love offering received at the Convention amounting to over \$200 to be used for expenses toward my accident a large lump came up in my throat as I thanked the Lord for the sincerity of their love. Likewise when my own church learned of the possibility of my being able to travel home they pledged themselves to raise the full amount necessary for the trip even though it was then expected that the same would require \$350. These expressions of love along with scores of others both from churches, and individuals who have sent temporal gifts, floral tributes, and personal messages, have meant more to me than my vocabulary can express.

"Thirdly it has proved that the Lord can lay aside His servant and still carry on His work. The British Columbia

Convention at which I was to have been guest speaker was one of the best they have ever had. Not a few attribute the extra touch of warmth and mellowness to my sudden and serious accident. One honest brother remarked to me that he thought my suffering had meant more to the Convention than my speaking would have done. These are my sentiments. Then in my own church, Sunday services are being well attended and the midweek prayer meetings are the best in years.

"While convalescing in his cast for the next few weeks Pastor Hall will broadcast a quarter of an hour each Sunday evening beginning at 10.15 over CFCN. A private line and a microphone are being installed at his bedside. He covets your prayers that this small effort may produce much fruit to the glory of God."

"CAST DOWN BUT NOT DESTROYED"

(Continued from page 4)

the order for retreat was given, he succeeded in reaching the south of France in safety with all his men, though he passed through many perils. His was the only section of the battalion which remained intact. Pastor Waecker continues his ministry. With his usual optimism, he wrote in a letter that he lacked nothing except money, which really means, 'I lack everything'. Mr. Dubarry at Nîmes is carrying a great many extra burdens for he is trying to find lodging and work for the refugees from the other churches there. There are some twenty refugees from Alsace alone at Nîmes. In Cour, Switzerland, though Pastor Weber is in the army he is able to obtain a weekend leave which allows him to conduct his Sunday meetings. The other churches in Switzerland have not been seriously affected by the war except that many of their members have been called up for military service.

"During Mr. Buhler's stay of ten days in Switzerland he interviewed the authorities at Berne with a view to obtaining permission to remain here in order to minister to the church at Bienne, where there is great need of him. Thus far he has received no definite word."

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 5 Third Quarter Lesson 32 August 10, 1941

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

ISRAEL DEMANDS A KING

Lesson Text: 1 Samuel 8.

Golden Text: "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them"—1 Samuel 8:7.

I. Rebellion—verses 1 to 6.

Israel was prosperous and victorious while Samuel flourished (1 Sam. 7:13), but declined as old age crept upon him and he was no longer capable of guiding the affairs of the nation. Thus, Samuel, although excellent in many ways (1 Sam. 2:35), was but one of the long line of human priests, who were not suffered to continue, because of infirmity and death (Heb. 7:23-28). The Lord Jesus Christ, on the other hand, is our perfect High Priest, made after the power of indissoluble life (Heb. 7:16).

Samuel had two wicked sons, but he was probably not to blame for their conduct, since we are not told that the Lord rebuked him, as He did Eli (1 Sam. 2:27-29; 3:11-14). Notwithstanding good parentage and excellent training, such is the perversion of the human will that sons and daughters will not always walk in the ways of a Godly father and mother (1 Kings 11:4; 2 Kings 21:1-9).

A wise man builds for the future, and those entrusted with leadership should make such provision as rests in their power to ensure the continuance of their work (Eccl. 2:18, 19). Samuel was doubtless ambitious for his sons, but they were not worthy to be judges in his stead. They used their authority to further their own interests, accepted bribes and perverted justice (Exod. 18:21; 23:6-8; Deut. 17:18-20).

Students of history distinguish between the primary causes of an event and the contributory factors. The misrule of Samuel's sons provided the occasion of the demand for a

king, but this was not the cause of Israel's rebellion against God. It merely gave the people the opportunity to voice the complaints against the Lord which they had long harbored in their hearts. They had already forsaken Him and were serving other gods.

II. Rejection—verses 7 to 18.

Samuel considered the people's demand for a king as a rejection of his own administration, but it went deeper than that. The people were determined to set aside the theocracy, or the direct rule of God (Deut. 17:14; Judges 8:23; 1 Sam. 10:19; Isa. 33:22; Hos. 13:10; Acts 13:21). By one stroke they planned to set aside the government of God, the One Who had guided, strengthened and delivered them, times without number (Deut. 8:11-20; Psa. 106:21; Isa. 1:3-5).

So close is the union between the Lord and His representatives that those who refuse to hear the word of His messengers are counted as rejectors of the Lord Himself (Exod. 16:8; Lk. 10:16; John 13:20; 2 Cor. 5:20; 1 Thess. 2:13). The responsibility which rests upon preachers and teachers is great, but so also is the obligation of the hearers (Mk. 4:24; Lk. 8:18).

It was Samuel's duty to warn the people of the consequences of their foolish choice. God has given men freedom of decision, but He has made them accountable to Himself (Eccl. 11:9; Rom. 14:12). We cannot force people to make right choices, but we can influence them by pointing out the possible results of the contemplated course of action (Lk. 14:28-33).

The children of Israel desired to be freed from the imagined restraints of the Divine government, but in so doing they would be yielding themselves as slaves to human masters (1 Sam. 14:52), many of whom would be selfish, hard and cruel (1 Kings 21:12-26; Ezek. 45:8; 46:18). When men say that they will not have Christ reign over them (Lk. 19:14), they place themselves still further under the domination of Satan (Rom. 6:16-22). The only true freedom of spirit is that which is the portion of the Lord's bond-servants (John 8:34-36). Let us urge those under our care to enlist in the ranks of the Master Whose service is perfect freedom (1 Pet. 2:16).

The monarchy is probably the purest form of human government, but it is not perfect, as wherever personality is involved, there is an element of doubt. So much depends upon the individual who occupies the throne. There are good kings and evil kings. In some cases it is dangerous to lift a man above his fellows, as he may use his position to exploit others, rather than to serve them. We give God thanks for a Christian king (1 Sam. 10:24; 1 Tim. 2:2; 1 Pet. 2:17).

God knew that the time would come when Israel would cry to be delivered from the oppressive rule of their kings, but there is such a thing as the law of natural consequences (Rom. 2:3-11; 2 Cor. 9:6; Gal. 6:7). When they had once made their choice, even the Lord Himself would not interfere, but would permit them to bear the results of their folly (Isa. 1:15; Micah 3:4).

III. Response—verses 19 to 22.

The Israelites were not contented to be God's peculiar people, a people for His possession (Deut. 4:20; 14:2; 1 Kings 8:53; 1 Pet. 2:9). They were not able to bear the reproach connected with their position (Deut. 7:1-6), but wanted to be like the other nations around them. Separation from the world rather than conformity with the world should be the rule for the people of God (Rom. 12:2; Heb. 11:26; 13:13; Jas. 4:4). The Israelites wanted to be ruled by a king in the flesh, whom they could see and hear. Such worldliness of outlook and aim is a characteristic of those who wander away from God.

Theologians speak of the active directive will of God in contrast to His passive permissive will. Israel's request for a king was not according to the directive will of God, but when they insisted upon having their own way He permitted it (Compare Num. 13:1 with Deut. 1:19-24. See also Num. 22:12, 20, 32-35). The desire that the Lord's will be done should actuate all our prayers and all our actions (Matt. 6:10; 26:39), especially when we remember that if we insist upon having our own way the Lord may see fit to stand aside and abandon us to our own devices, that we may see the folly of trying to direct our own steps (Psa. 78:29-32; 81:11-16; 106:13-15; Prov. 1:24-33; Hos. 13:11).