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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"FATHER, I WILL"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, August 3rd, 1941

(Stenographically Reported)

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."—John 17:24.

Prayer Before the Sermon

Thou hast told us, O Lord, that while Thou dost dwell in the high and holy place, Thou dost also dwell with him who is of an humble and contrite heart, and who trembleth at Thy word. We trust, therefore, that there are many here this morning with whom Thou dost dwell. Draw near to us and make us to know something more of Thine abounding grace today. We thank Thee that though Thou art high and lifted up, and Thy train fills the temple, yet Thou dost condescend to hear the cry of needy men and women. Such we are before Thee this morning. We bless Thee for the assurance of Thy presence with us, and of Thine attitude of grace toward us. Look upon us in our need; teach us out of Thy Word.

It may be there are some here to-day who, having battled fiercely with untoward circumstances, and having had to wrestle against principalities and powers, are this morning wounded in spirit, depressed, and cast down. It is often so, even with the children of the Lord. If there are any such here before Thee to-day we pray that Thou wilt be their glory, and the lifter up of their heads. There may be those who are fearful of the future, who see but a little distance before them, and even that distance is full of shadows, and their hearts of foreboding. We thank Thee that to-morrow is not hidden from Thee. All the years of the future are open to Thy view: Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world.

Help us therefore this morning, Lord, that we may trust Thee for the days to come as well as for the present. Strengthen us to face the future, whatever it may hold for us, with confidence that Thou wilt see us safely through.

We trust there are many here before Thee this morning who desire to know more of Christ, who fain would enter more fully into the enjoyment of the riches of His inheritance. Lead us, we pray Thee, to a fuller understanding of the truth of the gospel, to a deeper appreciation of our privileges in Christ Jesus. Help us that we may glory in the Lord for what He is, and for what He has done. Come to this congregation, meet us every one, from the oldest to the youngest, just at the point of our deepest need, so that we may be enriched by this service, and equipped for all that lies before us.

We commend to Thee to-day all the interests of Thy Church throughout the world. May the missionaries of the cross, the ministers of the gospel, those who preach on street corners, those who minister elsewhere in the open air, those who visit hospitals, or who give a tract to the wayfarer as they meet him, be conscious of the presence of the Lord as they so labour!

And for the Empire to which we belong, we pray. We thank Thee that Thy hand has been upon us so far. We thank Thee that Thou hast preserved us from many a great disaster, that Thou hast brought victory out of defeat again and again. We pray that Thou wilt continue so to do, that on all battle fronts the interests of righteousness may be promoted, and the forces of evil overwhelmed. For those in authority, upon whom the tremendous responsibility of choice and direction rests, we pray that as Thou didst make Solomon wise in his day and generation, so Thou wilt give to each of these men, the King and all his counsellors throughout the Empire, that wisdom which is from above, which is first pure then peaceable.

For the land to the south of us we pray, that there Thy will may be done, and that Thou wilt use that country greatly in the cause of righteousness.

Bless those who are absent from us this morning, those who are seeking rest and refreshment, and who perhaps are unable to attend the service of Thy sanctuary. May they find a Bethel where they are, and delight in the presence of the Lord.

Bless us as we study Thy Word. Bring to us something of the riches of Thy grace wrapped up in this treasury of revelation.

We ask all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

It is said of the Lord Jesus that the people who heard Him in the days of His flesh remarked: "Never man spake like this man." His were words of wisdom, and of power always. I like to believe that there never was a human voice so full of music and of grace as was the voice of the Lord Jesus. They "wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth". It must have been a rare privilege to hear Jesus speak to

men. But it must surely have been a still higher privilege to hear Him when He spoke to God. It was when the disciples heard Jesus pray that they felt in their hearts a great desire to be able to pray as He prayed. And so they said, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."

But if there could be a difference in the prayers of Christ, if at any time He seemed to reach greater heights than others, it must have been when He offered this last high-priestly prayer in behalf of His own elect, when the shadow of the cross was falling upon Him. John's Gospel was, perhaps, the last of the four Gospels to be written. You may wonder how so long after the fact the evangelists were able to record that which Jesus had spoken. But He had given them a promise that the Holy Spirit should bring to their remembrance all that He had said to them. And as John wrote this prayer he was reminded, by the Spirit of God, of the very words which Jesus Christ had uttered. I can well imagine that as John penned these marvellous sentences he must have been thrilled again at the remembrance of the music of them, the grace of them, the power of them, as he heard them when they fell from the lips of Jesus. And surely of the lovely word of this matchless prayer there were none fuller of grace, or fuller of promise of glory than this cry from the heart of the Saviour of the world: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

I.

It would be well if we could learn to measure ourselves, and all the interests and values of life by divine standards. **HERE BELIEVERS ARE DESCRIBED AS THE FATHER'S GIFT TO HIS SON.** The Lord Jesus speaks of you and of me, if we are believing people, as of those whom the Father had given. And *the Father could not bestow upon His Son as a gift that which was not within His own possession and authority.* They were His, and He gave them to His Son. The Father has always had a proprietary right in you and me. We never were our own; we are not our own now. But what a marvellous selection! What a strange choice! What would you give to someone whom you greatly loved, as an expression of your abiding affection for that person? Would you be puzzled sometimes to determine just what kind of gift to select? Would you try to understand the mind of your friend, his or her taste, that person's particular requirements, so that you might be able to select a gift that would be appropriate and appreciated? What would you give to your beloved? How strange that when the Father would give a token of affection to His Son, when He should select a gift which He knew His Son would highly prize—how strange that He should have selected you and me that He might give us to be the Son's possession forever! Oh, it would greatly strengthen us in our faith, and greatly enhance our estimation of the value of the salvation which is in Christ, if we could learn to go beyond that which lies on the surface, and give our thought sometimes to the secret counsels of God as revealed in His Word, so that we might revel in the luxury of such a truth as this, that for some reason, unknown to us, utterly inexplicable so far as our understanding of things is concerned, for a reason known only to Himself, the Infinite selected us, and said, "I

will give that man, that woman, that boy, that girl, to My Son." So the Lord Jesus regarded the Father's gift.

And I am sure the Father would not give to His Son as a gift *anything that was not of great worth in His own eyes.* If you are buying something for a little child, you spend a few pence in buying a little toy, because you know it will be broken to-morrow. It would not be worth while buying for an infant a very expensive gift. But as the child grows older, you find it more difficult to select a present—and a little more costly. And when the child has become an adult, and his mind has become enlarged and enriched, and he has a larger and richer view of life altogether, it becomes a still bigger problem. You say, "Oh, I could not insult him with anything cheap or taudry! I must find something worthy of the person to whom I propose to give it." Can you understand by that standard of value why God should have given you to His Son, the well-Beloved, Whom He had already made Heir of all things, Who was not poor but rich! And yet He proposed to add to His wealth by making Him a present of you or of me! He must have seen some worth in what we regard very often as our worthless selves. He must have seen potentialities there of which you and I have never dreamed. Oh, that we could give our imagination wings, and try to imagine what God has planned for us, what He expects for us, what He has willed that some day we are to be! Otherwise why should He give us to His Son?

Sometime when you feel especially down—Do you ever feel down? Do you ever have a day when the sun is overcast, or the night without stars? Do you feel that all of life is awry? Everything has gone wrong somehow, and you are tempted to think that you are not of much worth to yourself or to anybody else—just stop a little to reflect upon this, that you must have been of some value to God, or He never would have given you to His Son. He must have seen latent powers and possibilities in you which His grace could develop, or He never would have made you a gift to His well-Beloved. We must be diamonds in the rough—very much in the rough, I fear. If you were to see a diamond in the rough in its native place, some of them at least you would never recognize as diamonds at all. The Lord must have had a keen eye for value, when He could see something of worth in you and me! Don't you think so? So if you feel a little off shade sometimes, if you feel that you are not of much account in this world, say to yourself, "I may not be of any account now, but some day I am to be one of the Lord's jewels. I have heard Him say, 'They shall be mine . . . in that day when I make up my jewels.'" I do not understand it; I content myself with the barest statement, for it is utterly beyond me to understand why God should lay His hand upon you and me, and say to His Son, "I am going to make you a present." Wonder of wonders! This is one of the marvels of the grace of God!

Sometimes we speak of our acceptance of Christ. I think that is scriptural in principle: "As many as received him, to them gave he power." There is a sense in which we "receive" Christ. We accept Him; and that is the crisis-hour in the life of anyone. But has it occurred to you that the Scripture teaches that *if we are Christians Christ has accepted us?* He has received us as a gift from His Father. Already we are His possession.

You may sometimes say, "Thank you", for a very indifferent gift. You would not be guilty of the discourtesy of appearing to put a low estimate upon any gift which anyone might be pleased to bestow upon you. The father receives a gift from his little child, and makes much of it, though the gift may have no intrinsic value at all. Its value consists in the fact that the child put his affection into it, and gave it to his father or mother. But when the Lord Jesus received you as the Father's gift, when He accepted you from the hand of God, and said, "Thine they were and Thou gavest them Me. That soul now is Mine, My possession", I do not think He received you merely for the sake of the Giver. He did receive us with divine appreciation because His Father had given us to Him, but I think He received us because He saw some value in us. It must have been so, for it was for us He died.

And so I bring you this simple and yet profound truth this morning for your comfort, that we who belong to Christ are the Father's gift to His Son.

II.

What will He do with His gift? Here He prays THAT SUCH AS HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO HIM MAY BE WITH HIM WHERE HE IS: "I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." Surely He could have paid us no greater compliment than to have expressed a desire for our presence.

We have all known people whose presence rather bored us, good people in many ways, but we did not want them to be with us very much. We soon wearied of their presence. I confess I have met people whom I loved in the Lord, and whom I like to meet, but I am not sure that I should want to be with them very long. There are people whose conversation is edifying. You feel it is a privilege to be with them. There are others who weary one almost to the point of exhaustion. I once travelled for a long time in the company of two men. I was *with* them, and they were *with* me. They were both men of prominence. I have heard both of them speak. They were preachers, and both very widely known. One in his public ministry was far more widely known than the other. But in his private life, and private conversation, he was one of the most wearisome and monotonous persons I ever knew. Day after day there was not a bit of sparkle about his conversation, no freshness. As we met a succession of strangers in different places he always had the same remarks to make until I grew utterly wearied of him. When he was shown something of historical interest, something about which volumes had been written, he had the same inane remark to make. I knew before our guide, whoever it was, had finished his description, exactly what this man would say, because he had nothing else to say. I was amazed that a man who should be so prominent publicly, should be so wearisome in daily conversation. I learned after that what he dealt in publicly was not his own. He was a good gleaner, merely a parrot, parroting what other men had thought. But when you found him alone, and tried to draw upon the treasures of his own mind, it seemed to me he was almost incapable of thinking. He was a nice sort of man, but I confess that often I said to myself, "Oh, another monotonous day! How many times I shall have to hear the same thing!"

The other man was altogether different. He never said the same thing twice. He always had some fresh remark

to make. It seemed to me every time he spoke he said something different. I said to myself of him, "What a privilege to live with a man like that! One would be getting richer and richer all the time."

Well I wonder why the Lord Jesus wants to live with you and me? He does not say anything about heaven's golden streets, and jasper walls, and gates of pearl, and the tree that bears twelve manner of fruits. That is not what He is talking about: He is talking about inner things, not externals. And He says: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am."

Occasionally I have met people who were kind enough to say that they wanted to be with me, kind enough to say that they found some pleasure in my companionship. And do you know, I felt a little taller at that! I said to myself, "That is fine!" When I have met with someone who, with apparent sincerity, has grasped my hand and said, "I have long wanted to meet you; I wish we could find time for a good long visit together"—I do not know how you would feel, but I always feel that to be a high compliment.

We have to be careful of the people we select to live with—the people who become a part of you, whom you have to meet every day—every day—every day—every day, months together, years together, just to live with him or her as the case may be! Well, you had better be careful whom you select. You had better get someone who won't wear out very soon.

But here the divine Bridegroom has selected a Bride. We are members of it, if we are believers. And He said: "I desire that whomsoever Thou has given Me, be with Me where I am—not only in the same house, but always with Me wherever I am."

I have often told you of my dog. He supplies me with many illustrations. I had been away from home, and when I came home Saturday it took him at least half an hour to say, "I am glad to see you"; and then he followed me around, and wherever I sat down he sat beside me, and he looked up into my face and said, in his own language, "I am glad you are home. I just love to be with you." And I could not help petting him a little more, and saying to him, "I like to be with you, too."

Just think of the relationship into which we poor sinners are brought, when the Prince of Glory says, "I want them to be with Me where I am." We are not to travel third class, or second class: we are to be first class passengers with the King all the time. My friends, that is what heaven is going to be, and what the heavenly life is to be here when Jesus Christ becomes real to us.

And if He wants us to be with Him where He is, why should we desire to be where He is not? That ought to be our question always: "Is the Lord Jesus to come?" That would keep us away from many a place, and from the doing of many things, if we were guided by that principle, and resolved always to be only and always where He is, that we may behold His glory.

What do you understand to be the "glory" of Jesus Christ? *His glory is not what you think Him to be, but what He really is.* And He wants us to be with Him so that we may get to know Him. The Apostle Paul, learned man that he was, a man of large natural capacities, rich in Christian experience, when he wrote to the Philippians said: "I count all things but loss for the excel-

lency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." And the Apostle Paul sacrificed everything to a spiritual education that he might get to know the Lord Jesus Christ better.

You say, "I love to study the Bible." That is well. Study it as much as you can. But the end of all our study, of all our praying, of all our endeavour, must be that we may know Christ better.

And then the Lord Jesus prays that we may be with Him at last, that we may be with Him to behold His glory. Not till then shall we know Him as He is. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." On the Mount of Transfiguration the Lord Jesus allowed the glory of His personality to shine through the concealing veil of His flesh, and before that supernal light they fell at His feet. But some day we shall be able to see Him as He is in His own home.

If you want to know people you must know them in their own home. I am reluctant to form a judgment of anyone when I see him in public places. It is a high compliment to any man or woman when it is said that he or she shines more at home than anywhere else. There are some people who are wonderfully polite away from home, wonderfully engaging, interesting, away from home, who at home are just as ugly as a bear. What are you at home? How do you behave at home? What sort of a person are you to live with every day? Well, the Lord Jesus said, "I want all these whom Thou hast given Me, to see Me at home. I want them to see Me just as I am, as I have always been; when the veil of this flesh no longer conceals My glory. I want them to see Me in the infinite reaches of My grace, and in the glory which Thou gavest me from the foundation of the world.

It will be a great day when we are "at home" with God. That is what heaven is. Will you remember that? To be in heaven is not merely to be with God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, but it is to be at home with Him and to feel at home, and to see His glory, and enter into the joy of it. Joseph said to his brothers: "Tell my father of all my glory in the land of Egypt, and of all that you have seen. Bring down my father hither. I want him to see me at home, with all that God has given me in this land of wealth." My friends, the Lord Jesus prays for that.

III.

AND WHAT IS HIS PRAYER? This is the best part of it all: "Father, I will." Read the seventeenth chapter of John, and see what emphasis the Lord Jesus lays upon the sovereignty of His own will. There is a text in the tenth chapter of Hebrews from which I have never yet presumed to preach. I am going to try one of these days; but it will be only an attempt. It is one of the profoundest scriptures in the whole Book, where the Holy Ghost, speaking of the failure of the law, and of the necessity of the coming of the one and only Saviour, then said of the Christ: "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God"—and listen: this is the text: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all". Shall I repeat it: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." "I will." You have said it. Well, you may be a man or woman of strong

will, of resolute purpose, and it may be when you say "I will" generally speaking you execute that resolve. But always, we all, in some measure, fall short of the execution even of our own wills. Paul said in the seventh chapter of Romans: "When I would do good"—that is when he willed—when he willed to do good, alas!—"evil is present with me."

My dear friends, if your development into a godly character depended upon your will, you would not get very far. If your arrival at last in glory depended upon the continuity of your strength of purpose, if salvation depended upon your setting your will heavenward, and so persisting—oh, there would be no hope for any of us in such a case! But when all other wills have failed, and everything else proved abortive, then said He: "Lo I come to do thy will, O God." Someone has come now to do God's will, Who will succeed, and He did succeed until at last He cried, "It is finished!" He never failed in the execution of that upon which His heart was set. What He willed to do, He accomplished. And then it is said, "By the which will we"—poor weaklings, poor worms of the dust, who ought to be better, and cannot be; who have tried a thousand times, and yet in ourselves have failed, until sometimes we wonder if we shall ever be completely victorious—"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." And when He said: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory", He settled forever the destiny of those whom the Father had given Him. And we shall be with Him where He is, and we shall behold His glory, and in the ages to come He will show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Jesus Christ.

"He wills that I should holy be
What can withstand His will?
The counsel of His grace in me
He surely will fulfill."

Some day we shall be without fault—not among blind men, nor among people of prejudiced judgment; no, we shall be without fault before the throne of God, where even the angels can see no flaw in us, and where and when even God Himself will be pleased. Then our Lord Jesus shall "see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."

A COLORED PASTOR'S PRAYER

"Oh, Lord, give thy servant this mornin' the eyes of the eagle and the wisdom of the owl. Connect his soul with the Gospel telephone in the central skies. Luminare his brow with the sun of heaven. Pizen his mind with love for de people, turpentine his 'magination, grease his lips with posum oil, loosen his tongue with the sledge hammer of thy power. Lectrify his brain with the lighthen' of 'de Word. Put 'pepual motion in his arms, fill him plum full of de dynamite of 'dy glory. 'Noint him all ober with 'de kerosene of 'dy salvation, and set him on fire. Amen.

Subscribe for The
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EVENING SERMON

"TILL HE COME"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto,
Sunday Evening, August 3rd, 1941

(Stenographically Reported)

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."—1 Corinthians 11:26.

On the evening of our July Communion I spoke to you of the ordinance of the Supper as a feast of remembrance, from the preceding verse. The ceremonial ordinances of the New Testament are full of teaching; and we shall derive profit from their observance as we enter into an intelligent understanding of their spiritual significance.

We ought not to observe the ordinances as mere ceremonies, but as speaking ordinances, as institutions which teach something, which proclaim the truth of the gospel. I may have preached—I think probably I have—many times from this text: I have consulted no record to refresh my memory. Even so, this is a word like the tree of life which yieldeth its fruit every month—not the same fruit, but the same tree. This is as the garden of the Lord into which we may go frequently, and regularly; and we shall always find some new flower opening to the sun—a rose perhaps, or a lily, or, mayhap, some shy forgetmenot. This is a mine in which we may dig for ever, for the soul's perpetual enrichment. The words of God are not cisterns: they are springs of living water to which the Spirit of truth will lead us, and from which He will draw such sweet and refreshing draughts as were never drawn even from the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate.

We are to remember the Lord's death, as we remarked last month. This text says we are not only to remember it: we are to proclaim it; and we proclaim it by the observance of this ordinance. Granted, then, the necessity for the continuous remembrance of the death of Christ; and the wisdom of the institution of this ordinance to assist our memory, why should the Lord have chosen this particular form? That is the direction of our enquiry this evening. Why should we proclaim the Lord's death by the observance of a feast? This is a strange collocation, that the remembrance of death should be associated with a feast, that a feast should be instituted for the remembrance of death; that death should be proclaimed by a feast. We have heard sometimes of there being a skeleton at the feast! There is no skeleton at this feast, but death itself is to be had in remembrance; and even though there be death, we are to proclaim it by a feast.

I.

WHY SHOULD DEATH BE PROCLAIMED BY A FEAST?

First, because this feast celebrates the destruction of our greatest foe. It is a feast of victory, when we are reminded of a great war, a final battle, and of a great Conqueror's prowess.

Sin was the enemy that was overcome, overwhelmed. And what an enemy he is! There is no garden whose soil has not been polluted by the seeds of the thorns of his sowing; no field in which this enemy has not sown tares; no heart anywhere which this enemy has not defiled; no kingdom which he has not subdued; no crown from which he has not plucked the most precious jewel—a pitiless enemy this, who has had no mercy on men or women, young or old, or even upon little children. He

has been the great desolator who has converted gardens into deserts, and populous cities into heaps of ruins. The mark of his destructive work is everywhere apparent; and never perhaps in all the world's history more apparent than now.

Until the advent of Jesus Christ, there was no one who could successfully match his strength with this great enemy. He triumphed over everyone; and not until Jesus Christ came was the subjugation—indeed the destruction—of this foe possible. But as we come to the Table this evening we celebrate the victory of Calvary, a victory of vaster dimensions, of infinitely greater potentialities, than a thousand Waterloos. Well may we celebrate that victory, not with mourning in sackcloth and ashes, but jubilantly by the observance of a feast.

Not only so, but as we come to the Table this evening we celebrate a victory over another foe: *our deliverance from fear*. You remember that Mr. Roosevelt spoke of four freedoms, and one of his four freedoms upon which he said the democracies must insist, was freedom from fear. We are not to be held in dread, in perpetual fear of the aggressor. To that, we all agree.

But none of us is free from fear. We all have much to fear—fear of that for which there was no human remedy. How shall I put it?—the fear of our past. Whatever you may do for to-day, whatever you may hope for to-morrow, your past is beyond all possibility of human rectification. Our yesterdays are gone, and their record is indelibly written. Left to ourselves, we must live in perpetual fear of the past. There is not one here who could turn all the pages of his past with satisfaction—

"Who bears no trace of passion's evil force?"

Who shuns thy sting, O terrible remorse?

Who does not cast

On the thronged pages of his memory's book,

At times a sad and half-reluctant look

Regretful of the past?"

How shall we bury it? How shall we get rid of it? How shall we free ourselves from this incubus? I remember to have read somewhere in some missionary's biography the story of a missionary who preached on the resurrection. He was interrupted by one of the tribal chiefs in the midst of his sermon. The chief said, "Stop, missionary. You say that the dead will live again?" "Yes." "They will all live again?" "Yes; there shall be a resurrection of the just and of the unjust." "But," said the mighty chief, "this arm has slain its thousands of enemies. Do you mean to tell me they will rise again and confront me?" "Yes; that is the revelation of God." "It cannot be—it must not be," the chief replied.

He did not want to meet his past. Nor can any of us divorce ourselves therefrom save through Jesus Christ. That is the marvel of grace, that it has anticipated our folly. The wonder of wonders to me is that the cross has a retroactive value. Christ died for the transgressions that were under the first covenant. One arm of His cross reaches back to the beginning of time, and so abounding grace makes it possible for all the past to be blotted out, and buried for ever; so that we may be delivered from the fear of the past, and set our faces joyfully toward the future. Well may we celebrate so great an achievement with a feast. We ought to celebrate it hilariously; we ought to celebrate it with songs of joy and thanksgiving; not with mourning, I say, but with gratitude to God for the triumph of redeeming grace.

We celebrate in this feast a death which gave value to a certain testament by which we were made heirs of

glory. The New Testament tells us that "where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."

What an unseemly thing it would appear, to hold a feast in celebration of the death of someone who had named you as a beneficiary in his will! Many people who have money or property to leave, guard most jealously, as a great secret, the contents of their wills. I do not blame them! I suppose they do not want anyone to be waiting for them to die.

A certain man some years ago told me that at the time he was appointed Chancellor of a certain university he met with the Governors of the institution to consider all the business affairs, that he might learn what the revenue of the institution was. They told him of their investments, then said, "There is another five thousand dollars a year that will fall in, we expect, very soon. The widow of the testator is rich in her own right, notwithstanding her husband who left his estate to this institution stipulated that during her lifetime she should be given an annuity of five thousand dollars. But she is past seventy years of age, and it is not likely she will live very long. Of course, at her death, our revenue from that source will be five thousand more annually."

I had dinner with that same lady in the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Montreal more than twenty-five years after the Governors told that Chancellor they expected soon to receive the increase in revenue due to her death! She was ninety-six or ninety-seven, and really she seemed at that time to bid fair to put on another hundred! She gave no promise whatever of any immediate likelihood of shuffling off this mortal coil.

This is a very strange thing that we should be asked to celebrate the death of a Testator by Whose last will and testament we are made rich, heirs of eternal wealth. But inasmuch as He Himself requires this of us, we may do it in obedience to His command; and as we contemplate all its significance, and think of the vast wealth which becomes ours because of His death, it is not an unseemly thing that we should celebrate His death even with a feast, especially because His resurrection is the complement of His death, and because He has promised to join us in the feast of remembrance: "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." So let us think of that: by this death we remember, we are made rich.

And there will be no mistake in the distribution of the assets of the estate, for the reason that the living Testator has made Himself the Executor. We shall have our full inheritance, and as we come to the feast, let us come with hearts of gladness and gratitude to Him to Whom we owe so much. Mr. Churchill said, "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many, to so few." That was very good. That is an immortal sentence. And yet it is not strictly true. Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to any other One. We owe it all to Jesus Christ. Let us remember Him.

Then, dear friends, in this feast *we celebrate the death of Death itself.* We sometimes sing,—

"He hell in hell laid low,
Made sin, He sin o'erthrew;
Bowed to the grave, destroyed it so,
And death, by dying, slew."

The last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death. And what an ugly thing death is. There is not one here who has not felt the weight of his stroke. He is a robber of the family. He has taken the husband and breadwinner away, and left the widow and children in tears and in want. He has taken the wife and mother from the husband's side, and from the little children; and left them to fare alone in the world. There is no sphere of life into which Death has not entered.

What a robber of churches is he! He has laid his icy hand upon the champion of the truth. He has taken the shepherd from the flock, the counsellor from those who needed his wisdom. How he has impoverished the state; when some great leader and governor seemed to be so much needed he is snatched away by the hand of Death. Death is a horrible thing. There is a rhyme—I will not call it a hymn—in which I have never joined, but which some sing, which begins something like this, "Oh, lovely appearance of death." I have never seen anything lovely in death, have you? Death is the offspring of sin, and sin never brought anything lovely into the world, and never will. Death is an enemy against whom no one stood until He came, the Hero of this feast. When Death came up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan, our mighty Samson laid hold upon him and laid him low, and put His conquering heel upon his neck, and extracted his sting, and, sovereignly making him His servant, harnessed him to His golden chariot, and compelled him to drag His ransomed children up the shining pathway of the skies. We have heard them, if not actually sing the words, in spirit as they neared the glory and left the earth behind, say—

"The earth recedes; it disappears,—
Heaven opens on mine eyes, mine ears
With sounds seraphic ring!
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O Grave, where is thy victory?
O Death, where is thy sting?"

To the believer, death has ceased to be an enemy. Grace has converted him into a servant who does the will of the Father in heaven and in earth; and we celebrate that in this feast of love, the triumph of a Hero. It ought to be a feast: nothing else would do.

There have been other memorials. In some cases a splendid pillar of marble or granite has been raised to keep in memory someone who is gone; or some noble piece of sculpture, some magnificent architectural creation like the Taj-Mahal; or, the endowment of a college, the building of hospitals, the erection of churches, were designed to perpetuate the memory of a life rather than the death of the person concerned. Here we owe everything to death, which was the termination, the completion of a perfect life. So we celebrate it with a feast.

II.

There is something more than that in a feast. **THERE IS ALWAYS RESIDENT IN IT THE IDEA OF FELLOWSHIP.** We come together at each other's tables occasionally, not because we are paupers in need of bread, but because we enter into fellowship with each other as we break bread together. Last week I was in North Carolina, and I visited there one of our members whom some of you will remember, Dona Wheeler, who was in Toronto studying music. I met her and her parents, and was their guest. But they did not invite me to their table because they thought I was hungry, but because they wanted me to

be there to have fellowship with them, and because they knew I should be delighted to reciprocate and have fellowship with them. We had a delightful time, all too brief, together.

That is common to all of us; and when Jesus Christ ordained that He should be remembered, and that His death should be proclaimed by a feast, I am sure He designed that this great truth of fellowship, this conception of fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, should be the main feature—and with each other as members of the household of faith.

It is a feast in honour of our Lord. Let us always remember that He must be supremely honoured with its every observance. Sometimes we hear of a Washington dinner, or a Lincoln banquet, or other great feast held in honour of some distinguished man who is made the guest of the evening. This feast is a feast in honour of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Conqueror, the supreme Victor of all time, Whose coming to earth has made righteousness and peace possible. How much is wrapped up in Him!

But the wonder of it all is that the feast is of His ordaining. There is a sense in which He is our Guest, but another sense in which we are His guests and He is the Host. We miss the significance of this feast if we do not enter into fellowship with Jesus Christ. What was the purpose of His coming, His incarnation, His vicarious life, His expiatory death, His resurrection and ascension—what was the purpose of His whole scheme of redemption if it was not to remove that which had effected the alienation of the soul from God, if it was not designed to restore our souls, and bring us back into fellowship with the Most High? They ought to be in fellowship with God who come to this feast. God forbid that it should ever be a mere ceremony to us, that we should attach to it any sacramentarian value, as though the observance of it conferred grace upon the participant. They only ought to observe this feast who are in fellowship with Him Whose exploits, Whose achievements, it proclaims.

If we were honoured by the presence of some naval or military commander, or let us say, by the Empire's hero of this hour, Prime Minister Churchill,—if he were here, and the banquet were prepared in his honour, we should never think of permitting a pro-German to attend. That would be an insult. They only could sit at the board who were in fellowship with him in whose honour it was held. No one has a right to the Lord's Supper merely by virtue of a religious profession, or membership in a church. Fellowship with God is the prerequisite for this feast: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" Communion, fellowship if you like, with the blood of Christ! A heart-understanding, if I may so put it, of all that Jesus Christ came to do, and of all that He successfully and victoriously accomplished. This we must have if it is to be a feast, indeed.

But there is also fellowship with the saints as well as with the Saviour when we come to this feast of love. Do you not think that it was all designed as a foretaste and foreshadowing of that happy state of life to which grace will some day bring us, when we shall sit down in the paradise of God, there to enjoy fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for ever? Let us keep that in mind as we come to the feast.

III.

AND IT HAS SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT THE FUTURE. "Ye do proclaim the Lord's death *till he come*." It is a witness to the finality of the gospel. "Keep that in its central place, and keep on observing it until I come back." Have no other gospel than this: proclaim the death of Christ."

I met a lady while I was away who had been secretary to a certain lawyer of prominence in this city before her marriage. After some years of absence, she told me, she returned to Toronto, and went down to the office where she had worked, to renew her acquaintance with such members of the staff as still remained. She met the lawyer whom she had served years before, and he said, "Your name is Mrs. So-and-So?" "Yes." "I understand you married a minister." "Yes; my husband is a minister." "And were you unfortunate enough to marry one of the old-fashioned sort—I think they call them Evangelicals or Fundamentalists?" "If you mean, Does my husband believe the Bible, my answer is yes, he does." "I believed it myself once. My mother so taught me, and I believed it when you used to be in the office; but I do not believe it any more." "Why, Mr. So-and-So? What has changed your mind—your own investigation?" "Oh no. I am a lawyer. I have not time for that. I leave all that to the religious experts; and my minister says it is all nonsense, all bunk. And I have accepted what he says about it, just as he would accept my advice as a lawyer."

God have mercy on the soul of a minister who so teaches! But how many there are who would amend the gospel, bring it up-to-date! How many in Toronto! But in this place we still believe in the old gospel. We still proclaim the death of Christ. We still sing,

"Thou dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power
Till all the ransomed saints of God
Be saved, to sin no more."

There is no other gospel than that. There is no other hope for the individual, or for the world, than that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin. We believe in the absolute finality of the revelation of God in Christ. He is God's last word, and we shall never hear another word from God that is contrary thereto. So must we proclaim His death *till He come*. I hope you love to do it. I hope you can sing the rest of the hymn—

"Ere since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wound supply,
Redeeming Love hath been my theme,
And shall be till I die."

That is our resolution in this place, to proclaim the Lord's death "till he come".

It sets up the light of truth in the temple of truth, a temple like Ezekiel's temple, whose prospect is toward the east, toward the world's great morning—"till he come". And are you not glad He is coming? That is our hope; that is "the blessed hope", the "glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

We have had to endure scorn and spitting because of loyalty to the truth—we all have. But we shall have our day some time. Faith will be vindicated when He comes. I often dream of it; I often sit and think of the day when Jesus Christ shall come down the skies, when we shall actually see Him as He is. And He will look for those who have been faithful to their trust. We shall not be called old-fashioned then; we shall not be out-of-date then, when we are found among those whose every word is vindicated by the coming of the Lord; for

when He comes, every word in the Book will be established. He will be clear when He speaks, and justified when He judges.

And I want to be on His side, and in favour with Him when He shall come. Therefore are we resolved, I trust—you Jarvis Street people, and many others here who are not of this particular family—more firmly than ever that as God helps us, we will take the cup and break the bread, and in so doing shall continue to proclaim His death—"till he come".

Let us pray:

For our present enjoyment, O Lord, of this incomparable salvation, for such experience as we have had of the fulness of Thy grace, we give Thee thanks. And for the prospect of the morning, and the better days in the city which knows no night, and for that life of unending fellowship which is to be ours through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ—for all this we give Thee thanks as we come to Thy Table this evening. Help us to come in faith, with grateful love in our hearts to Him to Whom we owe, not merely "so much", but to Whom we owe all for this life and that which is to come. In His name we ask it, Amen.

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 5 Third Quarter Lesson 33 August 17th, 1941

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

SAUL CHOSEN AS KING

Lesson Text: 1 Samuel 9.

Golden Text: "Stand thou still a while, that I may shew thee the word of God"—1 Samuel 9:27.

I. Saul the Son—verses 1 to 10.

Kish, the father of Saul, is introduced to us as "a mighty man of power". He was doubtless a man of strong physique and prowess, as well as a person of substance and influence. It is a blessing to be well born according to the flesh, but to be truly born again of the Spirit of God is of the utmost importance (John 3:3-7).

It is significant that Israel's first king was a man who fulfilled in large measure their ideals. He was youthful, handsome and tall, towering above his fellow-men (1 Sam. 10:23). They had expressed a desire for a king who would go before them into battle (1 Sam. 8:20), and Saul would make a conspicuous captain for the army because of his great stature. People are wont to follow the leaders whose aims harmonize with their own (Hos. 4:9; 2 Tim. 4:3, 4).

God calls into His service those whose faithfulness in the ordinary duties of life demonstrates their fitness (Judg. 6:11; 1 Kings 19:19; Matt. 25:21). Saul was sent on a homely mission, but he stood the test and exercised obedience, good sense, conscientiousness and persistence. He also had a proper sense of values, rightly judging that his father's chief concern would be for the welfare of his son rather than for the safety of the asses. Many have not yet learned the preciousness in God's sight of a human soul (Matt. 6:26; Mk. 8:36, 37; 1 Cor. 9:9, 10).

Saul was not above listening to the advice of a servant (2 Kings 5:2, 3, 13, 14), and his humility was rewarded when that servant's plan proved to be the link in the Divine purpose of bringing the young son of Kish in touch with the prophet. Samuel was indeed waiting to show them the way they should go, even the path leading to the throne. Every preacher, teacher and Christian has the privilege of proclaiming the word of God, and thus marking more clearly for pilgrims the way to Christ and the celestial city (Psa. 119:105, 130; 143:8; John 14:6).

In those days the people gave offerings to those who ministered to them in the things of God (1 Kings 14:23; 2 Kings 4:42; 8:8). It was a gracious custom, and a similar

expression of gratitude and generosity is enjoined upon Christians (1 Cor. 9:11; 1 Thess. 5:12, 13; 1 Tim. 5:17).

II. Samuel the Seer—verses 11 to 27.

In the Scriptures the Lord's servants are called by various names, names which describe their position and duties. For example, Samuel is called a priest, in that he offered sacrifices (verse 12; 1 Sam. 2:35; Heb. 8:3); a judge, in that he administered justice (1 Sam. 7:15-17); a seer, in that he received revelations from God (verses 15, 16; 1 Sam. 3:21; 2 Sam. 15:27); a prophet, in that he proclaimed the will of the Lord (1 Sam. 3:20), and a man of God (verse 6). The New Testament designations for the minister are many; such as, the pastor or shepherd (Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11), the minister (Col. 1:7; 1 Tim. 4:6), the bishop or overseer (1 Tim. 3:1), the elder (1 Tim. 5:17), the teacher (Jas. 3:1), the preacher (2 Tim. 4:2) and the man of God (1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 3:17).

The maidens of the city knew where to find the prophet and they rightly described his habits. The world will read us, whether we will or no, and even the unsaved will know whether or not our testimony is sincere. Every preacher or teacher has a right to be hated for the Lord's sake (Matt. 10:22; John 15:18, 19), but no one has a right to be despised (1 Tim. 3:7; 4:12; Tit. 2:15). Let our conduct be above reproach (Col. 4:5; 1 Pet. 2:12, 15).

The Lord consented to Israel's demand for a king, but He retained the right to choose the man who should occupy that position (Deut. 17:14-20). Saul was chosen of God for his high office (1 Sam. 15:1; Acts 13:21). The Lord's sovereign purpose is being worked out in the lives of His own, and He exercises at all times a merciful restraint lest we be carried away by our wilfulness (Job. 33:14-18; Isa. 61:8, Jer. 18:6-10; Rom. 8:28; 10:33-36).

Although the Israelites had rejected the government of God over their nation He still called them "my people" (Exod. 3:7; 1 Kings 8:36; Isa. 1:3; 43:1; Hos. 4:6; 11:1). The Lord has loved us with an everlasting love, and in spite of our unworthiness He will not let us go (Isa. 54:10; 60:10; Jer. 9:24; Hos. 14:1-4).

The Lord gave specific guidance to Samuel in the matter of the choice of a king for Israel (1 Sam. 16:2, 3, 12). As He made His will known to His servants of old, so, to-day, as we wait upon Him in humble obedience He will guide us by His word, His Holy Spirit and His providential dealings.

Saul answered the call of God with becoming humility. One cannot come into touch with our holy heavenly Father without feeling his own unworthiness (Exod. 3:11; 4:10; Judg. 6:15; 1 Sam. 15:17; Isa. 6:5; Jer. 1:6).

God Himself must first teach His servants, in order that they may be equipped for His work (Gal. 1:15-17; Eph. 3:1-4). "About the spring of the day" the elderly prophet communed with young Saul bidding him stand still (Exod. 14:13; Psa. 46:10; Isa. 30:15) and listen to the word of the Lord (Psa. 119:59, 60, 99-101; Isa. 30:21).

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