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

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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"IN THE BEGINNING GOD—IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD—AND THE WORD WAS GOD."

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, December 28th, 1941

(Stenographically Reported)

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

"And God said."—Genesis 1:1-3.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."—John 1:1.

I have no hope of being able to expound such great words as these. Zophar the Naamathite was eminently wise when he asked, "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." Let us ever remember that this is the word of the Infinite; and that the inspired Book is written in pregnant speech; that all the words of God, like the works of God, are multifold.

Yet though we may not fully expound it, much less exhaust its meaning, we may find in these words some answers to questions which, if we think at all, we must all have asked. I heard a professor—rather a vain-glorious, egotistical professor—in a convocation address to an educational assembly, say most solemnly, "This is an age of quest." He seemed to think the interrogation point was a modern invention. People have always asked questions. Ask any mother, and she will tell you that her children begin to ask questions as soon as they can talk, and, even earlier, act like animated interrogation points as soon as they can walk. Hence the necessity of keeping some cupboards near the floor securely locked. They are always prying into something, asking about how things came to pass.

And even children ask questions relating to origins, where and how did things begin. We all have had to ask such questions. Part of our enquiry has always

included that great word, "the beginning". What about it? Who can answer us? I suppose we have all asked questions, not only about things, but about God. Who is He? What is He like? How does He speak to us? How does He touch us?

I heard a professor once tell a story about one of his own little boys. His mother was putting him to bed, and had been telling the child Bible stories. The little fellow who had not learned to speak quite plainly, said, "Mamma, is heaven hard or soft?" The mother did not quite understand what he meant, and so, as the professor said, she thought she would take a stab at it, and replied, "My dear, I think it is soft." "Well, then," said he, "why don't the angels' legs stick 'fru?"

I thought of that when I saw the men putting the glass in this ceiling—part of the time their legs did stick through.

We have all asked such questions. They are reasonable questions, and questions which demand an answer. Who is God, if there be a God? Is He a person? Or is that creative Power an abstract something that is devoid of personal attributes, and only a great Force? What do we mean by God? What does the word denote to our understanding? And if He be a person, what sort of person? Have you ever tried to picture God, to imagine what He is like? Certain men asked a great Prophet in the long ago, "Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Tell us about God."

Surely never in the world's history has there been a day when men needed more "a power, not themselves, that makes for righteousness". But how shall we imagine a picture of God? How can a man paint the Invisible? How can he make a graven image of One Whom he has never seen? The Bible says that men "did not like to retain God in their knowledge." That which might be known of God was manifest to them, they could have known Him if they had wanted to, "for the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." And because men did not want to retain God in their knowledge "God gave them over to a reprobate mind." Thereafter you find the natural man, the man of the reprobate mind, trying to imagine what God is like.

The prodigal was so long away from home that he forgot what his father was like until he "came to himself". Even then he had forgotten the idiom of his father's speech, and had to learn the language of his father's home all over again. How far have men wandered from God! How then shall we know about Him? That is my question to-night.

I.

I begin the exposition of my subject—rather than an exposition of my text: that is too profound for me—by gathering together the principles that are suggested to my mind by these two verses brought together, and remarking that REVEALED RELIGION CHALLENGES US TO BELIEVE IN A PERSONAL, CREATIVE POWER AS GOD; that God is a person Who of His own sovereign will brought the universe into being.

Let me *distinguish simply between revealed and natural religion*. All men are religious. All have some kind of religion; and natural men have tried to find out God by searching, and by their own unaided reason or imagination to discover the Almighty to perfection; but always to learn that the Subject was beyond them. The chapter from which I have quoted gives some indication of the trouble into which men have plunged themselves by dismissing God from their knowledge. Left to themselves, they try to picture what God is like; and they have "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things."

Not much evolution there! But that has been the result of man's effort to find God; he has made a god for himself; he has imagined God to be something like a man—a Buddha; or like birds—for they worship birds; and fourfooted beasts—they worship the sacred cow in India; and even creeping things, for they have made reptiles into gods, and they that worship them are like unto them. The history of pagan religions confirms the truth of Scripture, for no two religions have similarly pictured God. There are more gods than religions, for some religions have many gods.

The naturalist tries to find his god through nature; or, perhaps in the record of history. There are some who tell us that our whole religious concept is a historical evolution. Some try to find God in their own religious consciousness, to imagine God, to dream what He is like, by some means to conjure up a picture of Him.

You hear someone speak over the radio, and almost invariably you say to yourself, I wonder what he is like? Is he young or old? Tall or short, dark or fair? Why do radio announcers at the end of some advertisement say, "This is So-and-So speaking"? Why should anyone be interested to know what is behind that voice? Of course we want to know! After a while, should you meet him, you may say, "I never dreamed you were like you are."

How are we to imagine what God is like? "No man hath seen God at any time." You cannot paint a picture of God; hence, natural religion, instead of giving men a true picture of God, has reduced God to the likeness of men, "and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things."

By revealed religion, we mean the religion of the revelation of God which we call the Bible. We mean that because God saw that we could not find Him, He set out to find us. The Bible is a record of God's plan and purpose, Himself to seek and to save that which was lost; not a record of man's search after God. The Bible is a revelation of God. That is the subject of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. It is God's Book; it is a story about God. Part of it is history, part of it is biography, much of it deals with natural phenomena, and discusses things which properly belong to the realm of science. There is philosophy there: if you want to sharpen your wits, if you want to learn how to think, if you would become a logician, study the Bible. There is all that in it, but that is incidental. It was not primarily written to teach history, although it does so; and where it touches upon historical matters, it is always true to historical fact; it is never unhistorical. The Bible was not written to teach science, but where it deals with matters which belong to the realm of science, it always deals with them in truth; and it is never unscientific, or contrary to true science. It was not written as poetry, primarily, but it is there in the Psalms, in the book of Job, in the Canticles; and many of the prophetic passages of history are prose-poetry, marvellously written. The Bible was not written—how shall I say—as literature; but it is the sublimest of all literature. It was not written for the sake of making a book—but it is a Book, the Book of all books. It was written to reveal God. That is the purpose of the Bible. The Bible is a revelation of God. And that is what we mean by revealed religion.

Revealed religion challenges us to believe in a divinely-inspired record of God's disclosure of Himself. Revelation is one thing, Inspiration is another. This is an inspired record of what God has revealed; and the revelation is within the record. And the record, being divinely inspired, must be divinely true. I had a battle some years ago over the question, as to whether the writers or the writings of Scripture were inspired. My insistence is that the writings of Scripture, from the first verse of Genesis, to the last verse of Revelation, is written by the direct inspiration of the Spirit of God.

We are a bit old-fashioned here, old-fashioned enough to believe the Bible as it is; that it is in truth the word of God. A great many preachers do not believe that to-day. I fear comparatively few believe it. A friend told me only this past week of going to hear a certain man in a very large church, where there were about fifty people present, including the choir and himself—and I suppose the janitor. The

preacher was all dressed up in his robes and hoods; and delivered himself as an oracle, waving evangelicalism out of court. He seemed to think the whole question was finally settled, and that we have no inspired Bible at all. He seemed to think that these great matters revealed in the Scripture are still but subjects of enquiry and investigation, that nothing is settled as being true; that the higher critics have done with the books of the Bible what Britain has done with the navy of the Italian "utensil" of Hitler, two-thirds of which has been scuttled, and the other third is skeddaddling.

The Bible still stands, and many of these men do not know that their theories have been scuttled; that the Word of God has withstood, and is now withstanding, all the storms that beat upon it. There was a time when I was afraid of these critics. I wondered if they could possibly have found a back door into the citadel of truth, and thus had learned things that had escaped the rest of us. I made up my mind I would find out for myself—and I am not afraid of them now. I wish this place were crowded to the roof with professors and college presidents, preferably theologians: I would have a merry time. Much of what they call scholarship is very largely learned lunacy. Most of them are parrots. They put on their collars and gowns, and deliver themselves as oracles of something they have never thought through. I remember years ago going along Carlton Street, seeing a man in the distance, who looked as though he had his wife's hat on! He had some kind of feather trailing down over his shoulder. When I got nearer to him, I saw the fellow had a parrot on his shoulder, saying to it, "Hello, Polly", and then it would talk back to him.

I said, "That is exactly the picture I want. That is like many of these modernistic preachers. They are not prophets, but parrots, riding about on the devil's shoulder. Do you know what they tell me? Come into the study for a minute: it will not tax your brains, though it may tax your imagination a little. They have discovered that the first five books of Moses were not written by Moses; that certain parts of the Pentateuch are Mosaic, have a flavour of Moses about them, but he did not write all of the Pentateuch. It is rather like a patchwork quilt, written at different times, and a redactor stitched them together and made a book. They discovered that the man who used Jehovah for God was one writer, the man who used Elohim was another. The man who spoke of the altar and the blood and the priests and the vessels was another writer—that was the priestly code, and did not belong in the Pentateuch at all, but should be dated after the exile when the children of Israel returned from Babylon. It was, in fact, a forgery, and was intended to bolster up the priests' authority. They professed to be able to take a verse of Scripture—five words or less—and subject it to a critical literary analysis, and discover that part of the verse was written by one man, and part by another—different styles; and then all cleverly woven together.

And that, by men who had learned a language that was not their own, who pretended to be able to project themselves through the centuries, and recreate conditions which obtained millennia ago, and actually say what particular words a particular man used. And they call that scholarship! All that the Old Testament had to say about the priesthood and the blood sacrifice,

upon which the Epistle to the Hebrews and other epistles are a New Testament commentary, being untrue, the integrity and authority of the New Testament would be destroyed utterly. I never believed it. I give you an example of the improbability of the truth of this hypothesis of the Pentateuch's composite character.

I must confess I am old enough to remember "Teddy" Roosevelt; we called him "the great Roosevelt". Mr. Roosevelt had been Governor of the State of New York, President of the United States; he was a prolific writer—had written many books. It was said at that time that he had probably spoken to more people in the United States than any other living American. They knew his voice, they knew his style. As I sat on a train one day on a continental journey, I saw a copy of *The Ladies' Home Journal*, open at a page which had a big headline, "The Anonymous Roosevelt." I thought that would be interesting, for I supposed it would be impossible for a man so widely known to be anonymous.

I read the story, and it was this. The Editor of *The Ladies' Home Journal* made a proposal to Mr. Roosevelt. He said, in effect: I want you to write twelve articles on any subject you like. Do not disguise your hand; follow your usual style; make no effort to conceal your identity; write as you ordinarily do—but write it by hand. Deliver the manuscript to me personally, and it will be a pledge between us that no living soul apart from ourselves will know who wrote the articles. We will publish them, and see if anyone finds you out.

Mr. Roosevelt accepted the contract, and wrote the twelve articles anonymously. *The Journal* had a very large circulation, was—and is—read by a great host of people. The twelve monthly articles appeared, and at the end of the year how many people do you suppose among the one hundred and thirty millions of the United States guessed the authorship of those articles? Not one. Scores of guesses were made, but no one discerned any peculiarity of style, even though reading their own language, spoken by a man born to the English tongue, and whose style was known to millions, and who was their contemporary. No one recognized the style or identified the author.

There are many, many illustrations of the folly and fallacy of that assumption. The *Letters of Junius*, the Baconian theory of the authorship of Shakespeare, and others. How utterly foolish to apply such principles to the Bible. The fact of the matter is, the whole Book was written by men inspired by the Holy Ghost.

At least I can show you that the Bible is either divinely inspired, or it is a fraud. The critics talk about "sources"—I am talking shop with you to-night; it may do you good; it may help you to understand some things when you read them, about where a particular biblical author got his information. With whom did he communicate? It is said that Mark received his information mainly from Peter; and the Roman Catholics tell us that it was because of Peter's modesty that Mark failed to record the great words that were spoken to Peter! The first Pope was very modest! His successors got bravely over that modesty.

When you come upon a passage like this first verse of Genesis, you may well ask, What is the subject? Who wrote it? What is the writer talking about? Listen: "In the beginning:" Does not that wake you up? At last someone is going to tell us, not about a

beginning, not about *some* beginning, several beginnings; but *the* beginning. Who can possibly be competent to write about "the beginning"? Where did he get his information? Who could instruct him about "the beginning"? Who was there? You remember how God challenged Job?—"Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest?" The fact is neither Job nor anyone else was there. - Then who wrote that first verse? Either God wrote it, or it is not worth the paper on which it is written. Either it is a record of what occurred "in the beginning", inspired of God because God was there, or it was written by someone who presumed to use "words without knowledge". The Bible is the basis of revealed religion. There is a revelation of God in nature, but here we have an infallible record of God's disclosure of Himself.

II.

What else? Summing up, IN THE PERSON OF CHRIST REVEALED RELIGION CHALLENGES US TO LOOK UPON CHRIST AS GOD THE CREATOR. He is nothing less than that. That is the story of the Book: Jesus is God.

We have been celebrating His birth in Bethlehem, but the days of His flesh were but a segment of the eternal circle, marking the infinite stoop of Deity to the comprehension of finite men; a segment of the circle? Yes; from the gates of pearl to Bethlehem, and back up yonder to the everlasting doors. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." Jesus Christ comes to us as God.

And more than that: He is the Creator. "In the beginning was the word"—"And God said." What did He say? "Let there be"! "Let there be"! "Let there be light." "And it was so." True science is the handmaid of religion. Truth never contradicts itself. It is always in agreement. I am not a scientist, but I have sense enough to deal with things which investigators of natural phenomena bring to my hand. I am grateful for the scientists' investigation and research. They tell me that the difference between light and sound is only a difference of vibration. There is a certain rapidity of vibration which makes light, and certain other vibrations which make sound. That is how, I suppose—I do not know—they send the wireless photograph across the ocean: not, a shaft of light, but through the air some vibratory current is sent from this side that can be picked up on the other.

We used to broadcast our services, and I remember receiving letters from a territory which I measured by the map as covering one million six hundred thousand square miles; and within that area there were no less than one hundred and four million people living. Of course, they did not all listen! I received a letter from a captain on a freighter who said, "I worshipped with you twelve hundred miles away, in the middle of the Atlantic." We had letters from the Arctic and elsewhere, where the voice of this pulpit and the sound of the music reached. Why? Because science had devised a way by which it could take hold of the human voice and project it through space so that millions could hear it. It was estimated that President Roose-

velt recently spoke to ninety millions of people. I have little doubt that he and Mr. Churchill together spoke to far more than that; perhaps hundreds of millions of people all around the world. Men with ordinary human voices, but the electric power took hold of their voices and sent them around the globe.

"The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."—"And God said." Put almightiness into the divine Voice, conceive of all the resources of Deity finding expression in a word, "Let there be light"—and there was light. That is in accord with the strictest principles of science.

But who was the Word? "In the beginning was the Word. . . All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." Saul of Tarsus was learned in the law. He heard of a Man called Jesus, and he hated Him: "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." Then a light that never was on sea or land, and the Voice that spake the worlds from naught, called him by name; and Saul of Tarsus discovered that Jesus was God. Later he wrote of Him, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell."

That is the Jesus of Whom the Bible speaks from Genesis to Revelation. The record which God has given to us of His Son is contained in the Old Testament as well as the New. You cannot have Jesus without Genesis, and you cannot have Genesis without Jesus. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." That is the message of revealed religion.

III.

What are SOME OF THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS TREMENDOUS TRUTH THAT JESUS CHRIST IS GOD, AND THAT HE IS THE CREATOR?

We ought to accept the record itself, accept what the Bible teaches as to the necessity for Christ's coming into the world. You say you do not understand it? There are many things you do not understand. The Bible says that was the only way by which men could be saved, by Christ's coming into the world. He came, and we are to believe it. That is of the very essence of faith, that we recognize God as God, and recognize Christ as God, and that thereafter we accept all He says because He says it, because it is the word of "God that cannot lie".

You do not understand the Atonement, do you? I do not. I have known people who seemed to think they could put a square and compass on the word of the Infinite. You say, "Jesus paid our debts." Yes. "He was a substitute for us; He died the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God." Yes. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with

his stripes we are healed." Yes, that is true. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." That is true; and so you might go on. But when you had quoted every passage in Scripture, we should still have to say, "I do not understand it." If you could understand it, you would be equal with God. "To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One." We believe many things we cannot understand: we must believe this. The simple fact is, the Bible tells us—and it is all gathered up in the person of Christ—that He died for our sins, Deity in human form; and that when the blood flowed from His wounds it was really the wealth of the universe in solution. It was the very life of God offered as an equivalent for the life of every sinner who has transgressed the law of God. He died for you, and He died for me.

What else? What sort of Saviour did you need? A little Saviour? You have not been a very big sinner? One sin plunged the world into hell. One sin is enough to baffle all human efforts to save the soul. If He Who is our Saviour is the same One Who said, "Let there be light", the One Who created this world with all its wonders, its piled up mountains, its fields and valleys verdure clad, its mineral wealth, its chemical resources, its marine marvels—the wide expanses of water, and the infinite spaces tracked by the orbits of a myriad worlds—if He did that, can He not look after you? If Jesus Christ be God, He can save any man. No one but God can because it was God Who said in the beginning, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." That image was marred, and if a man could remake himself in the image of God, he would be equal with God. That is why salvation is of grace, that His eternal supremacy might be secure; that none might share His grand prerogative. Hence, and thus He commands your faith.

If you can take that first word in the Bible, "In the beginning God", and yield your heart and intellect to that, and believe that, you will have no difficulty with anything you find in the Bible. Once postulate God, once get heart and mind properly oriented toward God, all difficulties will vanish because all things are possible to God. The very worst sinner in the world can be saved. He can save you. This church cannot save you, the priest cannot save you, the Mass cannot save you, purgatory cannot save you, the Pope cannot save you—no one can save you but God. He can; and the only God we know is Jesus Christ. He is God. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

If that is so, I feel like wishing you a Happy New Year because *I have hope for the nation*. I wonder who is going to disentangle things? Who is going to bring order out of our present chaotic condition in Canada? They talk about the "new order", all the plans they are going to make after the war! We heard that during the last war, all the wonderful things that were going to be done when the war was over. But the same sinful nature was here—and the same self-seeking politicians. I should have no hope if I did not believe in Someone, a Power outside ourselves that makes for righteousness, that can lift even a nation; for it is said, "The nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance." He can lift

them up, and do what He will. He is called the King of nations Whom everyone should fear. Because we have such a God, and such a God revealed in Christ, we may hope.

And not only for the nation, *but for the whole world*. I do not know when complete deliverance will come, but I am sure that this world is not spinning its way into everlasting darkness. I am positive our gracious God did not create it for that purpose. We begin with that creative word, "Let there be light." Then follows darkness. When you get to the end of the Book, the darkness is passed, and there is a city of which the Lord Himself is the light, and "there is no night there." But we are not going to have a new order by any such methods as some men are now proposing. I am certain the meddling of the Pope will accomplish no good. All honour to Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill. I would second, if I could, their every effort in endeavouring to make this a better world; but if I were in their counsels I should have to say, "Gentlemen, it is too much for you." And they would agree. Mr. Roosevelt spoke, not merely of "Almighty God", but of God as revealed in "Christ". His God is the God Whom Jesus Christ has revealed; and Mr. Churchill quoted a text from which I preached not so long ago, "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord." Toward the end of his address he said something to this effect, Who of us does not feel that we are the simple instruments of a Power above us, and that something is being worked out in this world of human affairs which is not of our planning?

Shall I fill in the void? "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful." As though he said, "Write it down, for it is true and faithful because I have said it. I said at the beginning: Let there be light. I say it again: I make all things new. Write it down for it is going to be done." And it will be. Some day this glorious Lord of Whom we speak will again come down the skies, not to Bethlehem's manger, but will rend the heavens and come down, and will take to Himself His great power and reign. "Every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him." And from before His face the earth and the heavens shall flee away. There will be a new heaven—of which we read to-night, and a "new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." With that confidence, we may walk softly into the New Year,—

"For lo, the days are hastening on
By prophet-bards foretold,
When with the ever-circling years
Comes round the age of gold,
When peace shall over all the earth
Her ancient splendours fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing."

Congratulations, Alderman Saunders

A week or so ago we called the attention of Toronto readers to the fact that Mr. L. H. Saunders, Secretary-Treasurer of THE CANADIAN PROTESTANT LEAGUE, and Editor of *Protestant Action*, was an Aldermanic candidate in Ward One. We did this because *The Catholic Register*, in a short but bitter article, attacked Mr. Saunders, and urged its readers to vote for one of his competitors, Mr. R. A. Allen.

We are of the opinion that it is a great mistake to make religion an issue in a municipal election, but as the Catholics made it an issue, and evidently saw some profit in getting a Roman Catholic elected as an Alderman, Mr. Saunders accepted the challenge. *The Catholic Register* of January 1st. gave this further choice word to its readers:

Voters! Do Your Bit Today

It will not escape notice the three Toronto newspapers have put on their slates for the municipal elections the professional bigot, Mr. Leslie H. Saunders, Organizer of the Orange Order, Editor of "Protestant Action" and Secretary-Treasurer of THE PROTESTANT LEAGUE of which the Rev. T. T. Shields is President.

Mr. Leslie Saunders is running in Ward One where Mr. Robert A. Allen, a Catholic, is a candidate.

Throughout the city the municipal vote was very small, as there was no great civic issue before the people. Out of six candidates for Ward One, only two could be elected; and Mr. Saunders headed the poll, receiving even more votes than a sitting Alderman. The vote in relation to his Roman Catholic competitor was: Saunders, 3,898; Allen, 1,512. Mr. Saunders thus led his Roman Catholic opponent by a majority of 2,386. We believe that the same result would obtain if some heroic Protestant were always to step forward to accept the challenge of a Roman Catholic opponent. Roman Catholicism is subtle and unscrupulous when it can work secretly and in the dark: it is never brave when openly challenged.

Congratulations, Alderman Saunders!

New Year's Day in Jarvis Street

The usual watch-night service was held Wednesday evening beginning at eleven o'clock, and being dismissed about twelve-fifteen. The meeting was largely attended.

The New Year's Morning Meeting for prayer and fellowship, which has been a Jarvis Street institution for seventy-five years or more, was also largely attended, and began in Greenway Hall at ten-thirty, continuing until twelve-forty-five. There was much prayer, glowing testimonies, and altogether it was a great meeting. The Pastor gave as the motto for the year, "My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me."

At three o'clock in the afternoon a six-hour meeting for prayer was held in the Jarvis Street auditorium under the auspices of THE CANADIAN PROTESTANT LEAGUE. The meeting was arranged and announced before the announcement had been made from Ottawa setting aside New Year's Day as a day of prayer. THE PROTESTANT LEAGUE decided to have fellowship with the people in the United States in their day of prayer, and as it turned out the same day was set apart for Canada and Great Britain.

The leaders of the six-hour meeting, each assuming charge for one hour, at the hour named, were as follows: *three o'clock*, Rev. J. H. Barnes, St. Peter's Anglican Church; *four o'clock*, Rev. William Thomas, Cooke's Presbyterian Church; *five o'clock*, Rev. G. H. King, Metropolitan United Church; *six o'clock*, Rev. G. D. Little, Chalmers United Church; *seven o'clock*, Rev. J. B. Thomson, Dufferin Street Presbyterian Church; *eight o'clock*, Rev. T. Christie Innes, Knox Presbyterian Church.

There was a very large gathering of people of all denominations, particularly from three until five-thirty. We did not expect, of course, that people would be able to stay right through; but they kept coming and going during the whole six hours, and even at the most inconvenient period, from five-thirty to seven-thirty, the attendance was large. It was manifest to any who stayed through from one hour to another that there was really no change of leadership in the meeting: it was evident that the whole meeting was under the direction of the Spirit of God. We have never seen a group of men fit into each other's style, and prove themselves to be each the complement of the others, more beautifully than at this meeting.

In late afternoon and all through the evening rain descended in torrents. But for the weather, we are sure that, during the more convenient hours at least, the building would have been crowded. Inasmuch as the promise of the divine presence is made to two or three, and of the divine performance even to two who shall agree, we felt that if prayer were offered nowhere else, that meeting alone would ensure victory.

Many meetings were held in other churches. We were rather gratified than otherwise to note that no report was given in the press of the meeting held under the auspices of THE CANADIAN PROTESTANT LEAGUE. The important thing about a prayer meeting is, not its reaction upon the people who pray, or the report of it as a sign of "union" in the press: the only thing that matters in a prayer meeting is that God Himself knows it is being held because He hears the prayers that are offered.

When Paul told the Romans that he was praying for them, he said, "God is my witness" to the fact; and after all, God is the only witness. And we are sure that a report of this great meeting for intercession reached heaven, God's dwelling place, where the Toronto papers are not in circulation. We approve of the kind of union we had at this prayer meeting, where men of different denominations led, and people of all denominations participated, and all rejoiced in the manifestation of the unity of the spirit. The unity of the spirit is something we enjoy even now: the unity of the faith something to which, in all its detail, we may yet have to attain, but which also in the fundamental verities of the gospel, is a present and a happy experience.

The Editor in the United States

The Editor preached Sunday morning, but had to leave for the United States at an hour which made the taking of the evening service impossible. His place was taken by Rev. W. Gordon Brown, always an acceptable and welcome preacher in Jarvis Street pulpit. The Editor goes for a two weeks' mission, from January 5th to 16th, at the Bible Presbyterian Church, Collingswood, N.J. Collingswood is just across the river from Philadelphia, practically a suburb of Philadelphia, though in another state.

This church is one of the group of Presbyterian churches which withdrew from the Presbyterian Church of the United States, under the leadership, or at least as a result largely of the protest of Professor J. Gresham Machen and those associated with him, against the Modernist of the mother American church. Westminster

Theological Seminary and Faith Theological Seminary are parts of the general movement.

And by the way, speaking of the unity of the faith and the unity of the spirit, we find we have far more fellowship with brethren who are not Baptists by name but who believe in the inspiration and authority of Holy Scripture, and in the essential deity of Jesus Christ and the atonement by blood, than with many people who wear the Baptist name but who really believe none of these things.

The Editor would be glad to meet members of THE GOSPEL WITNESS family who are within reach of Collingswood. The services will be held in the Collingswood Bible Presbyterian Church, Haddon Avenue and Cuthbert Blvd., Collingswood, N.J., each week-evening at eight o'clock, we presume, except Saturday; and at the usual hours on Sunday.

Sunday Evening Service Broadcast

We have just been advised by telegram that the Sunday evening service, January 11th, will be broadcast over Philadelphia Station WPEN, 950 Wave Length; 8 to 9 o'clock Eastern Standard Time; 9 to 10 Toronto Time. Jarvis Street members and GOSPEL WITNESS readers who are able to tune in this station will welcome this information. But be sure to attend your own service, first!

Opening of New Church at Norland

The new building of the Pioneer Baptist Church, Norland, was officially opened on Sunday, December 14th, 1941. Though bad roads made it impossible for many friends of this work from more distant points to be present, this new building was crowded with local friends who have followed the progress of Brother Vaughan's work with deepest interest. Rev. W. S. Whitcombe, Secretary of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches, was the special preacher for the opening services which included part of the following week. It is with great joy that our Union friends will read the following statement made by Brother Vaughan at the opening service. It is a pleasure to help such causes and their pastors, to help themselves.

"The erection of this house, I venture to say, is a modern miracle. In the early Spring of 1937, after having received a call from the members of this church, I made my way from Kimmount to Norland. My only conveyance at that time was a bicycle.

"I had a difficult task. There was no guarantee that I would receive any salary, but I started in by faith on an income of \$2.50 weekly. I tried to pay my board and hire someone to drive me to the appointments, which at that time were five, but have since increased to seven. I soon discovered that it could not be done on that salary. Looking the problem squarely in the face, I said, 'I must resign.' Instantly our gracious God responded to our need and a cheque arrived with the promise that a similar amount would come monthly. I acknowledge my indebtedness to the Union of Regular Baptist Churches which made it possible for me to get this work under way.

"In the summer of 1940 the foundation for this church was built and of necessity we had to allow it to stand over the winter with the result that frost practically destroyed the stone walls. The big job of rebuilding the walls faced us, and this strenuous task was completed by the end of September, 1941.

"In connection with this great undertaking I would like to pay tribute to the people on the field. They have responded financially by supplying materials, and by willingly giving of their time. For every gift large or small we are grateful indeed.

"Then we owe a debt of gratitude to friends whom the Lord has raised up. Words cannot convey our thankfulness to strangers who have made large contributions toward this building. The result has been, that, giving our time freely,

together with these splendid contributions, we have been able to bring this building to its present stage. With these things in mind I am sure you will desire to help us complete the task. We are especially desirous of finishing the outside and it will cost us \$150.00."

We should like to add an additional note to the above. First, we hope the present need for immediate help to finish the outside of the building will not pass unnoticed. The offerings at the opening services amounted to almost one-third of the sum Mr. Vaughan mentions, and all this was devoted to the building fund. We urged Mr. Vaughan to proceed with the work at once, as it is necessary for the cold winter weather, and in the confidence that friends of the work will see him through.

Another need of this heroic pastor deserves the immediate attention of friends who desire to help in spreading the Gospel. Brother Vaughan has some seven appointments each week—some in school houses, others in homes in sparsely settled communities. In the summer his ancient Ford rattles him over the back roads to these distant appointments each night in the week, but in the winter time he must go on foot. Brother Vaughan informs us that if he had a pair of skis he could use them to excellent advantage travelling not less than sixty miles a week on them. They would render his travelling easier by enabling him to follow a direct line and instead of ploughing through the snow he could glide over the top of it. We recommend this need especially to some Sunday-school or Young People's group in one of our churches. The office of the Union would like to hear from some group or groups at once.—W.S.W.

Bible School Lesson Outline

INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

From internal evidence it is comparatively easy to reconstruct the circumstances attending the writing of the Epistle to the Romans. The Apostle Paul's labours in Macedonia and Achaia were drawing to a close, and his face was turned once again toward Jerusalem. He had been entrusted with the mission of taking the contributions of the Gentile Christians to the Jewish believers in Jerusalem. After discharging that duty he intended to visit Rome (Acts 19:21; Rom. 15:22-29). He could not foresee the two years' imprisonment which would intervene (Acts 24:27), nor did he expect to enter the Roman metropolis as a prisoner (Acts 28:16).

Paul had long desired to visit the Imperial City, "the humanitarian metropolis of the world, the centre of all the elements of light and darkness prevalent in the heathen world". Not content with preaching in the smaller cities and towns, he desired to carry the message of salvation personally to the Capital of the Empire.

This letter, written probably from Corinth about the year 58 A.D., was designed to prepare the hearts of the people for his future evangelistic ministry in their midst.

Unlike the other Church Epistles, this one was addressed to a church which he had not founded. His authority over them as a church rested solely in the fact that he was the Apostle to the Gentiles. Except in the case of certain individuals, he had no claim to their love and gratitude, and needed "epistles of commendation". This Epistle is such a letter of recommendation, a vindication of his right to go to them.

In all probability the Apostle Paul intended that this letter should have wide circulation in the constituency, although addressed primarily to believers (Rom. 1:7). Through the written word he would Christianize the Empire at its very centre.

But the Epistle is far from being local in its application. As a message to the Romans it met their immediate requirements; as a message through the Romans, given by the Holy Spirit and preserved to us through the centuries, it forms a compendium of the doctrines of salvation. As a document setting forth the essential truths of the faith the Epistle to the Romans has exercised a tremendous influence down through the ages. Think, for example, of the mighty Protestant Reformation which centred in the thought "The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17).

The Gospel reveals the righteousness of God, not merely as an essential attribute inherent in God and manifest in

Christ, but also as a state imputed and imparted to man, and making its presence known in the practices of his daily life. Herein lies the close association of the ideas of righteousness and holiness. The Apostle uses the term "righteousness" to denote both justification and sanctification, both the removal of the guilt of sin and the bestowal of the power for right living.

AN OUTLINE OF THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

Theme: The Righteousness of God Revealed in the Gospel.

- I. Prologue (1:1-17).
- II. The Righteousness of God in Retribution (1:18-3:20).
- III. The Righteousness of God in Justification (3:21-5:21).
- IV. The Righteousness of God in Sanctification (6-8).
- V. The Righteousness of God in History (9-11).
- VI. The Righteousness of God in Christian Living (12:1-15:13).
- VII. Epilogue (15:14-16:27).

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

THE RESULTS OF JUSTIFICATION

Lesson Text: Romans 5.

Golden Text: "But God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"—Romans 5:8.

JUNIOR CLASSES:

The joy which comes to the individual when his sins have been forgiven may be illustrated by reference to Lk. 15:4-7, 11-32. Emphasize the Scripture truth that the way to be happy is to trust and obey; to put trust in the Lord Jesus as Saviour, Lord and Friend (Matt. 19:16-22), and then to obey His word willingly, promptly, completely and unceasingly (Matt. 7:21-27).

SENIOR CLASSES:

One way of studying this chapter profitably would be to group the various thoughts under headings suggested by the repetition of the phrase "much more": the "much more" of redemption (verse 9), of resurrection (v. 10), of riches of grace (v. 15), of righteousness (v. 17), of reign (v. 20).

I. Saints Saved by the Life of Christ—verses 1 to 11.

What a glorious thing it is to be saved! Many Christians, unfortunately, do not "possess their possessions" (Deut. 11:22-25). They remain children in the faith, and fail to grow to maturity (Heb. 5:11-14; 6:1). To believe on Christ as Saviour is but the first step in the Christian life (2 Pet. 1:5-11). With Christ we potentially gain all spiritual blessings (Rom. 8:32; 1 Cor. 3:21-23; Eph. 1:3; 2 Pet. 2:3), and we need not live at a "poor dying rate" when the Lord has made adequate provision for a more abundant life through the Holy Spirit (John 10:10).

Those who have been declared righteous by virtue of their faith in Christ, Who has taken away their sin and imputed unto them His own righteousness, have peace with God (Lk. 2:14; Col. 1:20-22). Through the one Mediator the believing sinner has been reconciled to the Father (verse 11; 2 Cor. 5:18-21; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6; Heb. 8:6; 9:15); the controversy is over (Lk. 15:20-24). Some of the ancient manuscripts have the reading, "Let us have peace with God".

Believers have been given the right and the privilege of approaching directly into the Father's presence (Heb. 10:19-22). By grace they have a new standing; they are no longer aliens and strangers, but sons (John 1:12; Gal. 4:1-7; Eph. 1:5; 2:18, 19). Through the Holy Spirit blessed communion with God may now be theirs (Eph. 3:12; Heb. 4:16; 1 John 5:14, 15). Their hope for the future is strong because they shall one day share in the very glory of God (John 17:24; 2 Thess. 1:10, 12).

The path toward the fulfilment of this hope is a steep and difficult one. Trials and tribulations are necessary in the process of perfecting Christian character, just as the acid and the darkness are needed in the development of photographic plates (Jas. 1:3, 12; 1 Pet. 1:6-9). Believers are able to rejoice in the midst of their persecutions and suffering (Matt. 5:12; 1 Pet. 3:14; 4:12-14), since the Holy Spirit fills their hearts with a consciousness of God's love for them (Rom. 8:18).

Christ died for sinners, for the helpless, the unworthy and the ungodly (Mk. 2:17; Rom. 4:25; 1 Tim. 1:15; 1 John 3:5). Since we have done nothing to merit salvation, it is entirely the work of God (Rom. 4:5), and whatever God does is perfect (Phil. 1:6). Therefore, our eternal security rests upon the fact that we have been saved by grace. As we have been saved by the death of Christ from the penalty of sin, so shall we be saved by His resurrection life and power from the dominion of sin (Rom. 6:5, 6, 22). Our Saviour lives to continue His work on our behalf until we are finally presented faultless before His throne with exceeding glory (Rom. 8:28-30; Heb. 7:25; Jude 24). By partaking of His death we become reconciled to God; by partaking of His life we are sanctified from day to day (2 Cor. 4:10, 11; Gal. 2:20; Col. 1:21, 22).

II. Sinners Saved by the Death of Christ—verses 12 to 21.

"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:22). Adam was the representative head of our race. When he sinned, we all sinned. His disobedience to God marked the entrance of sin and death in the human family (Gen. 2:17; 3:6, 19). The law of Moses defined sin and charged men with the transgression of God's commandments, so that they became conscious of their need (Rom. 4:15; Gal. 3:21-26; 1 John 3:4). All Adam's descendants have come into the world with his sinful nature; one after another they would join the long procession downward to darkness and death, were it not for the fact that Christ has become the Head of a new spiritual race (Rom. 8:19-22; 1 Cor. 15:45-57). Those who take their place with Him by faith are made sons of God, partakers of His holy nature, and with Christ before them they form a procession marching onward and upward to light and life (John 3:5, 6; 2 Cor. 5:14-17; Col. 1:13-15; 2 Pet. 1:4).

Some of the scholars may be puzzled as to the relation between our condemnation and Adam's sin. Through Adam we inherited the tendency to sin, but we are sinners, not only by nature, but also by reason of our own deeds, for which we are personally responsible (Ezek. 18:20; Rom. 3:23). In the final analysis we are not lost because of Adam's sin, for on the cross Christ paid that debt, but we are under condemnation when we refuse to have part in His atoning death. The seeds of sin dwell in our nature as part of our natural inheritance, and like disease germs will produce spiritual death as these do natural death, unless we avail ourselves of the remedy provided (John 3:14-19; Rom. 6:23).

The contrast between our condemnation in Adam and our justification in Christ is described in detail (verses 15-21). As each verse contributes at least one idea to the development of the general thought, by separating these chief points and focussing attention upon them one by one; the meaning of the passage can more easily be grasped: the offence of one to many—the gift of one to many (verse 15); the judgment to condemnation—the grace unto justification (v. 16); death reigned by one—life reigned by one (v. 17); condemnation upon all—justification for all (v. 18); the disobedience of one—the obedience of one; many sinners—many righteous (v. 19); sin abounding—grace more abounding (v. 20); sin reigning unto death—grace reigning unto life (v. 21).

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