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THE DUTIES OF A ROMAN CATHOLIC PREMIER

MUCH has been said in the Canadian press of late concerning the possibility of Canada having a French-Canadian Roman Catholic Prime Minister. In view of this possibility we thought it would be of interest to our readers to put together a few of the many official statements made by various Romanist authorities as to the duties and obligations of Prime Ministers and other persons of the Roman Catholic faith who hold political offices.

Let us first of all remark that we are not at all convinced that Mr. St. Laurent, the present Minister of External Affairs and a French-Canadian Roman Catholic, will be our next Prime Minister at Ottawa. There are always the proverbial slips twixt the cup and the lip which make it impossible to forecast political events, and the difficulty of foretelling the Canadian political scene is greatly multiplied by the presence of Mr. Mackenzie King, the astute and seasoned politician who now holds the reins of office. Though he has already announced his retirement, it must be taken *cum grano salino* because of his well-known ability to make long speeches in which he seems to mean one thing but which actually turn out to have contained so many saving clauses that in the end they mean exactly the opposite. In our own mind, we wonder if Mr. King is not playing the part of a coy young maiden who is flirting with another possible suitor to spur to action the one of her own choice. Be that as it may, the fact is that Mr. King has not yet retired, and that Mr. St. Laurent has not yet been chosen as Liberal leader, and furthermore, the Liberal Party has not yet been returned to power. And political eggs should never be counted before they are hatched, and least of all at a time when all electoral barometers point to change if not to wind and storms.

In the meantime, it is clever political manoeuvring for Mr. King to nominate or have nominated as his possible successor a man whom French-Canada regards as its favourite son. It reminds one of the story of a newsie who was asked if he could change a twenty dollar bill. He replied in the negative, but added, "Thanks

for the compliment." French-Canada has been exceedingly flattered by the compliment, if one is to judge by the comments in the French-language press of Quebec. The very suggestion by Mr. King and the Liberal Party that a French-Canadian Roman Catholic is being considered as the next Prime Minister is only a little short of the actual honour that French-Canada would experience in having one of its sons placed in that high position.

Mr. King More Useful to Rome Than Mr. St. Laurent

In fact, some of the more ardent Romanist and nationalist papers have hinted from time to time that while great prestige and honour may accrue to Quebec from having a Laurier or a St. Laurent hold the reins of office, yet in point of actual advantage it is preferable to have an Anglo-Protestant in the driver's seat while French Romanists in the back seat order the chauffeur's course and speed. The argument is simple, and we must confess, convincing: Outside of Quebec, a French-Canadian Roman Catholic premier would find every move would be watched with jealousy and suspicion. His least move might be interpreted as some hidden concession to the Roman Catholic Church. He would be compelled to lean over backwards in order to prove that he was merely standing erect. But on the other hand, an Anglo-Protestant while professing loyalty to his own people and his own religion would be in a position to make large concessions to the predilections of Quebec without arousing the slightest suspicion throughout the rest of Canada. We are convinced that this has been the chief stock-in-trade of Mr. Mackenzie King. Suppose, for instance, that a French-Canadian Prime Minister had permitted mass to be celebrated on Parliament Hill. Or suppose that a French-speaking Roman Catholic Prime Minister had made a speech at a banquet held in Ottawa in connection with the "Marian Congress" and had been quoted in the local French-language newspaper as saying that he approved the union of church and state. From one ocean to the other there would have been a storm of protest. It would have been regarded not only

as indiscreet but as disloyal to British traditions and to religious liberty. But when it is Mr. Mackenzie King who does all this, the public piously remembers his reputation as a man who is said to read his Bible every day and to be a regular attendant at a Presbyterian Church. And remembering the reputation which Mr. Mackenzie King has sedulously cultivated, the general public in this Dominion does not even stir in its slumbers. But it would be another story if a French-Canadian did all that.

For our part, we believe that there would be decided advantages for Protestantism if Mr. St. Laurent were made Premier of Canada. It would serve to waken Protestant opinion as to the real strength of Romanism, and it would openly identify the Liberal Party as the French Roman Catholic Party which it now is in secret. At present it is Liberal in name only, for no party which is so closely tied to the skirts of the clergy can be truly liberal in its principles.

Mr. St. Laurent and Roman Catholics

This article was suggested by several editorials which have appeared of late in the French-language press of Canada discussing certain statements made in *The News Letter* of THE CANADIAN PROTESTANT LEAGUE. The contention of *The News Letter* was that a Roman Catholic official is obliged to give priority to his loyalty to the pope over every other loyalty, including that to the country which he serves. It is significant that at least two French-language papers discussed this statement at some length. Evidently it touched a sore spot—Romanists are aware of the difficulties in which absolute obedience to the pope involves them, and apparently some French-Canadians take the possibility of Mr. St. Laurent's candidature for the premiership with great seriousness. In *Le Canada*, a Liberal organ of Montreal, Mr. Eugène L'Heureux, former editor of *L'Action Catholique*, writes as follows:

Politics are one thing and religion is another. Each one of these two perfect societies, the religious and the civil, is responsible to itself alone, even though the religious and moral incidence in politics, as well as the political incidence in organized religion and morals, cannot be denied.

The pretensions of THE CANADIAN PROTESTANT LEAGUE relative to the choice of the Hon. Louis St. Laurent as leader of the Liberal Party, and hence as eventual Prime Minister of Canada, are therefore ridiculous on their face.

The religion of the Prime Minister of Canada is of small importance, provided that the holder of this office himself be a great statesman, and that he should know how to deal justly and even charitably with all religions which subordinate the creature to the Creator.

Apparently the great majority of Canadian Liberals—Protestants as well as Catholics—are inclined to choose Mr. St. Laurent as Mr. King's successor. They believe that this great lawyer is capable of leading their party to victory, and then to give clever guidance to the ship of state. That is their own business.

Evidently the Franco-Catholics of Quebec, without demanding that the next Prime Minister of Canada should be a French-speaking Catholic, would be happy to see one of their own number preside over the destinies of the country. . . .

In the same strain the official *L'Action Catholique* of Quebec City asks:

Where are the "innumerable" concessions that a federal government has ever made to the Catholic religious authorities of Canada? What are these "privileges" and "advantages" that the Catholic Church has

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asked from the country? Has the Catholic clergy of the two languages ever asked for anything else than for respect of its rights?

Rome Professes To Be Tolerant, But Is She?

Such utterances as the above are intended to convey the assurance of toleration and broadness of view; they are calculated to allay suspicion of Roman Catholic aims. But in all frankness, we cannot accept them as the sincere utterance of enlightened men. We are compelled to believe either that they were not spoken sincerely, or that they were written by men who were not fully aware of the teaching of their own church. Without attempting to choose between these two alternatives, we content ourselves with pointing out the fallacy in the above statements translated from the Romanist press of Quebec.

To say, as does the former editor of *L'Action Catholique*, that church and state are entirely separate is to run counter to the official statements of Rome. For the refreshment of the memory of Mr. L'Heureux, we remind him that Pope Innocent III likened the relationships of Church and State to that of the sun and the moon. According to this pope, the Roman Church is higher than the State, and is the source of the State's power:

These dignities are the pontifical power and the royal power. Furthermore, the moon derives her light from the sun, and is in truth inferior to the sun in both size and quality, in position as well as effect. In the same way the royal power derives its dignity from the pontifical power.

We would also remind the former editor of *L'Action Catholique* of the papal bull *Unam Sanctam*, which as a faithful Roman Catholic, he is bound to acknowledge as authoritative. It is there stated that, "The one sword should be under the other, and temporal authority subject to spiritual. . . ."

According to Mr. L'Heureux's own admission, religious

and civil matters are very closely related. What would he suggest that a Roman Catholic Prime Minister should do when there is an "incidence" of the religious and civil laws? If he does not know, let him consult *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume XIV, p. 251, where he will find the following authoritative directions:

It is clear, therefore, that the purpose of the Church is higher in the order of Divine Providence and of righteous human endeavour than that of the State. Hence, in case of direct collision of the two, God's lower purpose should yield. Likewise the argument for the extension of the powers of the higher society in a measure into the domain of the lower will not hold for such extension from the lower into the higher. . . . In case of direct contradiction making it impossible for both jurisdictions to be exercised, the jurisdiction of the Church prevails, and that of the State is excluded. The reason for this is obvious: both authorities come from God in fulfillment of His purposes in the life of man: He cannot contradict Himself; He cannot authorize contradictory powers. His real will and concession of power is determined by the higher purpose of His Providence and man's need, which is the eternal happiness of man, the ultimate end of the Church. In view of this end God concedes to her the only authority that can exist in the case in point.

The meaning of the above is plain enough: The State is free to do what it wishes so long as its desire does not run counter to that of the Church. But when it does, it must submit to the Church's will. That is the kind of freedom that slaves are allowed by their owners, which is no freedom at all.

The Special Duty of R.C. Legislators

If these editorial writers lack information as to the obligations of statesmen to the Roman Catholic Church and its head the pope, they should consult official textbooks on Moral Theology, where they would find the following instructions, which we here reprint in French for the convenience of French-Canadian politicians. The book from which this statement is taken is used as a textbook for priests in Seminaries in Quebec:

Par ailleurs tout législateur catholique devra se rappeler son devoir particulier de protection à l'égard de l'Eglise, et il s'inspirera de son enseignement en toute question intéressant plus ou moins directement la Foi ou les Moeurs.

—*Théologie Morale*, Jean-Benoît Vittrant, S. J.

The translation of this sentence from the Jesuit book of Moral Theology is as follows:

Moreover every Catholic legislator ought to remember his particular duty to protect the Church, and he will be inspired by its teaching in every question that has to do more or less directly with Faith or Morals.

What question is there in all life that has not to do, more or less directly, with Faith or Morals? In other words a Roman Catholic Member of Parliament will at every move and on every thought be inspired by Roman Catholic teaching.

Mr. St. Laurent's Chief Duty as Defined by the Pope

The spiritual advisers of Mr. St. Laurent and of every other Roman Catholic politician will not fail to drill them in the principle enunciated by Leo XII in his Encyclical *Immortale Dei*:

"All who rule should hold in honour the holy name of God, and one of their chief duties must be to favour religion, to protect it, to shield it under the credit and sanction of the laws, and neither to organize nor enact any measure that may compromise its safety. That is the bounden duty of rulers to the people over whom they rule."

We have printed the above in "bold" or "black" type as most befitting its bold, black character.

Do we need to remind our readers that "religion" in the mouth of a pope means the Roman Catholic religion—"outside of the Roman Catholic Church there is no salvation". This papal Encyclical, then, means that Mr. St. Laurent as Prime Minister, or as Minister of External Affairs, is under obligation to favour Romanism. Indeed, it is "one of his chief duties" so to do. He must "protect it, shield it under the credit and sanction of the laws". This is what Franco is doing in Spain; it is what Mussolini did in Italy. It is the ideal that the Middle Ages attempted to fulfill. It is the principle that produced the Inquisition and the dragonnades and all the other tortures used by the state in the name of the church for the suppression of heresy.

Blasphemy: "Where the Pope Is, Christ Is!"

Roman Catholic apologists may answer that Protestants are also bound by religious principles since they are under the religious obligation of following the teaching of the Bible. That is so, but no church except the Church of Rome ventures to impose infallible interpretation of God's word and God's will on its followers, demanding that they give the earthly head of the church the same obedience that they yield to Christ. It is this difference that constitutes the threat of Rome to the civil and religious liberty of Canada and all other nations of the world. A Protestant is bound by his conscience as it is enlightened by the Word of God under the illumination of the Spirit of God. But no Protestant Church or individual claims infallibility for their interpretation of the Scriptures nor do they claim as their right to cast down to hell those who fail to agree with their doctrine. No Protestant church claims the right to use force on those who differ from it in opinion. No secular authority among Protestants lays claim to their allegiance in the name of religion, and no earthly organization claims the right to command them in matter of Faith or Morals. In other words a Protestant is a free man before God, to Whom he comes directly through the One Mediator, Jesus Christ. On the other hand a Roman Catholic's conscience is committed in advance, blindly, to the commands of the pope in all matters on which he may speak, whether religious or civil. The Romanist is bound in all conscience to follow the pope's directives without questioning, and if they conflict with the laws or interests of his country or of his own mind and person, he must put the pope's commands first and all other considerations last. If the pope were Christ, then the Romanist would be right and Scriptural in so doing, and Rome seeks to justify her harsh doctrine by identifying the pope at Rome with Christ in heaven. But to those of us who find this strange doctrine utterly absurd and impossible, the absolute authority which the pope claims over the bodies and minds of his subjects is not only blasphemous, but disruptive of every loyalty to human laws and governments.

We recognize that there are some sincere Roman Catholics in politics who are either ignorant of the demands of their church on their first loyalty, or who are "non-practising Catholics"; that is, who deliberately ignore the claims their church makes on them. In other words such Roman Catholics in public life are Canadian citizens first and subjects of the pope of Rome last. With such Roman Catholics, we have no difficulty in cooperating, and we believe there are many such in public life and

in private life. They are not, however, good Roman Catholics though they are good citizens, and there is always the danger that their co-religionists will compel them to keep step with the directives of the church, or that when the shadow of death falls across their path they will seek to make peace with the passport department at Rome that undertakes to guarantee them safe passage through the flames of Purgatory—always in consideration of their full submission to the Hierarchy.

Many Protestants and even some Roman Catholics, as we have said, are not aware of the far-reaching extent of the authority to which the popes lay claim. To substantiate what we have said, we quote the following paragraph from a directive on Electoral Duty written by the late Cardinal-Archbishop Villeneuve in 1935:

It is understood that religious interests must be placed above everything else and that on this subject Catholics must all have the same sentiment, to wit, that which is taught them by the Church and its leaders.

In a pamphlet written by a priest and published with the approbation of the Hierarchy a few years ago in Montreal we read, "Where the Pope is, there is Christ." Further the same author says:

Since the pope is the head of the Church and the Church is the body of Jesus—"Jesus Christ is, indeed the head of the Church which is His body," Saint Paul says to us, and Saint Augustine says, "Christ and the church make one single person only: Christ and the church are the whole Christ." And since, moreover, where Peter is, or his legitimate successor, there is the church, according to that other word of Saint Augustine: *Ubi Petrus ibi Ecclesia* (Where Peter is, there is the church) it follows that in believing on the pope, and in obeying the pope, it is Christ that we believe on, it is Christ that we obey.

Let us follow out this reasoning. The perfection which deserves heaven, is to obey God, to do the will of God. Now Jesus Christ is God; and the pope is Jesus Christ, because the head of the Church is his body. Hence to obey the pope, to do the will of the pope, is to be perfect, it is to be certain of heaven.

There remains then nothing but to ask ourselves in what terms the pope habitually speaks to us.

—*Nos Devoirs envers le Pape*

Such is the teaching on which Mr. Louis St. Laurent has been nourished; such is the requirement that will be made of him by the Hierarchy of Quebec and of Canada; such are the terms to which any politician must submit in advance who wishes to gain a solid block of supporters from French-speaking Roman Catholic Quebec. Such are the "rights" which the clergy of Quebec demand from prospective Prime Ministers and others who enter public life seeking their support. The tap root of the problem is not whether the Prime Minister be a Roman Catholic or a Protestant, but whether he is willing for the sake of gaining office to submit to the terms of the papacy and to be their servile slave and dupe.—W.S.W.

"WHY"

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REV. JOHN WILMOT, OF LONDON, TO COME AS SPECIAL LECTURER FOR A YEAR TO TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY

WE ARE happy to announce that Rev. John Wilmot, who for about twenty-five years, has been Pastor of Highgate Road Baptist Church, London, has accepted the invitation of the Senate of Toronto Baptist Seminary, to serve as special lecturer in Theology for the term 1948-49. Mr. Wilmot will obtain leave of absence from his church for the period from September to May, in order to serve the Seminary.

The invitation was extended first to Mr. Wilmot last year; but as he had been absent from his church for about three months, he felt that he could not come last fall. We are most gratified that he is able to accept our invitation to begin work in September, when the Seminary opens.

One who knows London, and the Baptist Churches of London, very well, expressed the opinion that Mr. Wilmot is, by far, the ablest preacher among Baptists in London. GOSPEL WITNESS readers had an opportunity last year of sampling the quality of Mr. Wilmot's work. We consider him one of the ablest expository preachers we have ever heard. He has an unusual mastery of the English language, and is never found using a word in any other sense than that of its exact significance.

Mr. Wilmot will bring to his work in the Seminary also a wealth of pastoral experience, gained in several pastorates, and climaxed with nearly a quarter of a century as Pastor of one of the important churches of the world's metropolis.

It is, of course, of great value to have thoroughly trained men, who have ability, ably to expound the theory—the philosophy of things, the *how* and the *why* of things as they are. But over and above all that, there is something which only experience can teach, and which only experience can communicate.

Toronto Baptist Seminary is fortunate in having in those who constitute its Faculty, persons of sound scholarship, as well as rich practical experience. On both counts Mr. Wilmot, we are sure, will fit in to the Seminary curriculum, with ease and effectiveness.

We congratulate the Seminary and the student body on this addition to our teaching staff.

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THERE are still a number of copies available of Toronto Baptist Seminary's Year Book. This is a complete report by the students of their activities in school and out, during the year. Anyone who would like to know more about the Seminary and its students should obtain a copy of this well illustrated and well written book. 40 pages, \$1.00.

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MORNING SERMON

The Sin of Trying to Buy God's Gifts

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, June 6th, 1948

(Stenographically Reported)

"Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

"And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money.

"Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.

"But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

"Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.

"Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

"For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."—Acts 8:17-23.

MY TEXT is taken from a most instructive story contained in this chapter, of one who had exercised strange arts. He was a sorcerer, a trickster, a kind of magician, who, for a long time, had deceived the people, giving out that he, himself, was some great one; and so clever was his deceptive art that many of the people said, "This man is the great power of God".

When the apostles came from Jerusalem to a large group of newly-converted people in Samaria, that they might further instruct them in respect to their privilege to experience the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, and when Peter, by laying on of hands imparted to them—or at least when they received the Holy Ghost, at his laying on of hands—Simon thought it opened the way for a new religion, as we should say to-day, "racket". He proposed to commercialize religion, and offered the apostles money that he might have the power which they possessed, that upon whomsoever he laid his hands, they might receive the Holy Ghost.

By Simon's proposal, he revealed to these spiritual men the true condition of his own heart. Peter said, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money".

I want you to turn over that story with me this morning, that we may discover some of the principles that are involved therein.

I.

The first is this: It shows us THAT IN OUR APPROACHES TO GOD WE MUST BE GOVERNED BY STANDARDS WHICH ARE FOREIGN TO ALL OTHER HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS. We come into a different realm altogether when we approach God. Simon was accustomed to seeing men exchange, barter, do business with each other, buying and selling, and getting gain. He had used his trade for his own personal enrichment. He thought to transfer to this spiritual plane,

to this sphere of divine power, the principles which had governed him in the natural world. But he found that the currency which he was accustomed to use, had no value whatever at Heaven's bank, and that in coming to God he had to abandon all the principles which had governed him in other relationships.

That is one great matter which we all need to learn—that there is only one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. Such principles of conduct as govern us, and give us acceptance among our fellows, do not obtain, and have no value whatever in our approaches to God.

A man told me once of a great financial concern approaching his firm, of which he was one of the principals, wanting them to go into a new organization. He said, "No; we shall run our own business, or we shall get out." "Well," said the other, "is your company for sale?" To which he replied, "Everything is for sale in this life, providing you have the price."

I suppose that is a generally accepted principle. You can buy a house, a car, a business, you can buy social prestige, political position: you can buy almost anything if you have the price, and are willing to pay.

Some people imagine that they can come to God in the same way, and presume to offer Him some compensation for such advantages as they hope to receive from His hands. But my text tells us that God does not barter. He is not a Merchant Who is in business to sell things—He is a King, Who sovereignly delights to give things away. But He sells nothing. And you and I have nothing of value to offer Him. You remember how He glories in one of the Psalms in His sovereign independence, when He says, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof"; "every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills". "I need nothing from you. You can

add nothing to My wealth. I am not in business: I sell nothing."

That, I suppose, is one of the hardest lessons for anyone to learn. It is implied in the story of the prodigal, that while he had money, money to spend, he was hail-fellow-well-met with everyone, quite popular. But when he had spent all, he found that the very principle which he required for his enrichment in his utter bankruptcy, was one which was foreign to the idiom of the country. No one knew anything about that. They would buy and sell, but when he had spent all, "no man gave unto him". They had everything to sell—but nothing to give away.

Coming from a life in which such conditions had obtained, and returning to his father, and having acquired, so to speak, the accent of the "far country", he proposed that his father should deal with him as the merchants in the far country had done, only having no money to give, he proposed to give in exchange, labour, intending to propose that his father make him as one of his hired servants.

There are people who, if they have money, seem to think that by paying for prayers, and for masses, and for other things, by giving to charity, by supporting the church, by being generous to their neighbours, they are really ministering something to God, and that some recognition should be accorded them for all that they have done. If they had no money, then, forsooth, they would offer works of righteousness. They would ask to be made as a hired servant, and so to labour for God that He may reward them for their labour, not knowing that the Father had servants who had "enough and to spare". The complement of the household was made up. There was no vacancy for more servants. The Father needed none: the only thing He would do was to give things away.

That, my dear friends, is something we need always to keep in mind. First of all, *those who would receive salvation must remember that you cannot buy it*. It is not for sale: "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." We must come empty-handed, not like Simon, the sorcerer, offering money:

"Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling."

That is the sole condition of acceptance with God.

And then we who are *Christians ought also to remember that that same rule obtains all through the Christian life*. I have heard much teaching in respect to the privilege of the Holy Spirit's ministry. I have often heard it argued that the Spirit of God is to be obtained, and His ministry enjoyed on condition of our good works. You remember how Paul argues in Galatians, "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" If we are to have the Holy Spirit, we must never depend upon anything we do to receive Him. "If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" He will not sell Him, nor grant you that privilege, that power, on terms of money, or of any specially supposedly worthy service which we may attempt to offer to Him.

Even in our praying I think sometimes we allow that principle of works, of merit, to enter in; that if it be so that, for a brief period, we have had special grace, and have been made to ride upon our high places, and to enjoy spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, we are disposed to allow ourselves to think that

now we are a little better than we used to be, and that God will be more ready to answer our prayers, seeing we are living so well, and acquiring such goodness. But, my dear-friends, that can never be an acceptable ground of approach to God. If you became the veriest saint that ever lived, you would never be able to prevail with God on the ground of your own saintliness. He gives: He never sells nor barter. If we are to receive anything from Him, we must receive it on the principle of His free, His sovereign grace, acknowledging our utter inability to make any return for His abundant mercies.

How much oftener we should pray, and how much more earnestly should we pray, could we ever remember that the ground of our acceptance is the name, of Him Who is, Himself, full of grace and truth, and Whose merit extends to us. The blessing of God must come to us on His account, and on His alone.

II.

—There is a further consideration. Such proposals as this one that was made by Simon, CONSTITUTE A REVELATION, SHOWING THE TRUE HEART OF A MAN. Some might have supposed that Simon made a proposal worthy of consideration. Some might have said that he was actuated by high motives. "He wants to have power to communicate the Holy Ghost to others, and thus to do good." But the mere fact that the condition upon which he sought that gift, rather than as a free gift, showed that he was wrong in his heart. He did not know how to approach God. The trouble was not in the formula his lips employed, not in his verbal approach: his heart was not right in the sight of God; for remember out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

When you and I propose thus to earn something, or to derive some benefit of God, on the ground of our merit, be it great or small, by so doing we show that our hearts are not right in the sight of God. We have not the proper conception of God. We do not know Who He is. We have not come to recognize the greatness of His majesty, and of His sovereign independence.

Such an approach was interpreted by the Apostle Peter as *an insult to Deity*. I dare say you would be hurt if someone were invited as a guest to your table, and you offered them the freest, and fullest, and most generous hospitality of which you were capable, if, on rising from the table, he should offer to pay for the meal. Would you not feel greatly injured? You would say, "I am not conducting a restaurant: I invited you as my friend." So, when we dare to come with our poor pennies to God, and offer to buy something from Him, we show that we do not know Who God is, and we need to humble ourselves, and repent before Him, so that we may know how, rightly, to approach the Divine Saviour.

How much of that there is in modern religion! How often religion is commercialized in our day! Down here a little while ago in one of these churches, there was a divine healing charlatan, calling people up, and presuming to lay hands on them, to heal them of their diseases. And in the midst of it—a number of our students were there, and heard this—right in the midst of it as he laid hands upon those who were afflicted by certain diseases, the speaker said, "Now remember, my wife is at the back of the church selling records, and we are trying to buy a house, and we want you to help us." And then he went on.

I am sure that kind of thing is utterly abominable

in the sight of God. No man's heart can be right in the sight of God who so performs. Nor can ours if we allow an infinitesimal element of that commercialization to enter into our relationship with God.

In coming to God, we must remember that *He is a heart Specialist*. He is not greatly impressed by our speech, our conduct, by the outward characters we are able, perhaps, to form, frame, and build up, so that we may, like Simon, the sorcerer, show ourselves to be some great one. That does not impress God, when we come to Him. He is One Who does not look on the outward appearance, but He looks on the heart. When Simon spoke, this apostle who was filled with the Holy Ghost, said, "I see what the trouble is. You have a bad heart condition. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, and you need to approach God, and ask Him if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. Ask Him to forgive you. Thy heart is not right in the sight of God."

You remember in one of Mr. Churchill's speeches during the war, when referring to the enemy he said, in a tone of exasperation: "What sort of people do they think we are!" I can hear him now. When we come in the attitude of prayer, perhaps with our lips singing the praises of God, if our hearts are not right in the sight of God, it seems to me that we may hear God say, "What sort of Person do they think I am than I can be pleased with that sort of thing?"

No, my dear friends, to be right with God we must be right in our hearts. If we are right there, we shall be right in other respects, as God's grace is magnified in our behalf.

When a man goes, physically, to his physician, and he examines him, when after a while he shakes his head, and says, "I am sorry, sir, I have no good news for you." "What is the matter, Doctor?" "You have a very serious heart ailment, which may prove fatal." What does the man say? He is not foolish enough to say, "Can I not get a new one?" No! But how wonderful it is that when we come to God, and find that our hearts are wrong, and bad, that there is within us "an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God", we cannot buy a new heart, but we can come in humble penitence to Him, Who said: "I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh"—which is another way of saying, "Ye must be born again".

So you see, ever more in dealing with God, we are to remember that He goes to the heart of things, He deals with the very essence of what we are, and undertakes to make us anew, that we may be such creatures as He has willed we shall be.

III.

Now just this simple word: VICARIOUS PRAYER IS NOT ENOUGH. Simon said, "Pray ye to the Lord for me." It is a good thing to have people pray for you. But I have sometimes been troubled about the practice of evangelists, and preachers who ask, "Is there someone here who would like us to pray for them?" Who does not desire to be prayed for? Sometimes there is more of the Romanist in people than we suppose. We should be glad to have prayers offered in our behalf, vicariously. "Pray for me." That is what Simon said.

You say, "Is there anything wrong in that?" Let me

tell you a story: Years ago we had a great Russian missionary, a member of this church, whose name was Kolesnikoff. He was one of the greatest saints I ever knew. He loved the Lord with a consuming passion. He was a great preacher. He would have passed for a twin of the Grand Duke Nicholas. A very handsome man, and as handsome within as without, a man wholly given up to God! His wife was not second to him in her devotion to Christ.

When Russian immigrants came to this country, and to Toronto, these missionaries opened their home to them, and when they found one interested, they got him to come and live with them, so that they might minister to him. Man after man was converted in that missionary's home.

There was one man who seemed to be particularly obdurate. One day Mrs. Kolesnikoff earnestly exhorted him to receive Christ, but to no avail. "Oh, well," he said, "Mrs. Kolesnikoff, you continue to pray for me." She said, "I will not. I will never offer another prayer for you." "Oh, but Mrs. Kolesnikoff—" "No; I will never pray for you again." "Why?" "Because you will never be saved by my praying for you. You will never be saved until you pray for yourself. 'Whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'" He thought a moment, then he said, "Oh, then, let us get down, and pray now, and I will pray for myself." He was converted right there.

My dear friends, it will avail us nothing unless we pray for ourselves, which means, that in dealing with God there is no intermediary, there is no one to act as our proxy.

I was in Sarnia on Friday night, and I spoke of the evil of infant baptism. There was a paedo-Baptist brother there, and he said, "Don't you believe all the children of believers are included in the Abrahamic covenant, and that all the children should be baptized?" I said, "No, if that were so, there would be something about it in the New Testament." "Oh, but we argue from silence." I replied, "That is very dangerous. If it were so important as you make out, the New Testament would not be absolutely silent about it."

We cannot buy our way. We cannot get anyone else to intercede for us. We must come individually and personally to God, through Christ, and pray for ourselves, saying, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." There is no other way of opening the door of Heaven's Treasure House, but by believing personally in the Lord Jesus.

Let us pray:

Help us, O Lord, who are Thy children, to believe with a stronger faith. Help us ever to remember that to the end, we are dependent upon Thy sovereign grace. If there is an unconverted man or woman, boy or girl, here this morning we pray that such an one may receive Christ as the gift of God. If there be one of Thy children who longs for a fuller life, a greater measure of power, we pray that we all may understand that it may be ours as Thy free gift. So send us all away from this place this morning richer because we came.

For Thy name's sake, we ask it, Amen.

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—EVENING SERMON—

"The Secret of the Lord"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, June 6th, 1948
(Stenographically Reported)

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant."—Psalm 25:14.

WE became familiar during the war with talk about "secret" things. But we were not allowed to become familiar with the secret things themselves. I suppose most people find some fascination in a secret, in something that is not known to everybody. When they come into possession of knowledge of something that is withheld from the multitude, they feel a measure of superiority. Sometimes a woman may have a secret: she must not tell anyone. She invites a dozen friends to help her keep her secret, then she is surprised to discover that it has become a matter of public knowledge! The only one, perhaps, who surpasses her in unwisdom in that respect, might be her husband, for men are no better at keeping secrets than women.

People join certain societies, and become possessed of their secrets, whatever they are. I never joined one of them for the reason that I never felt disposed to buy "a pig in a poke", to buy something I cannot see, and to assume obligations that I could not understand until it was too late. But there are secret societies. Every Government has its secret servants, who do things secretly, private investigators, whose business it is to discover something of the ways of criminal procedure.

The religion of the Lord Jesus Christ is a secret. It is not something that everyone understands; nor is it something that everyone *can* understand. I am well aware that we are commissioned to preach the gospel to all the world, to every creature. Notwithstanding, it is only a comparatively few, who really come to a knowledge of "the secret of the Lord". I want to discuss with you that principle this evening. I think it will save us much mental distress if we can clearly understand this underlying basic principle of the Christian revelation. "The secret of the Lord"—whatever it is, is said to be—"with them that fear him".

I.

WHAT IS "THE SECRET OF THE LORD"? There are many secrets on the plane of the physical. The chemist has his secrets. The engineer has his secrets. The astronomer has his secrets, the physicist, the nuclear scientists that we hear so much about to-day,—they all have their secrets, and they are secret in this particular, that only the trained mind, and the disciplined intellect, the one who is fundamentally informed on other matters, is competent to understand these secrets. If the man of science were to attempt to impart his secrets to you, you would have no apprehension of what he said. You would say, "That is quite beyond me. I am without the elementary preparation for the understanding of these obscure and esoteric matters."

That is so with the religion of Christ. The church of Christ, the Kingdom of God, if you like, is a Secret Society. Those who compose it have been made acquainted with certain truths which other people are unable to understand. It is called here, "The secret of the Lord".

Mr. Slade read to you this evening, "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect"—those who have capacity to understand it. In effect it is said that the revelation of God in Christ is the acme of divine wisdom, but unless the hearers are prepared by the Spirit of God to understand it, then it is foolishness to them. And so he proceeds: "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory"—now mark—"which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

Who were they who crucified the Lord of Glory? The religious leaders of His day, Caiaphas, Annas, and all the kindred of the high priest, the doctors of the law, members of the Sanhedrin, the civil powers. Pilate and Herod had some part in it. The Roman soldiers, who erected the cross, and drove the nails into His hands and feet, and the spear into His side, and those who put upon Him the crown of thorns—all these had a part in it. The Bible says that had these princes of this world known this hidden wisdom, they never would have crucified the Lord Jesus. But they did not know Who He was. They never dreamed that He was Incarnate Deity. When He hung upon the cross, He prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do". You will recall that the apostle Paul said to the religious people of his day, "Brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers". Think of telling those learned Pharisees that they were ignorant; that they did not know what they were doing, and because they did not, they crucified the Lord of Glory!

There are many who take up that same attitude toward the Lord Jesus Christ to-day. Could we remember this principle always, we should be undisturbed by their opposition. They think they are able to tell us something of His origin. They would tell us that He was the Son of Joseph, not knowing that "from everlasting to everlasting, (He is) God." They see no significance in His death; they misinterpret it. They cannot understand how divine holiness should require the restoration of the moral equilibrium, and how that only Deity could fill the void which human sin had created, and offer a *sine qua non*, if I may so say, to the holy Constitution of the universe, in order that God "might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." They

do not understand that, hence they mock at the gospel. They go so far as to join with those who, in the days succeeding His crucifixion, denied that He was risen from the dead. They do not believe in the literal, physical, resurrection of Jesus Christ in the Body which was crucified. It was a strange doctrine to them, altogether beyond their capacity to understand.

Oh, if we could recognize that, we should not be troubled by the fulminations of learned professors. They may know something, but as to "the secret of the Lord"; they know nothing about it. They cannot understand it. Why worry because the professor writes a learned book, that is to be a kind of theological atomic bomb, which will blow the gospel into smithereens. Instead of that, it blows the professor into smithereens. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him."

What is "the secret of the Lord"? If I should tell you, should I be divulging the secret? No; not at all. Were I to address you in a language you did not understand, I should impart no secret to you. You would hear the words, but you would not be able to construe what was said, if it was a language foreign to your understanding. So when we speak the language of Canaan, when we use—what shall I say—spiritual concepts, the Gospel idiom, people do not understand what we are talking about. They have no capacity to take it in.

What is "the secret of the Lord"? The Divine Physician has a secret formula which He uses for the healing of the wounds of the world. It is not patented for the reason that that is unnecessary. No one else knows the formula. No one else could compound it. But He can.

Someone told me the other day of a certain popular beverage, non-intoxicating, that there was only one living man who had the formula for it. There was a second copy of the formula, locked away in some secure vault, with directions by which its content could be ascertained in the event of the death of the present holder of the secret. I do not know whether that is true or not. I do know that in the case of "the secret of the Lord" there is no duplicate, for the reason that the One Who holds the secret will never die: "Behold, I am alive for evermore," and the secret of the Lord is with Me." He knows how to save men. No one else does. He knows how to open the eyes of the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, and open the understanding, and flood the darkened mind with spiritual light. No one else can do that. He has an absolute monopoly of the divine secret. It is the secret of the Lord.

II.

And HE COMMUNICATES THAT SECRET, for His secret "is with them that fear him". Did I not say just now that He alone has the secret? and yet, paradoxical as it may seem, He shares it with His people. But we cannot communicate "the secret of the Lord". I do not need to be put under oath that I will never tell you how the soul is saved, because, of myself, I could not do it. I have no power to communicate that secret. It is "the secret of the Lord". Whenever a soul is saved it is divinely touched of God Himself. He has no deputies. No one else can do it.

How is "the secret of the Lord" communicated? Not by argumentation. Not by any rational, logical, process. There is a place for argumentation. There is certainly a place for inspired logic. This secret is not contrary

to reason; but it is above, and beyond reason: not unreasonable; but above reason. You cannot convince a man of his sin, and of his need of a Saviour at the conclusion of a logical syllogism. Something more than that is required for the divine communication of the secret.

It is not discoverable to the human mind: "Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me." But that would not discover Him: "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it." It is hidden wisdom. It is "the secret of the Lord"; and we are completely shut up to Him. Learn what you may. Dig as you may. Conduct what research you may, you cannot find God, nor His secret. Nor can anyone, possessed of His secret, of himself, apart from the Holy Ghost, communicate that secret to you. God will not share His honour with another. He will not share His glory. All the glory involved in the salvation of a soul must be His, and His alone.

How is "the secret of the Lord" communicated? I have already implied that. The Lord communicates it Himself. He can tell you His secret: I cannot. He may use me to give you His word, and to expound the principle of His word; but only as God, the Holy Ghost, makes use of these instrumentalities, will "the secret of the Lord" find access to your mind. So it is the Lord Who communicates His own secret.

How does He do it? He creates a capacity for its understanding: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation". Something has happened, not only to the heart of the man, but to the mind of the man. "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures". He will do that. Many a poor, unlettered, man, or woman, knows vastly more of the wisdom of God than some of your most erudite professors, for the reason that in the one case the Lord, Himself, has created the capacity for the understanding of spiritual things. In the other case the man depends upon his natural powers; "but the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." He has no place to put "the things of the Spirit of God". He cannot understand them. Only the Holy Ghost can create a capacity for the understanding of the word of God; and having thus created the capacity,

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only the Spirit of God can communicate the truth itself.

I stopped in the midst of a quotation a moment ago. Let me go on: "Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." The eye, and the ear and the heart are representative of the senses, of our perceptive, affectional, and volitional, faculties. But with all these senses in the natural state, we cannot understand, or even imagine, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him. People think that refers to the things of heaven. It does; but it does not refer to heaven only.

You who are Christians will quite easily understand, I am sure, the truth of what I say. You say, "I remember when I was groping in the darkness. I was ordinarily intelligent. I had been to school. I was able to read my Bible. I was able to hear and to construe rationally what the preacher said; and yet I did not understand. I was not a Christian. There was something beyond me. I did not know what it was. Then one day something happened. It was as if my eyes had been opened, and my ears unstopped. I heard the inner voice of God; and then it seemed as though the inner mind was flooded with a heavenly light." That is exactly what did happen: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Then you said, "Now I know what it means to behold the Lamb of God. I looked—and looked—and looked, but I could not see Him. I saw One hanging on a tree, but I did not know the meaning of it. But when that light that never shone on sea or land, shone upon me, I beheld the Lamb of God. The secret of the Lord took possession of me, and I knew that I was born again, for I heard the voice of Him, to Whom God had given the tongue of the learned that (He) should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary."

What a blessed thing it is to be in "the secret of the Lord"; to have His secret with us, and to be so secure in our understanding, and assurance of it that all the storms of doubt, and unbelief, that may assail us from without, can in no way shake our confidence in Him, Who has come so near to us as to whisper His secret to our hearts.

III.

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and HE WILL SHEW THEM HIS COVENANT." Or He will shew, and make them to know His covenant.

We used to have here, a few years ago, a dear old saint, who never missed a prayer meeting. He was fond of speaking of "experimental knowledge". He called it an "expeerimental knowledge". He prayed that we might have "an expeerimental knowledge of the gospel": not that we might hear it, nor read the letter of it objectively, but that it might become part of us, that we might know it, and understand His covenant.

I wish I had more time to talk about the covenant. What a tremendous truth it is that God has entered into covenant with the Adamic race, through the second Adam, Who is the Lord from heaven! that He has given this wicked race a second chance; and that, as He calls to Himself His chosen, and communicates to them His secret, He then shows them His covenant.

I trust we followed the prayer this evening when Mr. Slade prayed that we might know better, and more thoroughly understand what it is to be a Christian. That is what this text means: "He will shew them his covenant."

Not very many people who have, perhaps, a considerable estate, and who make a will in favour of certain heirs, feel disposed to reveal the contents of that will during their lifetime. I do not know why, but I suppose that, generally speaking, they do not want the heirs to be wishing that they would die, so that they might enter upon their inheritance. But it is not at all unusual for a husband to show the covenant to his wife. He knows that she will not desire him to be out of the way. Sometimes a father will communicate the terms of his will even to his children. He knows that they would rather have him than all his estate. But some day he may take them all into his confidence, and say, "Now I want you to see what is written here, so that you will know what is awaiting you when I pass from this sphere of action." Then they may turn the pages of the will to learn what each has been left in his father's last will and testament.

We are to come to the Table of the Lord to-night. A few months ago I pointed out to you the distinction between a covenant and a testament. A covenant is a bi-party, a bi-lateral affair at least, when people enter into covenant with each other. A testament is of no value while the testator lives. It is an expression of the will of one who has something to leave to others. The new testament in His blood is a covenant, made, not between God and men, but between the Persons of the Godhead. God covenanted with His Son, and the Son said, "Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me), to do thy will, O God." The Son entered into covenant with the Father, and with the Holy Ghost that He would die for sinners. The Holy Ghost entered into covenant with the Father and the Son, that He would fulfil His function. So He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and He "through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God"; He was also "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness"—or according to the Holy Spirit—"by the resurrection from the dead". So Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Signatories,—if I may so say,—of the covenant—and yet Testators, all of them, and each of them, three in One, in relation to the heirs provided for in the testament, Who willed that sinners should be saved,—the Signatories of the covenant, each participated in its implementation, and He loves to show us, by the wealth of His covenant, what it means for a poor sinner, redeemed by blood, to be brought into relationship with God, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.

When a will is read, as it is sometimes at some rich man's funeral, and its contents are published, people assume sometimes that that is the end of it. No, no! Wait until it is entered for probate. Wait till others who are interested, and who feel that they have been neglected, lodge their complaints. Wait until the Executors try to interpret the will. By and by there is almost a congregation of lawyers fighting each with the other, each for his own client, to get what he can out of the estate. No one knows until at last the supreme judgment is given, what disposition may be made of the dead man's wealth. But I remind you that this is an everlasting covenant. It is "ordered in all things and sure". It is

already settled, and probated, and there is no Court in the universe that can unsettle, or disturb, its provisions. The covenant will last for ever.

Someone told me of an estate in which his family was interested. His father, not a very old man, made a will, and a lawyer drew the will. It stipulated that the estate was not to be divided until the youngest grandchild came of age. Some of the children were not married. They married, and children were born to them. Ten years, twenty years, thirty years passed, and still the youngest grandchild had not become of age.

This man said, "That legal firm has been drawing three or four thousand dollars a year, while waiting for the youngest grandchild to come of age. As each child was born, it postponed the settlement further, and further." A pretty shrewd lawyer, was he not?

I heard of a man, a lawyer, who took his son into partnership. Then he left his son in charge of his office, and went away on vacation. After a while the son wired his father: "At last I have closed up such and such an estate." His father wired back, "You fool! That estate educated you." The father had kept it open as long as he could; and the son, not having his father's legal acumen, closed it up, and ended the remuneration to the firm from that source.

My dear friends, in this case the covenant lasts, and the terms of it will apply, and the wealth therein designated will become ours increasingly in all the ages to come, as He shows His exceeding kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

I thought I would just turn over this text with you this evening before we come to the Table of the Lord, that perhaps we may appreciate a little more fully what His grace has done for us, and rejoice with a joy unspeakable, and full of glory, that we are called into the fellowship of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Let us pray:

O Lord, we are dependent, as we have said, upon Thy light, upon the grace of Thy Spirit. We pray Thee, this evening, that Thou wilt make the light to shine still more brightly in the hearts of those of us who are Thy children. If there are any whose minds have been darkened, we pray that Thou wilt break in upon them, and by the Holy Ghost, communicate to them the secret of the Lord, that so they may come before Thee with full assurance of faith. Amen.

We shall close by singing that great hymn, "Abide with me."

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide;
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me!

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou, who changest not, abide with me!

Come not in terrors, as the King of kings;
But kind and good with healing in Thy wings;
Tears for all woes, a heart for every plea;
Come, Friend of sinners, thus abide with me.

I need Thy presence every passing hour;
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, oh, abide with me!

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless:
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness;
Where is death's sting? where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.

Be Thou Thyself before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee.
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!

Amen.

AMONG THE CHURCHES

IT HAS been the writer's privilege to pay a visit to a number of churches in the course of the last month, including the following: Cooksville, Alton, Otterville, Brantford Protestant League Branch, Lachute, Dalesville, Brownsburg, Gore and St. Amedee, Sawyerville, Lanark and Westport. In the itinerary among the Quebec churches he was accompanied by his brother, Rev. A. C. Whitcombe of Shenstone Church, Brantford. In the course of the next week plans are made to visit the following centres: Sudbury, Lavigne, Noranda and North Bay, LaSarre, and Malartic, if possible.

The total impression received from such an itinerary is most encouraging: it is evident that there is a steady growth in almost all our churches; they are holding forth the Word of life and the Lord is adding the promised blessing. Several of the fields visited are student-pastorates and it is refreshing to have fellowship with the students, not in the atmosphere of the classroom, but in their workshops, and to see them at work for the Master. Some of them are establishing new causes such as Mr. Ewan Paras is doing at Cooksville. This flourishing cause was begun as a mission of Long Branch Church and gives promise of growing as rapidly as did the other branch commenced some years ago and now known as the New Toronto Church. At Alton, Mr. McKay, another student-pastor, has an entirely different task, that of building up an older cause that formerly enjoyed great blessing. He is doing a fine piece of work.

At Otterville we enjoyed the fellowship of one of the old-established Baptist Churches that is still flourishing under the faithful and able ministry of Rev. Bruce Hisey. The anniversary services were well attended. Members of THE BRANTFORD PROTESTANT LEAGUE possess the sort of Protestantism that cannot be damped by showers of rain, and there was a good company to hear an address on "The Message of Protestantism". The president of the Branch, Mr. Grieve, was in the chair.

A trip to some of our churches in Quebec also proved to be of great interest, for in a special way these causes are on the front line. The work at Lachute under Rev. Hartley Britton gives evidence of real prosperity in every department. Rev. A. C. Whitcombe of Brantford spoke on Saturday evening at the Young People's Rally and again Sunday at Brownsburg, Dalesville and Lachute. Rev. George Hicks and his people extended a warm welcome and here, too, manifestations of the blessing of God were evident. At the Gore Church, friends from Thurso and St. Amedee united to form a fine company for two services. This whole district is one which is rapidly becoming French and Roman Catholic and it is of the utmost importance to maintain these lighthouses to the truth of the Gospel. Mr. Harold Duckworth, third year Seminary student, is labouring on this field which has been the scene of labours for many of our pastors in their student days. There was a good spirit in both these meetings, and we pray for the Lord's abundant blessing on Student-Pastor Duckworth.

Sawyerville is one of the oldest Baptist Churches in Canada. Vedder refers to it as being established among "American Tories", or as we should say, "United Empire Loyalists", shortly after the Revolutionary War. A century ago the Eastern Townships of Quebec were almost solidly English-speaking and Protestant. Now, both urban centres and rural population are in majority French and Roman Catholic. For some six years this old-established church at Sawyerville has been accepting a Home Mission grant to enable it to regain its feet. We were glad to note that under Rev. Graham Reeve, and now under Rev. Donald Day, another Seminary graduate, this historic church gives every evidence of being close to the point where it can again stand alone to carry on its glorious task of proclaiming the Gospel of Christ. A visit of this sort is a fine proof of the worth-while character of our Home Mission endeavour.

The cause at Lanark under Rev. Kingsley Cutler has grown from a very small beginning several years ago and now appears to be well-established and in a fair way to attaining still-greater things. This is one of our few new churches that has never received help from the Home Mission Board, due to the far-sighted liberality of brethren of Baptist convictions who moved to this town. Rev. A. C. Whitcombe spoke here, while the writer went on to his old student-field at Westport. Mr. William Piper, one of our student-veterans, has scarcely had time to become established on the field due to ill-health, but he is happy with a fine group of young people in the church and we trust we shall hear reports of real progress there this summer and in the future.

We thank God for Toronto Baptist Seminary as we visit various churches and see its present student body at work and as we review the accomplishments of its graduates. And we thank God also for the churches that have held forth the Word of life in season and out of season. In none of them is the work easy, but in all of them there are signs of the blessing of the Lord and of progress all along the line. Pray for them and remember the cost of underwriting the heavy expenses involved in maintaining our army of student-pastors on the various fields.—W.S.W.

ROME PRODUCES POVERTY AND IGNORANCE

WE REPRINT on this page an editorial from *The Toronto Daily Star* describing conditions in Italy. The paper from which this editorial is taken is far from being anti-Romanist—proof of that might be seen in its failure to mention the part played in that land by the Roman Catholic Church. We add this note to the *Star's* editorial to remark that if Rome's pretensions to infallibility and to the sole dispensership of salvation were true, then Italy ought to be the most enlightened, most healthy, and most happy country on the face of the earth. The *Star's* account of conditions there would seem to indicate that actually Italy is close to the other end of the scale, a further illustration of the fact that Rome's great swelling words are as empty and false as comparison with the Bible shows them to be.

The same account might be given, in principle, for any country in which Rome has usurped the monopoly of religion and education for hundreds of years. In Spain, in South America, there is the same picture: grinding poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, and "this violent contrast between the rich and the poor".

Again we point out that Rome's reactionary policies, based on her religious errors, are the most prolific breeders of Communism that the world has ever seen. There is little wonder that in the land of the popes, the poverty-stricken people, disappointed with the greediness of the priests have turned away in disgust from those that offer them a stone in the place of bread, to other self-styled liberators who promise them a paradise on earth. The sad part is that the down-trodden Italian masses are doomed to be quite as much deceived in the pretentious promises of Moscow as they were with the empty words of Rome's Mussolini. Italy needs the Gospel of the grace of God, and the Word of God upon which Protestant liberty was built by our forebears.

—W.S.W.

ITALY'S PROBLEMS

(From *The Toronto Daily Star*, June 15, 1948)

The new De Gasperi government in Italy faces a number of crucial problems. The country, one of the poorest among the so-called modern nations in Europe, is poorer today than she has ever been. The population is increasing faster than productive jobs can be provided. Italy today has 3,000,000 more mouths to feed than there were in 1936; industry and agricultural development have not kept pace with the population trend.

Housing and education are among the most critical of immediate needs. Thousands of homes that were bombed during the war require to be repaired and housing must be provided for the increased population. Over 1,000,000 persons have been classified as homeless—they literally have no roof at all over their heads. Another 800,000 are forced to live in quarters that have been condemned as unfit for human habitation. The government expects it will take at least 10 years to repair the war-damaged homes and longer to add new dwellings. Italy suffers more than other countries from shortages of raw materials and of money with which to import such materials.

An equally pressing matter confronting the government is the appalling illiteracy and the low standard of education in the country. It is estimated that 5,000,000 children of six to 14 years of age do not attend school. About one in five Italians is unable to read or write. There is a shortage of hundreds of schools for children; the war destroyed many school buildings and others were commandeered for war emergencies. At least 50,000 classrooms require to be added to the Italian school system and the standard of education needs to be improved along modern lines. Rural children especially have suffered neglect.

The contrast between rich and poor is a glaring one in Italy. Mr. James Reston wrote in *The New York Times* that when he got off the main roads in Italy last year, he saw "patient agrarian people working in small, miserable, dusty fields and living in hovels". In Rome, he saw near sidewalk cafes, "wretched people watching well-dressed people eating food that cannot be beaten anywhere in the world". In his travels through the country Mr. Reston everywhere noted "this violent contrast between the rich and the poor". He met men and women dressed far better than himself, and miserable beggars hungrier than he ever saw at home during the depression. The question arose in Mr. Reston's mind: "How can the United States revive Europe economically without at the same time reviving or maintaining a privileged class?"

The United States has already given Italy considerable aid and has promised more. The billion dollar debt was wiped out and \$60,000,000 of Italy's dollar pool in the U.S. was unfrozen. About 29 passenger and cargo ships were returned by the U.S. and loans were given to the automobile, tire and rubber and to the chemical industries. Italy has been offered \$700,000,000 under the E.R.P. program. Since the Allied landings, Italy received aid approximating \$2 billion, nearly all of it free and more than two-thirds from the United States.

"The gospel is no mere proclamation of 'eternal truths', but the discovery of a saving purpose of God for mankind, executed in time."—Dr. James Orr.

WHY PRIESTS SHOULD MARRY

THE Apostle Paul has the following to say of bishops or "overseers" of the church, an office which the New Testament identifies with that of the elder or pastor:

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, having his children in subjection, how shall he take care of the church of God?)—(1 Timothy 3:2-5).

If bishops ought to marry, then it follows that those who claim to derive apostolic succession from them ought also to be married. But in our day the Church of Rome "forbids to marry", and hence its priests and prelates are required to maintain the celibate estate in life. The moral ruin and corruption that is brought about by this unnatural state of affairs is inevitable. Roman Catholics are surprised to discover the difference between the commands of their church in respect to marriage of priests and the command of the Bible for New Testament bishops. The following question and answer from *The Prospector*, Romanist paper of Nelson, B.C., sets forth the position of the Church of Rome.

Question: Do you condemn Protestant ministers for marrying?

Answer: Not for a moment. They break no commandment of their church. It is true that God commands His priests to remain single through the legislation of the Catholic Church. But her legislation in this matter has nothing to do with Protestant clergy-men.

Our readers will note that the priest slyly says nothing about the way in which "the legislation of the church" runs directly contrary to the New Testament. The fact of the matter is that a faithful Roman Catholic is compelled to accept the authority of the Roman Church before that of the Bible, which, as in this answer, is not even mentioned when it runs athwart the "legislation of the church". Protestants may well rejoice that the "legislation of the church" does not apply to them. They are free to follow the precepts of the New Testament, thus finding themselves in the true apostolic tradition.—W.S.W.

MEDIOCRE, MR. DREW

(From *The Ottawa Citizen*)

Like the musing and ambitious Macbeth, Mr. George Drew must feel today after the outcome of the provincial elections in Ontario, that "vaulting ambition" has indeed overleaped itself and fallen on the other side.

All he has accomplished by his premature appeal to the voters is his rejection in his own constituency, a notable reduction in size of his party now left temporarily leaderless, and the replacement of the Liberal opposition in the legislature by the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation whose alternative program he may have more reason to fear.

In short, it is a Pyrrhic victory for the Conservatives. Another of the kind; and Mr. Drew, like the King of Epirus, would be undone.

Whether he obtained a dissolution of the legislature with an ambitious eye on the federal Progressive Conservative leadership as was alleged, or whether he felt the tide of popular support for his government beginning to ebb, can be only a matter of opinion. But whatever his reason for having an election out of due time, his tactics in fighting it are condemned by the outcome.

He denounced the "Red menace" in blood-curdling terms. The result: no diminution in Communist representation

and an obvious refusal in the predominantly English-speaking constituencies to take his sound and fury too seriously. He made all he could of the insinuation that although the C.C.F. repudiated Communist support, there was nevertheless something highly sinister about the fact. The result: the C.C.F. is now the second strongest party and the official opposition. Then there is little doubt that he misread the extent of the public's objection to cocktail bars, its resentment at the lack of government assistance for low-cost housing, and its doubt about his obstinacy in Dominion-provincial questions.

Apart from the strategy and tactics of the campaign, the election emphasizes not a few trends about which federal Liberals must raise notes of dubious self-interrogation. If the Liberal party is to remain merely a "third force" in Ontario, and in danger of being ground between the upper and nether millstones of Conservatism and C.C.F. Socialism, what are likely to be its future long-term prospects in the federal field?

It may win the general election next year. But suppose it does not? Is it then to form a working coalition with the Conservatives as it has already done in some provinces? Or can it develop such a social conscience as successfully to meet the challenge of the C.C.F. whose gains make an ironic commentary on those Conservative newspapers which ridiculed it as possessing only "nuisance value"?

Canada is the only country in the postwar world to possess a Liberal government. It is obviously the duty of those who lead it now to ascertain on what platform and with what policies they can ensure its survival.

Among the other political oddities of the elections is the fact that only in the French-Canadian ridings could Mr. Drew's scare campaign against Communism be said to have had any success. It is this that may, in part, account for government gains from Liberals in constituencies between Ottawa and the St. Lawrence as well as for accessions in Northern Ontario.

Finally Mr. Drew's own defeat in Toronto-High Park, a middle-class, temperance constituency which chose a C.C.F. member, frustrates what hopes he may have had of replacing Mr. John Bracken as national Progressive Conservative leader.

MR. DREW'S HOMING ROOSTER

(From *The Ottawa Citizen*)

Premier Drew's famous rooster, as is the way of untutored political fowl, is coming home disconcertingly to roost. Soon he will discover, if he takes the *Evening Citizen's* advice and investigates the facts, that the letter on which he based his unwarranted demand for a breach of Canada's diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia, bears no such interpretation as he thought it did.

He alleged that the letter, supposed to have been received by a Serbian in Toronto, (in reality, a Croat), contained threats to the effect that if the recipient did not cease his anti-Communist activities in Canada, not a trace would be left of his relatives in Yugoslavia—"not even a rooster to crow".

Now the *Evening Citizen* has seen a translation of this letter. It was sent by the "National Front" party from the village of Grab, Yugoslavia, on August 21, 1946, nearly two years ago. It contains no such threat as Premier Drew alleges.

All it does is to reveal that the recipient's relatives, as well as being harsh landlords, were Ustashi sympathisers, that is to say, supporters of the notorious traitor and Fascist criminal, Pavelic, who collaborated with the Nazis and Fascists during the war and caused the deaths of thousands of his fellow-countrymen. Despite their discreditable associations, however, the family was not only protected by the Yugoslav authorities but given enough land for their subsistence. And the purpose of the letter was merely to warn the recipient that if ever again the Ustasis and their sympathisers tried to resume their baleful activities in Yugoslavia, they would not be "left even a rooster to crow".

There was not a word about the recipient's attacks on Communism, nor a threat to his relatives on that account. Obviously, the letter was written only as a warning that both harsh landlords and sympathisers with Nazis and Fascists collaborators would never again be allowed to rule in Yugoslavia.

ROME CONDEMNS PRIVATE JUDGMENT

A CURIOUS answer to a question is found in a Roman Catholic paper which a subscriber sent us from British Columbia. We reproduce them herewith for the amazement of our readers:

Question: Why do you condemn private judgment when you admit that private judgment is necessary to find the true Church?

Answer: Private judgment is necessary and lawful before entering the Church for the same reason that scaffolding about a building is necessary for the construction of that building. Once the building is finished you have no further need for the scaffolding: *Once you have found the true Church you have no further need for the means that brought you into it.* The spirit of seeking gives place to a sense of security and fulfilment. Argument and worry are over; you are at home.

How different is this sense of contentment and satisfaction on the part of the convert from the state of those who go through life insisting on the rights of private judgment against which St. Paul warned his converts, "lest perhaps there be found among you contentions, envyings, animosities, dissensions, detractions, gossiping, arrogance, disorders." (2 Cor. 12. 20).

—*The Prospector*, Nelson, B.C.

We have emphasized one sentence in the above answer. Various newspapers have been featuring a series of strange advertisements under the heading of "You Hear Strange Things About Catholics". What stranger thing could be told about Roman Catholics than the above statement? The faithful are flatly told that once inside the fold of the church they have no further need of "private judgment" which is another name for reason and thought. When a man enters the Roman Church, according to this priest, he must leave his brains outside. That explains a good many mysteries about the curious beliefs Romanists have in apparitions, miracles and the supposed wonder-working power of priests in the mass, etc. Only those who have "no further use for . . . private judgment" could possibly swallow such nonsense as faithful Romanists are required to believe.

What a curious contradiction is involved in the idea that private judgment is valid and necessary before one enters the church, but sinful afterwards. Christ never engaged in the work of shutting men's eyes and ears; He came that they might have life and light; that their eyes and their ears and their minds also might be opened to the truth.

And consider, finally, the weakness of the scriptural argument that is reduced to quoting against private judgment a verse that condemns only a quarrelsome spirit. Evidently Rome considers that the spirit that enquires concerning the truth is to be identified with the spirit of contentiousness. What blind leaders of the blind these priests of Rome are!—W.S.W.

Notes and Comments

By W. S. WHITCOMBE

Mr. Drew and the French-Canadians

Le Devoir of Montreal returns to the theme that Mr. Drew owes his working majority to the French-Canadians of Ontario. In a recent issue it said:

The majority of French-Canadians in Ontario voted for the Conservatives: that is an astonishing but undeniable fact. Of the seven seats which they control almost exclusively, they gave six to Mr. Drew, while they refused them to him in 1945. Without them, the Conservative Party in Ontario would have only a feeble majority in the house. Somewhat like Mr. Bennett in 1930, Mr. Drew therefore owes his stability in office to the French-Canadians.

This fact, "astonishing but undeniable" of French-Canadian support for the supposedly ultra-loyalist Drew has not escaped the attention of a number of political observers, including *Saturday Night*. Most of the comment seems to ascribe some sort of genius to Mr. Drew for winning French-Canadian Roman Catholic votes. Many Canadians seem prone to ascribe the same political genius to Mr. King because he has succeeded in winning an almost solid block in Quebec in election after election. But the recipe for winning Roman Catholic votes is simple and it does not call for either genius or loyalty to principles. Appeasement is a simple matter if one is willing to sacrifice whatever the greedily hungry devourer demands. Mr. Drew has won French-Canadian votes, but let us remember that it is English-speaking Protestant taxpayers, in large measure, that will be called upon to foot the bill.

R. C. Church Collects Dues by Check-off

Members of Parliament last week learned how the Roman Catholic Church in Nova Scotia employs the "check-off system" to collect its dues. Mr. Clarence Gillis, C.C.F. member for Cape Breton South mentioned casually that churches in his country collected their dues by the voluntary check-off system just as the trade unions do. His words were drowned out by a chorus of unbelief, according to *The Toronto Star* account of the debate. Mr. Gillis put them right by saying:

"The Roman Catholic Church in my own community collects dues in that way . . . I am a Catholic, and I paid my own church dues in that way for 26 years. That system is still in use."

The Roman Church is never backward in employing the most effective methods of raising money. Perhaps the Members of Parliament who were so ready to rush to her defense will be more wary the next time they attempt to do combat for her.

Only Romanists Need Apply?

The following story is taken from *Liberty* of May 1:

In the corridors of Parliament a new and politically weird story was being told about James J. McCann, masked-faced ex-county-coroner, now minister of national revenue. When Canada's civil servants were being screened for possible Communist loyalties, the story said, McCann suggested to some of his colleagues that the "safe way" would be for the government to employ only persons of the Catholic faith.

His reason: they have a higher faith than local or international politics, are less likely to be swayed by red propaganda. But his cabinet colleagues smiled and shrugged off the warped views of time-serving McCann, himself a good Irish Catholic.

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CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY

The Christian View of God and the World, by James Orr, D.D., published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1947, \$3.75.

As a definite contribution toward evangelical scholarship, Eerdmans Company has brought out another issue of that work of Christian philosophy which began its great influence at the end of last century, *The Christian View of God and the World*, by the Scotch theologian, Dr. James Orr. Let not the thoughtless say, "I have nothing to do with philosophy since I am a Christian", for

"He who with his whole heart believes in Jesus as the Son of God is thereby committed to much else besides. He is committed to a view of God, to a view of man, to a view of sin, to a view of Redemption, to a view of the purpose of God in creation and history, to a view of human destiny, found only in Christianity." (page 4).

Here emphasize the phrase "Son of God", since "it is the fundamental assumption of these Lectures that the central point in the Christian view of God and the world is the acknowledgment of Jesus Christ as a truly Divine Person—the Son of God made flesh" (page 39).

The first postulate is that God is a good person Who reveals Himself. This is not Evolution, as we heard a radio speaker say the other day of the religion of Israel. If man be made in the image of God, as the oldest statement in the Bible about him tells us, then

"... real knowledge both of God and of the nature of things without us is possible" (page 86). In fact, "we recognize in man a conscience, which reveals moral law, a will which can execute moral purposes, and affections which create a capacity for moral love (page 140).

According to Christianity, "sin is that which absolutely ought not to be" (page 171).

The theory of Evolution dulls, if it does not remove, the sense of sin in those who believe it. We think, at times Dr. Orr deals with it too lightly (e.g., page 183). On the other hand, we think he finds it hard to prove the resurrection of the dead as a very old doctrine in the Old Testament (e.g., page 203).

The way in which modern religious Liberals can talk about the divinity of Jesus when they mean merely humanity becomes clear when one finds the same thing set forth by their spiritual ancestors, Schleiermacher, Ritschl, etc., as Dr. Orr examines them.

The doctrine of the Atonement comes in for careful discussion. Many theories are examined and the point of truth in each is singled out. We like this:

"So far from this latter aspect of Christ's work—the judicial—being to be thrown into the background, it is, I think, the one which the apostolic theology specially fastens upon as the ground of the remission of sins, and the means by which the sinner is brought into a relation of peace with God—the ground, as Bunyan phrases it, on which God 'justly justifies the sinner'" (page 317).

Even Eschatology, with the resurrection and judgment and individual destiny, are carefully discussed.

Dr. Orr's work brought to him, as it will bring to any careful reader,

"... the deepened and strengthened conviction of the reality and certainty of God's supernatural Revelation to the world,—of His great purpose of love and grace, centring in the manifestation of His Son, but stretching out in its issues through all worlds, and into all eternities,—of a Redemption adequate to human sin

and need, the blessings of which it is our highest privilege to share, and to make known to others" (page 346).

—W.G.B.

WHY OTTAWA'S EXCESSIVE TAXATION POLICY?

THE Finance Minister, when he submitted his Budget, suggested the necessity of being somewhat prepared for war. No relief to the hard-pressed Canadian taxpayers is given; but a surplus is to be piled up for military emergencies.

We do not believe there is imminent danger of war. Although we are sure the Roman Catholic Church, through the press of the world, is doing its utmost to provoke war between Russia on the one hand, and United States, Britain, and France, on the other. We do believe there is serious danger of civil strife in another direction. We have quoted Lord Bennett as saying, when he called to see us, that he could see nothing in prospect that could avert civil war in Canada. We can only hope that Lord Bennett was unduly apprehensive, although we, ourselves, think we can see it coming.

The Finance Minister is an Anglican. But few of the details of the policy of a Department are worked out by its political Head, and nearly every Department of the Government in Ottawa, is now largely staffed by Roman Catholics.

Has the Finance Department in Ottawa been instructed by the Hierarchy to wring every penny possible out of the Protestant taxpayers of Canada, to help pay for their own destruction by and by?

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 12 Third Quarter Lesson 1 July 4, 1948

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

INTRODUCTION TO THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

For the next six months the lessons will be taken from the Gospel of John. The Fourth Gospel was written by "the beloved disciple" John, the son of Zebedee and Salome. Salome seems to have been the sister of Mary, the mother of our Lord (John 19:25), and if so, John would be related to the Lord by the ties of the flesh. At any rate, we know that John, together with his brother James, and Peter, was admitted into close fellowship with our Lord.

The Gospel according to John supplements the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, being written with a definite object in view: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30, 31).

Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit this record was written, not primarily as a biography, but as a Gospel. Among the many miracles of our Lord, some were selected which would set forth His Deity in an unique way. They were signs, performed in the presence of His disciples, demonstrating that Jesus, the Man Who lived a perfect human life before the people, was indeed Jehovah's Anointed, the Messiah, and that He was the Son of God. The testimony of the words and works of Christ herein described would bring conviction to the hearts of the readers.

Conviction concerning the Person of Christ should be accompanied by new life. The Gospel was written that men might believe, and that they might have everlasting life through faith in Christ. These two central truths should be kept in mind at

all times. Luke sets forth accurately the facts concerning the life of Christ, while John sets forth the interpretation of those facts.

THE INCARNATE WORD

Lesson Text: John 1:1-18.

Golden Text: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."—John 1:14.

I. Christ the Word of God: verses 1-9.

It is fitting that the opening verse of this Gospel, the aim of which is to portray Christ as the Son of God, should contain a strong affirmation of the truth of His essential Deity, and that the titles ascribed to Him in the opening chapter should refer specifically to His Person and Work as the Son of God. He is called the Word of God (vv. 1, 14), the Same (the self-existent, unchangeable, eternal One—v. 2; Psa. 102:27; Heb. 1:12; 13:8), the Light (v. 7; John 8:12), the only-begotten Son (vv. 14, 18; John 3:16; Heb. 1:5, 6), Jesus Christ (v. 17; Matt. 1:1), the Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One—vv. 20, 41; John 4:25), the Lamb of God (vv. 29, 36; 1 Pet. 1:18-20), the Son of God (vv. 34, 49; John 5:19, 20), Jesus (Saviour—v. 37; Matt. 1:21), Rabbi (Master, Teacher—John 20:16), Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph (v. 45; Deut. 18:15; Lk. 24:27), the King of Israel (v. 49; Matt. 27:11, 37) and the Son of man (v. 51; Matt. 26:2, 24).

Christ was and is the eternal Word of God. There never was a time when He was not with God, for He is God. As a word is the expression of a person's mind, and is the means by which his character, thoughts and will are made known, so Christ is the expression of God's mind, and through Christ we know the character, thoughts and will of God (John 14:9; Heb. 1:1).

God the Son was the Creator and is the Sustainer of the universe of men and things (Gen. 1:1; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:2); God said, "Let us make man in our image" (Gen. 1:26). Christ has life in Himself (John 5:26), and He also has the power to bestow life (John 4:10, 14; 17:2). Life may be symbolized by light, just as death is associated with darkness (John 8:12). Christ came as a light to those who were dwelling in the land of the shadow of death (Isa. 9:2). The darkness was great, but the darkness could not overcome the light (possible rendering of the Greek word for "comprehended"; compare John 12:35, "lest darkness overtake you").

God sent His messenger, John the Baptist, to herald Christ's coming to the earth (Mal. 3:1; 4:5, 6). John, although a burning and shining light, was a temporary, transitory light (John 3:28-30; 5:35); but Christ, the true Light of God, is eternal and perfect, shining upon every man who comes into the world (John 9:5; 12:46). All may find life by believing in Him (1 Tim. 2:4; 4:10; 1 John 5:11-13). Light reveals (Psa. 36:9; Eph. 5:13), cheers (Esther 8:16) and glorifies (Acts 22:11; 2 Cor. 4:6). Sunlight is necessary to life and growth. Light is associated also with power, as illustrated by electricity. Christ is the Light of the world.

II. Christ the Son of God: verses 10-18.

Christ came to earth as the Light of God, but many preferred the darkness (John 3:19-21). He came to that which was His own, yet His own people received Him not. There was no room in the inn for the Son of God when He came to earth as a little child. The world as a whole failed to recognize its Creator.

People are divided into two classes according to their attitude to Christ. It was the same when He was here upon the earth. Many rejected Him, but many welcomed Him. To those who believe upon Him and receive Him He gives the right or authority to become the children of God (Rom. 8:16; Gal. 3:16). They are "bairns" who have come into the family of God through spiritual birth (John 3:5).

The only-begotten Son of God, the unique Son of God, died that He might open the way for sinful men to become the children of God. In order that He might become subject to death, it was necessary that He take upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. 8:3; Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:14). Christ was born to die.

As the Word of God Incarnate, Christ tabernacled among men, living a perfect life, the characteristics of which were grace and truth. He was perfect as a Redeemer (Heb. 2:10), and perfect as a Revealer of God. Grace and truth, elsewhere described as mercy and righteousness, are the two great attributes of God which are most conspicuous in His redemptive work (Psa. 85:10; 89:2, 24). John marvelled at the manifestation upon earth of the glory of God (Lk. 9:32; 2 Pet. 1:16; 1 John 1:1).

The Scriptures do not speak at length of the childhood of Christ, and as far as it is recorded, He was thirty years of age before He was publicly proclaimed as the Son of God. To John the Baptist, was given the high honour of officially announcing the presence of Christ, and of giving testimony concerning Him.

He Whose life was characterized by grace and truth, bestowed grace upon His own. The Old Covenant rested upon the basis of obedience to the law, but the New Covenant availed for those who would believe in Christ (Rom. 4:16). The righteousness of God was revealed in the law, but His righteousness and also His love were revealed in Christ; Christ was God's complete and final revelation to man (Heb. 1:1, 2). In verse 18 some manuscripts read, "the one who is God, only-begotten".

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

June 28—The Word Acting in Creation	Gen. 1:1-27.
June 29—The Word Upholding the Universe	Col. 1:1-19.
June 30—The Word Revealing the Father	Heb. 1.
July 1—The Word Manifesting the Father	1 John 1.
July 2—The Word—the Fulness of the Godhead	Col. 2:1-13.
July 3—The Word Redeeming Man	Gal. 4:1-7.
July 4—The Word Delivering Man	Heb. 2:9-18.

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