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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"Amasa Wallowed in Blood in the Midst of the Highway"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, June 27th, 1948
(Electrically Reported)

"And Amasa wallowed in blood in the midst of the highway. And when the man saw that all the people stood still, he removed Amasa out of the highway into the field, and cast a cloth upon him, when he saw that every one that came by him stood still.

"When he was removed out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri.—II Samuel 20:12, 13.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON

We acknowledge, O Lord, that our sin has incapacitated us for Thy service. Even when we would do good evil is present with us. As we approach Thy throne that we may worship Thee, we are reminded by Thy word that Thou art a Spirit, and that they who worship Thee must worship Thee in Spirit and in truth. No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Sin has made us bankrupt of everything which Thou canst look upon with favour. We are dependent upon Thy boundless grace. Even in our holiest endeavours, our highest aspirations, we can do nothing at all without the Holy Ghost. Therefore, O Lord, this is our prayer this evening, that the Holy Spirit may be our portion. We have Thy promise: If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?

We desire the presence and the endowment of Thy Spirit this evening, that in these hymns of praise we may be enabled to make melody in our hearts unto the Lord; and that in every exercise of this service of worship we may be moved by the Holy Ghost, so that this evening the name of Jesus Christ may be glorified among us.

We cannot even pray of ourselves. We thank Thee that Thou hast provided for this incapacity by giving us Thy Spirit in such measure that He makes intercession for the saints with groanings which cannot be uttered. Such prayers as He inspires must be heard, for He maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God. May that great ministry be exercised in our hearts this evening, that in this congregation there may not be one who shall remain unbled.

This evening we would see Jesus. We would understand a little more perfectly His work in our behalf. We would be warned against the perils of the road. Open our hearts to the receipt of the gospel, as well as to its ex-

hortations and encouragements. Help us that we fear not to hear the whole counsel of God.

We pray that this evening we may understand ourselves a little better, that we may have a new realization of our dependence upon Thy sovereign mercy; that we may never presume, when we come into the presence of the Holy One, for Thou art the High and Lofty One, inhabiting eternity, and Thou hast said to us, I dwell in the High and Holy place, with him also who is of a contrite heart, and who trembleth at my word. Give us that holy contrition which is ever the precursor of heavenly blessings, that we may be fitted to receive the gift of eternal life.

There may be someone here this evening who has heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, who is often, perhaps generally, found in the place of worship and of praise, and yet whose religion is merely nominal, whose heart has never yet been opened to the incoming of the King. May the ministry of the Spirit be exercised in behalf of such an one this evening, that he may be convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

Make us all to know how completely we are dependent upon that redemption which is accomplished for us by Jesus Christ our Lord.

We who are Thy children are but poor scholars in Thy school. We have made but indifferent progress. Many of us have named Thy name for many years, and when by reason of the time we ought to be teachers, we have need that someone should teach us again what are the first principles of Thy Word.

Oh, give us an appetite for spiritual learning! Work in us, we pray Thee, a hunger and thirst after righteousness. Give us a holy ambition to excel in the school of Christ. May we count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.

We must face the outer world to-morrow, the world of work, and of business, of barter, of trade, the world, indeed, that lieth in the Wicked One. We may not ask

to be taken out of the world, but we may say Amen to the high priestly prayer of our Lord, and ask to be kept from evil.

So help us as we mix with the world that has no knowledge of Thee, that we may move among men and women as those who are enabled by grace to keep themselves unspotted from the world.

Give Thy comfort to those who are in sorrow, to those who are bereaved. Lay Thy healing hand upon those who may be ill, in hospitals, in sick rooms. Remember the mother who cares for her children at home, who longs often to be in the assembly of the saints, but yields to the still higher call of duty, to nurture and train the children Thou hast given to her. The Lord make the nursery a Bethel, a place where the angels of God shall visit.

We pray for those who are anxious. It is part of the common lot, because of our limitations, because we are surrounded with fog, with the uncertainties of life, we are often, though we ought not to be, anxious about to-morrow. Help us, we pray Thee, that we may have the wisdom and grace to cast all our care upon Thee, with the assurance that Thou dost care for us. Thou art the God of to-morrow as well as the God of to-day. Yea, our glorious Lord Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

For those who seek rest in recreation, for any who are specially troubled, tempted, and tried, we pray Thee, put Thy shielding arms about them. Keep them from all evil. Lead them on in paths of righteousness for Thy name's sake.

Week by week, many times a week we open Thy word. It is ever a sealed Book, unless Thy light shall shine upon the sacred page, and unless the illumination of the Holy Ghost within be granted us. We pray that these may be Thy gifts to us this evening. Help us to receive them, otherwise we shall never understand.

So may this service to all who are here, and like services to others who worship in Thy name throughout the land, and throughout the world, be a service of divine benediction, that we may be enriched by our sabbath rest, and helped onward in our pilgrim journey.

Grant us this, we pray Thee, with the sense of forgiveness of all our sins, through the merit of Him Who died that we might live.

We ask it wholly in His name, Amen.

THERE is, of course, a bit of history behind this text, which we must consider in order that we may learn what lessons there are here for us. You are, of course, familiar with the story of Absalom's rebellion against David. One of the sons of Zeruiah was captain of the king's host. David desired to subdue the rebellion without the destruction of the rebels. As his armies went forth to the battle he exhorted them "Deal gently with the young man, even with Absalom for my sake." Absalom was a man of splendid physique. In all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty. From the crown of his head to the sole of his feet there was no blemish in him. One of his special attractions was his mass of long hair, which after the custom of the times, I suppose, was considered the crown of glory even to him.

The battle was joined in the wood of Ephraim, where Absalom and his men were completely routed by David's army under the command of Joab. As Absalom was riding upon a mule endeavouring to make his escape, he passed under a branch of a tree, and his long hair waving in the breeze wrapped itself round the branch, and the mule went from under him, and he was left suspended by his own hair from the branch of the tree. Someone brought news of that to Joab, and Joab made haste to the spot, and drove a dart through Absalom's heart, and slew the rebel whom the king would have saved. Then the people turned back again to David,

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and there was a regular stampede to welcome the king back to Jerusalem.

But there was a second rebellion, like fire which is supposed to be extinguished, but breaks out the second time. This time under the leadership of Sheba, the son of Bichri. But in the meantime, among those who had repented of their folly was this man Amasa, who had been captain of the rebel hosts under Absalom. He repented of his rebellion and turned to the king, and the king freely and fully forgave him, and announced his intention to promote him to the position of generalissimo in the stead of Joab. Joab had long proved a very difficult man, a man who seemed to be loyal to David, but whose later life proved that all the time he had been loyal only to himself.

He was loyal to David just so long as he found him profitable. So the king announced that Amasa was now to be commander-in-chief. He ordered him to assemble the army to withstand the aggressions of this second rebel, Sheba, the son of Bichri. Amasa went away to obey the king's orders. But "he tarried longer than the set time which (the king) had appointed him". Meanwhile, Joab took command of the army, and pursued after Sheba, and in his pursuit he came upon Amasa, who had been commissioned by the king to effect the mobilization of the host. Joab had flowing garments upon him, and partly concealed, I suppose by his garments, a sword, fastened upon his loins in the sheath thereof. As he went the sword fell out, just as Joab met Amasa. As he met him he inquired, "Art thou in health, my brother?" And Joab took Amasa by the beard, by the right hand, to kiss him, and with his left hand he smote him under the fifth rib, so that he fell dead in the midst of the highway. He "wallowed in blood". As the people came along and they saw this, the body of the murdered man, they did exactly what you would have done, they stood still: they followed Joab no longer: they saw something of his deadly work.

But "one of Joab's men" lifted the prostrate form of the slain Amasa, and carried the body over into a field beyond the hedge, and to make sure of its concealment, he threw a cloth over it, so that no one should see it as they passed by. And when Amasa was removed out of the way, all the people went on, after Joab.

Now it is of that I am going to speak a little this evening, for it is not difficult to identify the spirit which animated Joab. It was certainly not a good spirit, but an evil one. The scripture says that "Satan entered into Judas". He does enter into men, and leads them to do just what he, himself, wants to have done. And the picture of Joab's work is the picture of the devil's work everywhere. In our day and in all other days.

I.

Look then at that spectacle of AN ENEMY'S WORK ALONG THE HIGHWAY OF LIFE. A man wallowing in blood, slain not honourably on the field of battle, but murdered. David later complained of Joab that he "shed the blood of war in peace". Joab was not an honourable soldier, he was not in this case a servant of the king: he was a plain, common murderer.

The highways of life in our day are marked by the bloody track of this spiritual Joab, who was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth. Equally, one does not need very much discernment, to observe on every hand wrecks of humanity. "Broken pieces of earthenware," as Begbie would have called them, but men and women whose lives have been marred, and blighted, and blasted by an enemy's work: This vile world is not a friend to grace, to help us on to God. We live in an enemy's country, and it is easily possible to discern his hand in every direction.

Who was this Amasa? Did he die a martyr's death? Was he, after all, really murdered? He was so far as the motive of Joab was concerned. Jealous of him because of his promised promotion; jealous of a rival who would be likely to take his place, Joab removed him out of the way so that he should have no competitor. But Amasa was himself, or had been, a rebel. He had been the commander of Absalom's army, exhorted by Absalom to "smite the king only". Amasa had been an open enemy of the king; but the king had forgiven him all his transgressions, and proposed his promotion to the highest position in the kingdom.

My dear friends, we are all rebels like Amasa. We have all lifted up our hands against the king. We have all had a part in slaying the King's Son, saying in our hearts, "Smite the king only." And yet, notwithstanding our rebellion, it is the way of grace to forgive us. When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. Every obstacle to the renewal of our fellowship with God, has been removed on God's side. And He has committed the ministry of reconciliation to His church, sending us to all rebels to say, "Be ye reconciled to God."

Notwithstanding, Amasa did not enjoy the king's forgiveness, but before the king's order was implemented, an enemy stepped between Amasa and the king, and laid him low upon the highway, wallowing in blood.

So is it, dear friends, often in our day, that though God would have saved men, they go on still in their iniquity, and an enemy stands between the soul, and the operation of divine grace.

The fact of the matter is, *Amasa was no martyr*. As

a matter of justice, he deserved all he got. He had forfeited all right to life, and to the king's favour. It was of the king's boundless grace that he was not executed as a criminal. But he was not executed: he was murdered by one who had no right, in that case, to wield the sword.

Now the world is full of slain Amasas. In Europe, in Palestine, everywhere, blood has flowed like rivers the last few years. And somebody says, "What a God He is to permit such a thing as this!" Ah! but "God willeth not the death of the sinner". You cannot charge God with the wreck and ruin of this world that He has made. An enemy has done this, not God. You must not blame God for Europe's condition, or the condition of Asia, or the godlessness of Britain, and Canada, and America. Go where you will, and you will see some Amasa slain in the roadway. Who did it? Oh, well, the world is full of examples, illustrations, of the great law that "the wages of sin is death". You and I might similarly have been laid low: we should have been had not grace triumphed. We deserved nothing better than death, for we are all, by nature, enemies of God: "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

I could mention, I could identify the Amasas. Look at *Amasa the drunkard*, for instance. Was there ever a day when that accursed traffic had so many victims for its own? This country, and the United States, both are full of such tragedies, and, literally, the highways have been painted red with human blood. Countless thousands have been slain, not in war, but in time of peace, so-called by this accursed "Joab", who fattens on the blood of men.

There are many others. I need not refer you to jails and penitentiaries. There are multitudes who escape the clutches of the criminal law, who are their own, destroyers, ruined by their own vicious lives, by the sword of the "Joab" that is within them. Joab kissed Amasa to death, just as Judas kissed the Son of God to death. The world is full of kissing Joabs, who are killing Joabs at the same time.

When my wife brought in the papers last evening, I said to her, "What new horror is in the headlines to-night?" Every day we see it, murders, suicides, robberies, every kind of crime, multiplied a hundred-fold, such as we have never known before. Who is responsible for it? Joab! You don't believe there is a devil? Then I wonder who does it! Who is responsible for this bloody world, the confusion, and chaos, sin and sorrow, as we see it to-day? An enemy hath done this, there is no doubt about that.

But, ah! in the moral and spiritual sense, as well as in the physical sense, the highways are littered with slain Amasas. I never hear anyone take the name of Jesus Christ in vain but I say to myself, "That is the work of an enemy". I never hear a man make light of this Holy Bible, the inspired and infallible word of God, though he may be a preacher in the pulpit, or a professor in the classroom, or a President of the University, I do not care who, or where he is, I can but say, "He is a child of the devil, and doing the devil's work, slaying the souls of men by standing between the pardoning grace of the King, and the rebel's repentance, and killing them ere they receive his promotion".

You can make application of the principle as you will. You will not want for illustrations of it: Behold the

man in the midst of the highway, wallowing in blood, slain by a murderer's hand. Poor Amasa, he might have been the first in the kingdom; he might have been next in authority, and influence, to the king himself, if only the enemy had not stepped in between them. What a wonderful thing it is, that the grace of God is so magnified toward sinners that no matter how great the sinner, he may become the greatest of all saints!

If I were to ask you who was the chiefest of all the apostles, instantly you would say, "His name was Paul". He excelled them all in devotion to Christ, and in labour for His name. Ask him about himself, and he says, "I am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." And then he said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."—The chief of sinners became the chief of the apostles. Thus our Lord was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. And so completely does He do it, that at last the trophies of His grace are presented without fault before the throne of God. What a tragedy then, when anyone misses it! What a tragedy, when Amasa missed the high possibilities of life. Why was it? I could speak further of *Amasa—the unbeliever*. There are innumerable hosts of them. But I come to this, this was *Amasa the procrastinator*. The king said, "I shall make you chief of the host, in the place of Joab. Now go at once, assemble the host and take command." "But he tarried longer than the set time which he had appointed him." He was tardy; he was not quick enough. And because of his tarrying, Joab came with his concealed sword, and taking him by the beard, and kissing him, said, "Art thou in health, my brother?" And he drove his sword through his body, and laid him dead at his feet. Why? Because Amasa tarried beyond the appointed time and gave Joab his opportunity.

That is a significant phrase, "The appointed time". When is the appointed time? "Behold, now is the appointed time; to-day is the day of salvation." There is no promise that you will escape the sword of Joab if you wait until to-morrow, if you wait at all. The enemy is abroad, and we are in danger of becoming his victims.

II.

But now let me show you HOW THE FOLLOWERS OF JOAB WERE WARNED. They came along the highway, pursuing after Sheba, the son of Bichri, and there in the road a pool of blood, and in the midst of it, the body of a man. What would you have done? You would have done exactly what they did: you would have stood still. You would not have passed by that scene of destruction. You would have stopped to inquire why he had thus been slain. That happens often. Sometimes you read an editorial in the secular press after a man has been hanged for his crime, reminding criminals that "Crime does not pay".

The drunkard goes beyond moderation, and dies at last in a fit of *delirium tremens*, a horrible death. People stand by and say, "Is not that dreadful? I wish that everyone who drinks could see this, could have witnessed this end of the road." People would have stood still. They would have said, "If that is what it means to follow Joab, I am going no farther. I am stopping

right here." Very often when sin is finished and bringeth forth death, and leaves a spectacle like this, exposed to human observation, it is more eloquent than a year's preaching. People say, "I cannot go on, and risk such an end. I must stop." Yes!

A Professor in an American institution, the head of the Philosophy Department, called in to see Mr. Slade and me last week. He came from Chicago. I asked him about a certain man who was there, whom I had known just briefly, not intimately at all, years ago. He was a graduate of McMaster University, and was said to be a very clever man. The first time I saw him he was playing lacrosse. I was on holiday in Winnipeg. It was the only game of lacrosse I ever saw—and the only game I ever want to see. It was not a game at all: it was bloody war. That is all it was. Almost every man on the field was covered with blood, cut over the head, and everywhere. I did not know the rules of the game, and I did not feel any anxiety to learn them.

Someone pointed out to me this Baptist preacher. He was playing, and it seemed to me that he was one of the most vicious of all of them. He was slamming right and left with that great stick of his. At last the umpire blew his whistle, and everything stopped. He pointed to the preacher, and put him off the field for a foul. I should have put them all off. However, he was debarred for so many minutes. After a while he went back to the war. Well, I lost track of that man for a few years. He went to Chicago University, and became a professor there. He wrote several books, and at last he produced one on humanism, and on the passing of the gods. I knew that he was tainted, that he did not believe the Book. But he followed on after Joab, until at last he came to the place where he absolutely denied the existence of God. "The Passing of the Gods"—THE GOD was only one of many to him.

What a tragedy! An Amasa wallowing in blood, in the midst of the highway.

I need not speak of the more manifest evils. Everyone can understand them—the man who steals and gets into jail, learns it does not pay. The man who cheats in his business and is prosecuted, learns that does not pay. The man who gets drunk knows that does not pay. The man who forsakes his wife, and becomes a brute to his children—everyone knows that will not pay. But oh, in the moral and spiritual field, how many lives have been corrupted, how many lives blasted by these unbelieving Joabs, who conceal the weapon of destruction, while taking men, and saying, "Art thou in health, my brother?", and under pretence of a larger and richer learning, are slaying the souls of men for whom Christ died. Everywhere it is apparent. And when these outstanding cases are marked for public observation, it is natural that people should stand still. Even the professor who is dallying with unbelief, who says, "There are some things in the Bible which I cannot accept, but I believe in general that the Bible is the word of God—I believe it contains the word of God anyhow; and while I cannot subscribe to everything as being scientifically, and historically, as well as religiously true, at the same time I deplore the lengths to which some extreme Modernists have gone. Of course I do not intend to go as far as that." No; you are just going to mobilize the host, but you tarry beyond the appointed time, and before you know it, you are slain

by the sword of unbelief, and forever alienated from God.

Do you see, dear friends, that what I am trying to make clear to you is that there is *an enemy that would seek to nullify the grace of God?* God willeth not the death of the sinner, but wills that all should come to repentance:

"My God is reconciled;
His pardoning voice I hear:
He owns me for His child;
I can no longer fear."

There is no reason why we should fear God as a Judge: we need fear Him only as one we fear to offend. Keep your eyes open as you go along the highways. I do not know how you feel, but I always feel shocked when I see the body of an animal on the road.

I was glad to read that story of a little lad somewhere on North Yonge Street. One morning he was going down to work on his bicycle, and a little dog was struck by a street car. The motorman stopped, and he went out with his rod that they use to change the switches. He took his rod, and pushed the body of the wounded dog—not yet dead—to one side, and got back into his car, and went on, as I suppose he had to do, I do not know. But this lad got off his bicycle and went to the roadside, and picked up the bleeding dog, lifted it in his arms tenderly, and carried it in its blood to the nearest veterinary hospital. He said, "I do not know whose dog it is, but you look after it. Here is my name and address. I will pay for it." He was a good Samaritan was he not? "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast." But oh, to come upon a slain man or woman, wallowing in blood, what can you do but stand still, and say, "This must not be. I will not follow where that murderer leads."

III.

OBSERVE HOW JOAB'S FOLLOWERS WERE PREVENTED FROM DESERTING HIM: One of Joab's men took the body of Amasa, and carried it over into the field beyond the hedge, and with a cloth covered it up to insure its concealment, and having cleared the highway of evidence of the enemy's work, then all the people went on after Joab.

There are many men who are Joab's men, trying to conceal the enemy's work, trying to make us believe there is no danger. Have you noticed that the finest looking trucks on the road, always painted, always clean, are the trucks of the brewers, and distillers? And do you know that every driver of such trucks is instructed not to pass a motorist in trouble? If you had a flat tire, or some trouble with your motor, and you were driving along the road, and one of these liquor trucks came along, he would stop, and with the greatest care he would come to your help, to change your tire, or whatever it is. "One of Joab's men!" Look at the advertisements: "Conserve Canada's Resources"! "Keep Your Victory Bonds"! Pictures of our Hydro resources, our Forestry resources, the fish and game resources. "Be loyal Canadians!" "Be proud of your country!" Whose advertisements! It is against the law to advertise liquor, so they put up these flaring boards, with the name of the brewers, or distillers down in the corner. It is "one of Joab's men", covering up the damnable work they are doing. They litter the highways with destruction, and then carry it over and put it in a field, and cover it with a cloth.

I was glad that Premier Drew was defeated in High Park. I wish I were younger, I would go into politics myself. I think we defeated him in High Park, but I hope the true temperance forces will follow him wherever he goes, and defeat him wherever he tries to win. Why? You cannot believe anything these politicians say. There were so many less gallons of a certain kind of liquor consumed last year than the year before. But it was more than made up in another direction, and it is only less than the highest year where the maddened people of this country poured out hundreds of millions of dollars, for that liquid fire. Take the case of Premier Drew, Blackwell, and men of that ilk whose consciences seem to have been politically chloroformed so that they care nothing for the bodies and souls of men if only they may reap the rewards of office. They are *Joab's men*, covering up the destructive work of the organizations, and institutions they support.

So is it everywhere. What shall we do about it? Well, let our eyes be opened.

IV.

THERE IS ONE VERY SPECIAL CASE OF WHICH I WANT TO SPEAK FOR ONLY A MOMENT. This man was murdered by somebody. By whom? They said, "We are standing still till we find out." And not until the highway was cleared did they go on.

There was another Who was cruelly murdered. Nowhere in all history was man's sin so clearly exhibited as in the murder of the Son of God. Murdered by the will of a godless religion! Murdered by the act of a godless state! Crucified upon the cross! When one sees that he is likely to stand still. But Joab's men have covered the cross with roses. They have made it into a thing of gold. They would make it beautiful. The cross—or was it the instrument of the curse: "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree". And He was made a curse for us. I know that the cross has a multiple revelation, but remember that He went to the cross as your Substitute and mine. The Son of Man! They killed Him! And He died there to show what sin when it is finished does. It always reaches its climax at Golgotha, the place of the skull.

But beside, of course, it has a revelation of the love of God.

And what is the Christian world, so-called busy, doing? Trying to remove the cross out of the sight of man. Trying to cover up the awful consequences of sin! In some places you can preach almost anything, as long as you don't preach the blood. Men will not have that. Joab's men, who remove the cross out of the highway. And then the people go on, following Joab.

Do you remember John Newton's hymn:

"In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear,
Till a new object struck my sight,
And stopped my wild career.
I saw One hanging on a tree,
In agonies and blood,
Who fixed His languid eyes on me,
As near His cross I stood.

"Sure, never till my latest breath
Can I forget that look;
It seemed to charge me with His death,
Though not a word He spoke.
My conscience felt and owned the guilt,
And plunged me in despair;

I saw my sins His blood had spilt,
And helped to nail Him there.

"Alas! I knew not what I did;
But now my tears are vain;
Where shall my trembling soul be hid?
For I the Lord have slain.
A second look He gave, which said,
'I freely all forgive;
This blood is for thy ransom paid,
I die that thou mayst live'.

"Thus while His death my sin displays
In all its blackest hue;
Such is the mystery of grace,
It seals my pardon too.

With pleasing grief and mournful joy
My spirit now is filled,
That I should such a life destroy,
Yet live by Him I killed."

Oh, that we may see Him, and stand still, and Behold
the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the
world.

Let us pray:

O Lord, help us that we may make choice, all of us,
between Jesus, and Joab. Teach us how to follow the
Lamb whithersoever He goeth, and to follow this spiritual
Joab not at all. Bless our meditation for Thy name's
sake, Amen.

Good People With One Defect

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Morning, June 27th, 1948

(Stenographically Reported)

"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first
love."—Rev. 2:4.

IT IS proverbial that "Prevention is better than cure." It is better to endeavour to maintain a state of good health, than to neglect the fundamentals of right living, and then be under the necessity of being recovered from a state of illness.

There are people who do not wait until they are incapacitated for labour before consulting their physician. They go regularly to him for what they call a "check up", lest some minor matter should be dragging them down, unconsciously to themselves. I think your physician will tell you that it is often more difficult to diagnose the cause of ill health, when the disease or ailment is diffused, than when it becomes acute. The physician in the latter case is able to put his hand upon it, and say, "That is what is the matter with you."

I read years ago in a medical journal, known as "The Lancet", that appendicitis can simulate tuberculosis. The story was told of a man who had been for twenty years treated by a number of physicians for tuberculosis. He was able to get about, and attend to his business; but he was living at a poor, dying, rate. He went home each evening feeling that the day's labour had been almost too much for him.

At last another physician said to him, "Man, you have not tuberculosis!" "No! I have been treated for that for twenty years." The new doctor said, "You have a case of chronic appendicitis." The sufferer was taken to the hospital, and operated on. He made a complete and rapid recovery. Soon he was a new man. Twenty years of life spoiled because the cause of his indisposition had not been recognized!

Sometimes that happens in the life of a Christian. It is not any outward sin in the man who professes and calls himself a Christian. He does not get drunk, nor commit theft, or other open wrong: but you know there is something wrong with him; he is in a chronic state of ill health. The man is not happy. He is not able to perform with ease and comfort the duties which belong to a Christian. Yet there is nothing in his outward life to which anyone can point. His reputation may be unblemished. He may be numbered among the people of

God. Yet he knows, and perhaps others may recognize, that he is not in good health.

A member of this church, a lady who lives out of town, was in town last week. I never saw, I think, such a picture of radiant, exuberant, health. I said, jokingly, to her, "Don't you think you need the care of a physician and nurses?" She said, "Do I look like it?" I said, "No; you look as though you had a fountain of health from which others might draw." It is a great thing to see Christians like that, abounding in spiritual health.

My text is taken from a letter written by the Head of the Church, to one of the best, perhaps the most advanced, of the seven churches of Asia. I think, if you read Paul's epistles to the Church at Ephesus you will recognize that he strikes a higher standard than in almost any other of his epistles. He is writing to people who know the joyful sound, and who seem to revel in the things of God. Yet it is to this very Church the Lord is here speaking; and He commends them for many things.

Let me say that what is said of the Church must be said of individual members. A Church is never better nor any healthier, spiritually, than the members of which it is composed. This letter written to the Ephesian church says that He knows their works. They are not idlers; not people who have nothing to their credit. He commends them for their labour, and for their patience, for their intolerance of outward evil: "Thou canst not bear them which are evil". He commends them for their spiritual discernment, too: "Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars". They are not easily deceived, they are not "carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." They are mature, informed, discerning, Christians. They have borne very much. They have exemplified the grace of endurance, and they have patience, and they have had a concern for the honour of God's name: for His name's sake, they have laboured. While others have fainted, and fallen by the way, they have not fainted.

What a splendid characterization! Would you not like the great Head of the Church to say that of you? He describes Himself as the One Who "walketh in the midst of seven golden candlesticks", and "holdeth the seven stars in his right hand." They have not been devoid of the presence of the Lord: they have been blessed by His abiding.

Now all that is said of them. So may it be of us. The Lord is with us; He walks among us. He does not leave us alone; and yet, listen to the text: Notwithstanding all these excellent qualities, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."

I.

Obviously IT WAS A CONDITION OF ILL HEALTH THAT DID NOT MANIFEST ITSELF IN ANY FLAGRANT WRONG-DOING, OR INCONSISTENCY. But the great Head of the Church, the physician of souls, felt the pulse of this church, recognized its inward condition, and said: "You are not right. In spite of all your good qualities, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."

What a sad state to be in, when the Lord says, "I have somewhat against thee." We need not be too much distressed because men of the world have something against us: "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." We must not allow our peace to be broken by worldly criticism; by the fault-finding of worldly men. We could not expect them to commend us; but it is a greatly different thing when the Head of the Church says, "I have somewhat against you". Surely it is a high privilege to have the Lord for us: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" He is on our side, and we need not fear what men may do to us. But when the Lord says, "There is something wrong with you; I have somewhat against you", surely it is time for us to take stock of ourselves, and, seriously, to consider the cause of our spiritual ill health.

Now you will observe that what the Lord had against the Ephesian Church was *not something that was easily discernible by unspiritual eyes*: it required a spiritual expert to see just exactly what was wrong. What was it? "Thou hast left thy first love." It was really not an outward condition of life, but what is called to-day, in the physical sense, "a heart condition". It was something that only the Divine Specialist could recognize, diagnose. He said, "I discern there is something wrong with your heart. Thou hast left thy first love."

Can that be true of any of us? If I had to speak to those whose outward lives were irregular, and whose testimony was marred by obvious inconsistencies, it would be useless for me to talk to you, because the people concerned would not be here. That would be one of the marks of their ill health. They would forsake the assembling of themselves together; but it may be that in some particulars at least the same divine encomium is pronounced on our general state of health. "Nevertheless there is one thing wrong: Your heart is not quite right. You have left your first love."

In what does the religion of the Lord Jesus consist? Does it mean the pursuit of a certain ideal, trying to conform our lives to some external pattern? Is the religion of Christ solely a religion of "doing"? It is a religion of doing, and so it ought to be: "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works,

which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them". But these Ephesian Christians are not lacking in good works. "I know thy patience", said the great Head of the Church. "I am not complaining that you fail in your day's duty, so far as its outward form may be concerned." The religion of Christ, I say, is a religion of doing. It is something that determines a man's outward character—what he does; what he says; what he seeks; the influence he exerts. All that is part of the sum total of a Christian's life. But after all, the Bible has a way of going to the heart of things.

The physician carries his stethoscope with him, and other aids, which will discern things which cannot be discerned without such aids. And so the Lord tests these people. The doctor says, "You look all right. Why did you send for me?" You may say, "Well, that may be so, but I do not feel as I look." I have had people say to me, when I have asked how they are: "I am sorry, I am not one hundred percent. But I get no sympathy". The great Physician says you are not all right. Something is wrong inside. So I ask again, "In what does the religion of Christ Jesus consist? What is Christianity? Or, let me rather put it in this way: What is salvation?" *Salvation, my dear friends, consists in a personal relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ, the living Head of the Church.* You may be all right in the church. You may be all right with the people roundabout you. But you may be all wrong with Him Who walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks; because He does not look on the outward appearance: He looks upon the heart." He looked upon the heart of these Ephesian Christians, and He said, "I discern something." "What is it?" "You are not as warm toward Me as you used to be. You do not love Me as you once did. You have forsaken your first love. Other interests are claiming a share of your heart. Outwardly no one could discern this, but I discern in your heart that you have wandered. You have forsaken your first love."

How may we be helped to recognize whether this is true of us, or not? There is no profit in my speaking of the Ephesian Christians. The Head of the Church still lives; and His word is just as directly addressed to Jarvis Street, as to the Christians at Ephesus. He still walks among us.

But listen: your heart is skipping a beat! Something is wrong. You have forsaken your first love. Is that so? Let us see. What do lovers ordinarily do?

Once, in crossing the ocean there was a certain very voluble lady on board, who had a habit of coming and talking to any passenger who would lend her an ear. She was not without intelligence; but when once she got hold of you, there was no getting away. She could talk from morning till night. There was another quite intelligent passenger. We were all very sociable. One day this other lady asked me a question, and we engaged in conversation. Then she said, suddenly, "Oh, here is that pest coming." I said, "Pest! Why?" "Why once she begins she never stops." I said, "Don't you like to talk to people?" "Yes; if I get the chance, but I don't like to be talked to for ever. She does not want anyone to talk to her." I said, "You mean that you enjoy a mutual conversation more than a one-sided lecture?" "Yes."

What is your relationship to the Lord Jesus? You say, "I do not live a prayerless life." "No." You pray morning and evening. You never partake of God's material benefits without giving Him thanks at the

table? That is true of all of us. You talk to Him, do you? "Oh, yes!" But do you let Him talk to you?

I went once to give an address in a certain city where there was a young man, who was a minister. He had been converted in this church, and he was quite successful in his ministerial life. It was at a PROTESTANT LEAGUE meeting. There was a large attendance. After the meeting this young man came, and said, "Let us go and have some tea somewhere." That is an invitation which I seldom decline. I agreed. I happened to be with another man who had heard of this young man, but he had never met him before. The three of us sat down, and ordered what we wanted. Then this young man began! He told of all that he had done, all that he was doing, all that people said about him, of how tremendously successful he was. He talked continuously. When the meal was over, and we parted, my friend said to me, "So that is the Rev. So-and-So! I have heard of him. Evidently he is quite satisfied with himself. Have you seen him recently?" I said, "No." "Well," he said, "I noticed he did not ask any questions about Jarvis Street. He was not interested in anything, or anybody, but himself." It was a one-sided affair.

Is that like your praying? Do you talk to God about yourself? Do you pray, just to ask for a little more help, and do you think you are doing your duty when you are begging gifts of His hands?

A ministerial friend of mine in the States, once had some very special duty, for which he had carefully prepared. He had been hard-pressed for time. At last he went to his study. Before going he said to his wife, "Please let no one disturb me, on any account." She said, "I shall see that you are left to yourself." He became engrossed in his work, forgetful of everyone, and everything. Suddenly the door was pushed open, and a little toddler of about three or four years of age came in. He came over, leaned on his father's knee, and looking up into his face, said, "Hello, daddy!" "Of course," he said, "I had to say, 'Hello'." Then he said, "He proceeded to climb up on my knee, and to put his arms about my neck. I said to him, 'What do you want?' 'Nussin'.' 'What did you come for?' 'Nussin'.' 'I just wanted to see you.'" "Then," said the father, "he gave me a kiss, and said, 'I just wanted to say I love you.'" He said, "Sermon or no sermon, this is my first duty, and my first pleasure, and I wrapped my arms about him."

I heard of a magistrate who had a case before him. It was a domestic affair. The magistrate said, "What is the matter with you two?" He turned to the man and said, "What is the matter?" He said, "This woman is always asking me for money." "Well, why do you give it to her?" He said, "I don't."

Is that our only interest in Jesus Christ—just asking for something? He loves to have us ask for things: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" It is His delight to give, but I think that He requires something more than that of us: He would like us to push open the door sometimes, and just come to Him, when we have no special petition, just to tell Him that we love Him.

There are some people in this church whom I love to hear pray, and I will tell you why. They do ask for things, but very much of the time is taken up with thanksgiving for what they have already received, and

special thanksgiving for what Jesus Christ Himself is. It is the Giver rather than the gift.

A wife may be proud, and justly so, of her husband's provision for her, but I should not think very much of her if she showed her visitors the house, the furniture, the pictures, and all her possessions, and never said a word about her husband. Glad as she is that he is so good to her, it is her special joy that he is what he is. Is that our attitude toward Christ? Are we still desperately in love with Him?

Do you remember that story of Hezekiah, the king of Judah, and of how the Lord said to him, "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord saying, I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore." The Lord came to him again, and said, "I have heard thy prayer, and I have added to your life yet fifteen years." He told the prophet what to do for the king's recovery; and the king recovered his wonted health. Then ambassadors came from Babylon. They had heard that the king had been nigh unto death, and was now well, and they came to inquire of "the wonder done in the land."

I once asked a great surgeon what he thought of certain advertised remedies for cancer. "Oh," he said, "whenever, and wherever a real cure for cancer is discovered, it will need no advertising, but only a regiment of soldiers to stand guard, for people will come from the ends of the earth for healing."

Yes, they came from Babylon. They had heard of the king's healing, and they went to Jerusalem to inquire of the wonder done in the land. Now the old Book says of Hezekiah, that "God left him to try him, that he might know what was in his heart." When the ambassadors came, he received them, took them all through his great house, showed them all his treasures, all his wealth, all his glory—but never a word about the thing concerning which they came to inquire. He showed them things, but said not a word about his Lord.

That was the condition of these people in Ephesus. They had left their first love. And He knew it. Their love for Him personally was declining, and He had something against them.

It is a good thing when people come together, who have an affection for each other, just to talk. Talk about something! Well, yes; and perhaps to talk about nothing; but just because they covet each other's society. You have heard the story of Tennyson and Carlyle. They were great friends. They had much in common; but they were much occupied. So they planned that they would spend an evening together. One visited the other. They sat on each side of the fireplace, and looked at the fire. The hours passed, and the clocks struck the chimes of the hours, till midnight came. Then they thought perhaps the evening was ended. But for all the evening long they had not exchanged a single word. When they parted one said to the other, "We must have another evening like this." There are people who talk all the time, from morning till night.

Do you love to be where the Lord is? I think I could almost have been a Quaker. I like to sit in silence, just thinking. Is it not fine to be conscious of the Lord's presence, just to feel that He knows you love Him? "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" "Oh," said Simon, "I have not behaved as though I did, but I

love Thee." The second time He asked it. Simon replied, "Lord thou knowest that I love thee." The third time He said, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" This time Peter replied, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." Yes! Peter had been weak, and yet in this case, the divine Physician listened and He said, "It is all right, Peter. Your heart is all right. I know that you love me."

Does He know this of you and me, dear friends? Are we sure of it? We may be sure if we love to be where He is. We may be sure if we love to hear others speak well of Him. We may be sure, if nothing hurts us so much as to observe others' neglect of the Lord Jesus.

If some wife here this morning were to meet someone, while in company with her husband, and that person were to felicitate her on her good health, and appearance, and all the rest of it, and say, "I am so glad to meet you! I am delighted to have a chance to see you again", and then turn away—without a word to her husband, do you think that husband would appreciate it?

When we had our great revolution in this church twenty-seven years ago, when we had to fight for the Book, someone came to my wife one day, and said, "You know, we are all very fond of you. Your husband, you know, is a forceful man, very pronounced, and we cannot always quite take it. But we want you to know that we are all *your* friends." My wife replied, "No one can be a friend of mine, who is *not* a friend of my husband."

No one can be a friend of mine who is not a friend of my Lord Jesus Christ. I love Him too much even to endure His neglect by others. Nothing hurts so much as to have the Chiefest of ten thousand passed by as though He were nothing. Does that hurt you, dear friends?

"Ah," said this great Head of the Church, "Remember whence thou hast fallen!" "What! All these good works to my credit; and yet to be charged with having fallen!" Yes; and it is the most serious matter of all.

What I wanted to say to you is simply this, that the Lord Jesus is not satisfied with the second place in anyone's life—He must be first.

Before the great Spurgeon was married, when he was but a young man, he had tea one afternoon at the home of his fiancée, Susan Thompson. He was to preach that night in Exeter Hall, on the Strand. They drove together to the Strand, and got as near to Exeter Hall as the crowds would permit. Even the street was packed with people, and the great hall was crowded. He was so overcome by the sight of the multitudes that he forgot everything, feeling his responsibility. He worked his way through the crowd, and somehow got to the platform at last, and preached.

When the service was over he came to himself, and said, "Why, Susan came with me. I wonder what happened to her? What became of her? I remember nothing but getting out of the cab, and trying to make my way to the hall."

He drove to her home, and was admitted. But Miss Susan did not want to see him—she was upstairs in a pout. He said, "I must see her." So she came down. He said something to this effect: "Now, I am sorry, but perhaps it is providential. Perhaps it is just as well we should have an understanding. There is one Person only Who will take precedence of you. That One is my Lord Jesus. He must always be first, even before

you. My first obligation is to Him. Are you agreed to take second place to Him?" She said, "Yes; and that will be the most honoured place of all."

Let everybody come "after" Him; have nothing to do with philosophy and vain deceit, and all these things that are "after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ"—He must be first.

I am not going to ask you this morning to tell anyone about it; but I am going to ask you to bow with me, as we together in our hearts, tell Him that if anything has come between Him and us, we are sorry, and we want Him sovereignly to come in, and take the first place in our hearts.

Let us pray:

O Lord, we thank Thee for Thy great patience. Thou hast warned us in this scripture which we read this morning that even for such a heart failure as we have been speaking of, the candlestick may be removed out of its place. How many of Thy dear children have ceased to shine as lights in the world! How many of us have ceased to be true reflectors of the light which shines in the face of Jesus Christ!

Lord, we would repent and do the first works. We would this morning yield ourselves afresh to Thee, that, like Peter, after his denial, following hard upon his true repentance, we would say to Thee, Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that we love Thee.

May it be true of every one of us, for Thy name's sake, Amen.

CHRISTIAN STANDARD STRESSED BY QUEEN

Importance in the Home Is Pointed Out by Her Majesty to Mothers' Union

London, July 14—(Reuters)—A plea for parents to uphold Christian standards in the home was made by Queen Elizabeth today when she addressed members of the Mothers' Union.

The Queen said that she was deeply conscious of the great personal joy and thanksgiving which the celebration of a silver wedding anniversary brought and she rejoiced to know that hundreds of thousands of families all over the world were blessed with happiness no less complete.

"It is well to remember that successful and happy homes do predominate everywhere, carrying on their work steadfastly and serenely, and therefore, in these times, almost unnoticed," the Queen said.

BOOKS AND BOOKLETS

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The Gospel Witness

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PURITANS AND ROYALISTS*

By Lord Macaulay

WE would speak first of the Puritans, the most remarkable body of men, perhaps, which the world has ever produced. The odious and ridiculous parts of their character lie on the surface. He that runs may read them; nor have there been wanting attentive and malicious observers to point them out. For many years after the Restoration they were the theme of unmeasured invective and derision. They were exposed to the utmost licentiousness of the press and of the stage, at the time when the press and the stage were most licentious. They were not men of letters; they were, as a body, unpopular; they could not defend themselves; and the public would not take them under its protection. They were therefore abandoned, without reserve, to the tender mercies of the satirists and dramatists. The ostentatious simplicity of their dress, their sour aspect, their nasal twang, their stiff posture, their long graces, their Hebrew names, their scriptural phrases which they introduced on every occasion; their contempt of human learning, their detestation of polite amusements, were indeed fair game for the laughers. But it is not from the laughers alone that the philosophy of history is to be learned. And he who approaches this subject should carefully guard against the influence of that potent ridicule which has already misled so many excellent writers.

Ecco il fonte del riso, ed ecco il rio
Che mortali perigli in se contiene
Hor qui tener a fren nostro desio,
Ed esser cauti molto a noi conviene.

Those who roused the people to resistance; who directed their measures through a long series of eventful years; who formed, out of the most unpromising materials, the finest army that Europe had ever seen; who trampled down king, Church, and aristocracy; who in the short intervals of domestic sedition and rebellion, made the name of England terrible to every nation on the face of the earth—were no vulgar fanatics. Most of their absurdities were mere external badges, like the signs of freemasonry or the dresses of friars. We regret that these badges were not more attractive. We regret that a body to whose courage and talents mankind has owed inestimable obligations had not the lofty elegance which distinguished some of the adherents of Charles the First, or the easy good-breeding for which the court of Charles the Second was celebrated. But, if we must make our choice, we shall, like Bassanio in the play, turn from the spacious caskets which contain only the Death's head and the Fool's head, and fix on the plain leaden chest which conceals the treasure.

The Puritans were men whose minds had derived a peculiar character from the daily contemplation of superior beings and eternal interests. Not content with acknowledging, in general terms, an overruling Providence, they habitually ascribed every event to the will of the Great Being for whose power nothing was too vast, for whose inspection nothing was too minute. To know Him, to serve Him, to enjoy Him, was with them the greatest end of existence. They rejected with contempt the ceremonious homage other sects substituted for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil, they

aspired to gaze full on His intolerable brightness, and to commune with Him face to face. Hence originated their contempt for terrestrial distinctions. The difference between the greatest and the meanest of mankind seemed to vanish when compared with the boundless interval which separated the whole race from Him on whom their own eyes were constantly fixed. They recognized no title to superiority but His favor; and, confident of that favor, they despised all the accomplishments and all the dignities of the world. If they were unacquainted with the works of philosophers and poets, they were deeply read in the oracles of God. If their names were not found in the registers of heralds, they were recorded in the Book of Life. If their steps were not accompanied by a splendid train of menials, legions of ministering angels had charge over them. Their palaces were houses not made with hands; their diadems crowns of glory which should never fade away. On the rich and the eloquent, on nobles and priests, they looked down with contempt, for they esteemed themselves rich in a more precious treasure, and eloquent in a more sublime language, nobles by the right of an early creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier hand. The very meanest of them was a being to whose fate a mysterious and terrible importance belonged; on whose slightest action the spirits of light and darkness looked with anxious interest; who had been destined, before heaven and earth were created, to enjoy a felicity which should continue when heaven and earth should have passed away. Events which short-sighted politicians ascribed to earthly causes had been ordained on his account. For his sake empires had risen, and flourished, and decayed.

Thus the Puritan was made up of two different men, the one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion, the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker; but he set his foot on the neck of his king. In his devotional retirement, he prayed with convulsions, and groans, and tears. He was half-maddened by glorious or terrible illusions. He heard the lyres of angels, or the tempting whispers of fiends. He caught a gleam of the Beatific Vision, or awoke, screaming, from dreams of everlasting fire. Like Vane, he thought himself intrusted with the scepter of the millennial year. Like Fleetwood, he cried in the bitterness of his soul that God had hidden His face from him. But when he took his seat in the council, or girt on his sword for war, these tempestuous workings of the soul had left no perceptible trace behind them. People who saw nothing of the Godly but their uncouth visages, and heard nothing from them but their groans and their whining hymns, might laugh at them. But those had little reason to laugh who encountered them in the hall of debate or in the field of battle. These fanatics brought to civil and military affairs a coolness of judgment and immutability of purpose which some writers have thought inconsistent with their religious zeal, but which were in fact the necessary effects of it. The intensity of their feelings on one subject made them tranquil on every other. One overpowering sentiment had subjected to itself pity and hatred, ambition and fear. Death had lost its terrors and pleasure its charms. They had their smiles and their tears, their raptures and their sorrows, but not for the things of this world. Enthusiasm had made them stoics, had cleared their minds from every vulgar passion and prejudice, and raised them above the influence of danger and corruption. It sometimes might lead them to pursue unwise ends, but never to choose unwise means. They went

through the world, like Sir Artegal's iron man Talus with his flail, crushing and trampling down oppressors, mingling with human beings; but having neither part nor lot in human infirmities, insensible to fatigue, to pleasure, and to pain, not to be pierced by any weapon, nor to be withstood by any barrier.

'Such we believe to have been the character of the Puritans. We perceive the absurdity of their manners. We dislike the sullen gloom of their domestic habits. We acknowledge that the tone of their minds was often injured by straining after things too high for mortal

reach; and we know that, in spite of their hatred of popery, they too often fell into the worst vices of that bad system, intolerance and extravagant austerity, that they had their anchorites and their crusades, their Dunstons and their De Montforts, their Dominics and their Escobars. Yet, when all circumstances are taken into consideration, we do not hesitate to pronounce them a brave, a wise, an honest, and a useful body.

*From the essay on Milton, contributed to the *Edinburgh Review* of August, 1825, when the author was only twenty-five years old.

Gems From George Matheson

THE CONSECRATION OF OUR HOME LIFE

By faith Noah prepared an ark to the saving of his house.—Heb. 11:7.

WHAT a humble, what a modest sphere for the exercise of faith! One would have said that purpose was quite disproportionate to the work. The ark was a great undertaking, but what was it undertaken for? To save his own family. Is so narrow a sphere worthy to be the object of faith? Is so commonplace a scene as the life of the family circle fit to be a temple for the service of God? I always thought that the family was a secular thing. I always held that the duties of a man's household had nothing to do with his religious duties: that they were far too small things to have a place beside the reading of chapters and the singing of psalms. Going to church was the service of God; but to perform the duties of the household was only the service of man. Here is a voice that tells me all this was a delusion and a dream. Noah is bidden to prepare an ark for the saving of his house. His whole life on earth is a work for his family, and that is counted to him for a religion; it is called faith; he is only allowed to have one motive for action—a domestic motive, a commonplace motive, an intensely practical motive—the protection of his family, the sustenance of his sons and daughters; but because he fills that sphere to the measure of his power, he is reckoned among the company of those who through faith and patience inherited the promise.

My soul, when thou hast finished thy prayers and ended thy meditations, do not say that thou hast left the house of God. If thou art true to thyself thou shalt seek, like the psalmist, never to leave God's house, but to remain in it all the days of thy life. God's house shall to thee be everywhere, and thine own house shall be a part of it. When thou enterest into thy home thou shalt feel that thou art going into a temple, a place of divine worship, an atmosphere of holy service. Thou shalt feel that all the duties of this place are consecrated; that it is none other than the house of God, and one of the gates to heaven. Thou shalt feel that every one of its duties is an act of high communion. If thou art breaking thy bread to the family circle thou art fulfilling one form of the command: "this do in remembrance of me." If thou art shedding the warmth of thy love around the domestic hearth, thou art giving to the members of thy household, it may be, their first sense of God. How shall they love the divine Father

except through the image of a human fatherhood? How shall they prize the divine Brother except through the form of a human brotherhood? How shall they appreciate the revelation of the house with many mansions if their experience of an earthly home has not been suggestive of peace? Therefore be it thine to make thy house His house. Be it thine to consecrate each word, and look, and deed, in the social life of home. Be it thine to build thine ark of refuge for the wants of common day; verily, thy labour of love shall be called an act of faith.

THE POWER TO SEE GOD IN SORROW

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him.—Rev. 1:7.

A STRANGE thought, surely; why should every eye see Him when He cometh with clouds? Do not the clouds obscure the sight? Would we not have expected the words to be: "Behold He cometh without clouds, and every eye shall see Him?" Yet, bethink ye. It is not said that He cometh *in* clouds, but He cometh *with* clouds. The clouds are not to envelope Him, they are to accompany Him. All the mysteries of life are to follow in His train to prove that they have been all along the servants and ministers of His love. Why is it that to me the God of the universe often seems to hide His face? It is because the clouds of the universe are seen apart from Him. They are looked at as blots in His hand-writing. They are seen as accidents that have marred the plan of His providence. They are felt as influences that have disputed the reign of His empire. But if I could be told that the clouds are with Him, if I could be made to feel that they are parts of Himself, modes of His being, features of His plan, workings of His love,—if I could be brought to know that, so far from delaying His coming, they are the very chariots in which He comes—then, indeed, I should understand what the seer of Patmos meant. Every eye sees the clouds of life, therefore every eye shall see Him when He is known to be coming with the clouds. All hearts have the revelation of sorrow, therefore all hearts shall have a revelation of Him when sorrow is known to be a voice from Him. O Thou that hast made the cloud as well as the sunshine follows in Thy train! Help me to know that the affliction of time is actually working out the weight of glory in eternity! Let my vision of Thy faithfulness reach even unto the clouds of my earthly day! Show me Thy love in the things I called loveless; show me Thy face as it shines behind the veil!

A GOLDEN EVENING

They shall bring forth fruit in old age.—Ps. 92:14.

THE fruits of the spiritual life last all the year. Each season has its own appropriate produce. Childhood has its trust, and youth has its hope, and manhood has its work, and old age has its mellow love. They tell me that in old age the night cometh when no man can work; it is true, but there is no cause for sorrow in it. Every season should have its own fruit, and work is not the fruit of old age. Would you call the summer a time of gloom because it cannot give you the primrose? Nay; for its fruit is not the primrose, but the rose full-blown. Shall you call old age a time of gloom because it cannot give you work? Nay; for its fruit is not work, but mellowness. The fruits of age belong to itself alone; no other season can bear them. I hear men speak of the decline of life as a time when the powers decay; but there are powers that are then only born. There are voices in the soul which wake into

music only when the world's voices are silent; there are songs which can be sung only in the night. I have no pure retrospect of love until I have breathed the autumn air, have seen the ingathering of what life has done for me. Prophecies and tongues may fail before the portals of old age, but love will there only reach its perfect glow. Is it not written of the aged Jacob that he "worshipped leaning on the top of his staff"? The sacred fire was strong just where the outer candle was burning low.

Even so, my soul, shall it be with thee. Thy flesh may faint and fail, but thy God is the strength of thine heart. There shall be light at thy evening-time—light which even the morning could not give. Thy youth may faint and grow weary, and thy human strength may utterly fail, but thy faith shall mount up with wings as eagles, and thine inward man shall be renewed day by day. Thy tree of life shall be green when the world's leaves are falling; thou shalt bring forth fruit in old age.

THE HOMEGOING OF DR. W. PERCY HICKS

THE GOSPEL WITNESS has recently lost a sincere friend in the homegoing of Dr. W. Percy Hicks, for many years Editor of *The Christian Herald*.

Many years ago *The Christian Herald* Directors asked permission to reproduce sermons from THE GOSPEL WITNESS The Jarvis Street sermons, as appearing in THE GOSPEL WITNESS were always too long for *The Christian Herald*, and Dr. Hicks used to find delight in condensing them to one page. Of course, he had to leave out a great deal. When once we proposed to do it for him, he demurred, saying that he greatly enjoyed doing it himself.

Dr. Hicks was a veritable Valiant for Truth, and never, under any circumstances, lowered his flag. When we last saw him, about fourteen years ago, he was even then in indifferent health. But he must have suffered much since that time. THE GOSPEL WITNESS deeply sympathizes with Mrs. Hicks, and members of the family.

A letter from Mrs. Hicks informs us of sickness in the family still, and we ask our thousands of friends, who have been profited by quotations from *The Christian Herald* from time to time, when they pray, to remember the family of the late Editor of *The Christian Herald*.

During Dr. Hicks' editorship the circulation of *The Christian Herald* grew to 260,000 weekly; so far as we are aware, the largest circulation of any religious paper in the world. Following is the account of Dr. Hicks' passing, as taken from *The Christian Herald*:

PASSING OF REV. W. PERCY HICKS D.Litt., B.D., F.J.I.

In his eightieth year Dr. W. Percy Hicks recently passed away after having been for many years a semi-invalid. It was five years ago—in 1943—that he celebrated his jubilee year of association with the *Christian Herald*, and in our issue of February 18 in that year it was recorded that in 1894 he had begun as assistant to the Rev. M. P. Baxter, founder of the *Christian Herald*. Later, Dr. Hicks became editor, but, after a series of major operations in hospital, it became impossible for him to continue as the active editor. He was, however, able to do some of the work at home and

the sermons which have appeared in the *Christian Herald* week by week were selected by him.

Dr. Hicks was born at Hailey, near the blanket town of Witney, in Oxfordshire, and he began his public life nearly sixty-five years ago as a Methodist preacher while he was getting his first journalistic experience. Subsequently he joined the staff of a suburban newspaper in London until he came to the *Christian Herald*.

After several years' ministry in Union churches he became a fully-credited Baptist minister, and for years was well known as Pastor of Stratford Tabernacle. During those years he led many to the service of Christ. As a student of the Scriptures he preached the Gospel of Salvation and from his youth he taught the Second Coming of Christ.

Dr. Hicks has written hundreds of articles, some of which have been reprinted in other countries. He was also the author of several books, and two at least of his prophetic booklets have had widespread circulation.

In 1942 the Council of the Advent Testimony Movement elected him as their President in succession to Dr. F. B. Meyer, Dr. Burton and the Rev. E. L. Langston, M.A. For thirty-two years Dr. Hicks was a member of the Institute of Journalists, founded by Royal Charter, and in 1935 he was honoured by election to the Fellowship of the Institution.

In 1937 the Directors of the *Christian Herald* Company presented to him an inscribed gold watch "to commemorate the completion of 44 years of faithful service."

Because of his long period of illness, Dr. Hicks' death was not unexpected, but this did not lessen the sad grief at his parting, and we feel sure that all our readers will share with us the sincere sympathy for Mrs. Hicks and her son and daughter in their bereavement. Our prayers will be unanimous in the request that they shall find the nearness of the Lord to them in their sorrow and be comforted and upheld by the "peace which passeth all understanding".

A service was held at Worthing at his home, conducted by Rev. H. W. Janisch, M.A. The Rev. W. Grist, M.A., Vicar of Holy Trinity, Worthing, was at the service at the graveside, representing the Council of the Advent Testimony Movement. Many beautiful floral tributes were received.

WHO WILL BECOME LEADER OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY?

IN THE day's news we are informed of the resignation of the Honourable John Bracken, as leader of the Conservative Party.

Mr. Bracken successfully led an aggregation of all sorts in the Manitoba Legislature for about twenty years. He is a good man, honest and straightforward; but he had not the strength to lead the Conservative Party. We are glad to know that he is not seriously indisposed, but resigns because he feels he has not the energy to lead the Party to victory.

An Appraisal of the Hon. Geo. Drew

Now every political rendezvous will be buzzing with gossip, and with prophecies as to who is likely to succeed him. Every informed person in Canada knows that there is one man who has been planning for a long time to succeed him—a courtesy short-course lawyer of the First War; a disciple of the late Howard Ferguson, he is a good imitation of his former mentor. What he lacks in ability he makes up in political trickery. He is devoid of any political conscience. We have always thought of him as an alloy, composed of seven-eighths ambition, one-sixteenth brass, and one-sixteenth ability. It is easy to win at any game if one violates all the rules. So far as he has won at all, Mr. Drew has won in that way. But the Scripture says, "And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned unless he strive lawfully."

THE GOSPEL WITNESS was happy to have a share in defeating George Drew in the last Provincial election in the High Park riding.

We think it probable that, behind the scenes, pressure may have been brought to bear upon Mr. Bracken to resign now, so that a Conservative Convention could be called before Mr. Drew goes to all the trouble and expense of trying to get back into the Legislature through some other constituency.

We think the election of Mr. Drew as Federal Leader of the Conservative Party would be a disaster of the first magnitude. It would relegate the whole Conservative Party to the realm of unmoral politics.

Mr. John G. Diefenbaker, M.P.

Who else is available other than George Drew? By far the ablest man on the Conservative side is Mr. John G. Diefenbaker. He has shown his mettle in many a well-fought battle in the House of Commons. We have wished that he could be a little more outspoken, and a little more courageous in some directions; but on the whole, so far as we can judge, there is no Conservative in the House of Commons in the same class with Mr. Diefenbaker. We are judging, of course, by his speeches, and by the part he has taken in Parliamentary debate.

We hope the Conservative Party will look for an unambiguous and aggressive leader who will be all that, because of his ability.

This paper will heave a sigh of relief when Mr. Mackenzie King ceases to be Premier. But if we had to exchange Mr. King for Mr. Drew, it would be a case of getting out of the frying-pan into the fire.

Of one thing we are sure, when a Party has to look for a leader, they find only a time-serving politician. When Britain was threatened by invasion, Party considerations were entirely lost sight of. No one looked

for a leader. Instinctively the whole country turned to one man. Of course, we have no one of such calibre in this country; but we are inclined to think that the man who has shown himself most qualified to lead is Mr. Diefenbaker.

At all events, we hope the Conservative Party will find one of whom it can be said, as it used to be said of Sir James Whitney, that "he is honest enough to be bold, and bold enough to be honest".

FRENCH-CANADIANS BAPTIZED

EVERY observant and informed Canadian is becoming increasingly conscious of the fact that if English-speaking and evangelical Canadians are to preserve their liberties we must evangelize French-Canadians. The Roman Catholic control of this vast and ever-increasing people is such that the Pope expects in the near future to use them to stamp out all evangelical Christian testimony in Canada, and turn this fair Dominion into a thoroughly Catholic State. With this vicious plan and the rapid movement of events which will affect its completion ever before us, we are forced to this solemn conclusion that we must convert French Catholics now or prepare to fight them in the near future if any Christian light or liberty is to be preserved in Canada. As we travel among these people and look into the faces of the hundreds of children and young people which fill each French community it saddens our hearts to realize that in a few short years either they or all our Christian Churches and missionaries must fall in merciless slaughter, unless we successfully reach them with the Gospel now.

In the face of this terrible danger many have weakened and dispaired of doing anything. Others foolishly hope the situation can be saved by political strategy. Some even piously emulate the shocking example of the Thessalonian Christians and do nothing, because they are sure the Lord will come and dash these poor unfortunate slaves to perdition before they are strong enough to punish us for our past and present indifference. Yes, at the close of a service recently, after we had presented these grim facts to an enthusiastic audience, a lady smugly shrugged her shoulders and in effect said, "We need not worry or work, the Lord is coming at any moment and we shall be safe." We fear we rather rudely replied by sharply reminding her that there was nothing in Scripture or reason to suggest that the God of changeless love will ignore the cries of these hungry millions just to keep the unscriptural schedule by which she hoped to escape the work or wars which confront us.

Since we first saw the Lord's hand at work in the saving of French-Canadians we have been convinced that if somehow we can reach and really convert one French Catholic in each French community we can save Canada. One genuinely saved and carefully taught believer can break the power of the priest in a community. One true Christian standing against the curses and tyranny of the priest proves to all around that Rome is not almighty and that the priest is but a bluffer. Once this is demonstrated many Roman Catholics gladly become rebellious towards the Italian-controlled tyrants. They do not all turn to Christ, but they defy the priest's control in politics, in business

and in family affairs, because they see how a lone Christian can live and prosper in spite of all his fiercest abuse.

The Transformation Wrought by the Gospel

Good evidence of this was shown recently in the village of Lavigne, Ont. This district is entirely French and the country for many miles around was until recently solidly Roman Catholic. When we first started to travel over the fifty odd miles which we must cover to reach it from Sudbury we went with fear and trembling. It was a lion's lair. Children, young people and even old men and women obeying the priest's commands threw missiles or hurled curses as we passed. The priest gave his approval to a man who vowed that he would stop our work though he must do so by shooting the preacher. (This the man might have done, if we had not put him in jail for an attempt to shoot us in which he failed.) In spite of all this violence some were saved, and the work has grown until now a French Baptist Church is established and their building is in process of erection. However, we did not know until recently how completely the situation had changed. A former close friend of the priest was converted to Christ, and asked us to baptize him in Lavigne Bay directly beside the priest's house. We did not think a place could be found to hold the service; but when this obstacle was overcome we planned for the test of strength. Notices of the service were sent throughout the whole community and announcement was made by radio so that all might know. Of course the whole district buzzed with rumours about how the priest would teach us a lesson if we dared to gather for a baptismal service so close to his house. He would drown our voices with his public address system which broadcasts Catholic propaganda all over the bay. He would have us arrested or chased away by his enthusiastic young knights. Indeed the methods he would employ were so many and so effective that one was persuaded that he must be little short of God Almighty if all these devices were ready to do his bidding. Still we believed that "Greater is He that is with us than he that is against us". We gathered at the appointed time Sunday afternoon. Then came the crowds, some out of curiosity, some to see the trouble and some sincerely desirous of learning. They came from near and far, from towns and villages, from farms, camps and tourist resorts. They respectfully listened with wonder, and watched in amazement, as the Word of God was given in both French and English, and as the candidates gave their testimonies and were baptized as the Lord commanded. It was the largest and best French meeting we have ever seen, and while it filled our hearts with praise to God, it made French Catholics for many miles around realize that they need no longer languish as slaves, for One stronger than their armed master is working with almighty, delivering power in their midst.

Thus we can frustrate the plans of Antichrist by taking God's all-powerful Word to every such community. By this means this hour of threatening doom can be turned into the birthday of Canada's hope. Give us your support in prayer. Send us consecrated young people to train. Help us cover the cost of supplying the Word to millions yet in darkness, and God will finish the job.

—J. R. BOYD.

PREMIER DUPLESSIS SPEAKS PLAINLY

IN THE course of an election speech, July 11th, at St. Croix de Lotbiniere, Que., Premier Duplessis said:

"We have a hospital system based on the work of religious orders. It doesn't suit the other provinces but it suits Quebec. We need our revenues to give to our hospitals the subsidies they need."

Being interpreted, this paragraph means that Quebec needs to control its own revenues in order to be free to give them to the Roman Catholic Church. We have known that, of course, for a long time, and are obliged to Premier Duplessis for his acknowledgment.

THE INCONSISTENCY OF "INFALLIBILITY"

IT IS axiomatic that truth never contradicts itself; but how utterly inconsistent is the "infallible" voice of the Papacy! In the recent Italian election the Pope threw off all reserve, and plunged headlong into a political campaign. Thirty-seven thousand priests acted as electioneering agents, and through the pressure of the Papacy, a Roman Catholic Government, wholly subject to the Vatican, was elected. We think the Liberals of Quebec were perfectly justified in emulating the example of the Pope, indeed by quoting his actual words in the current election in that province.

But it must be remembered that the great difference lies here: in the one case the Pope was speaking in Italy, where the majority of the people, who were not Romanists, were Communists. But when the Liberals of Quebec quoted the Pope in support of their electioneering arguments, they were speaking within hearing of the whole Dominion, which has a population of fifty-six or fifty-seven percent Protestants. And so the Italian representative of the Pope, who ought to have been sent back to Italy years ago, impudently reproves the Liberal Party for quoting the Pope's words in an election campaign.

All right in Italy! All wrong, because rather dangerous, in Quebec! And, of course, the Liberal Party abjectly apologizes to their Italian master, the Pope's representative in Ottawa. Thus we see that whether it be the Union Nationale, or the Conservative Party, or the Liberal Party, they are all one in this that, like terrified slaves, they kneel at the crack of the papal whip.

Here is the news item in relation to this matter:

REGRET MISUSE OF POPE'S WORDS

MONTREAL—(CP)—Quebec Liberal party officials said Friday they regretted that a party advertisement, quoting Pope Pius XI, was interpreted by the apostolic delegation in Ottawa as a misuse of his holiness' words.

They expressed their regret in a telegram sent to the delegation after it had rebuked the party for its use of the pope's statements in newspaper advertisements which appeared in French-language newspapers Friday.

The delegation telegraphed its protest to Liberal headquarters here and released the text of the telegram to newspapers in Ottawa.

The telegram said in part:

"It is very regrettable that the words of his holiness

the Pope should be exploited in the pages of the newspapers for the ends of election propaganda in favour of one particular political party when it is well-known how the social doctrine of the sovereign pontiff is far above any party differences."

The telegram from Ottawa was signed simply "apostolic delegation". The Liberal officials, in charge of organization for the party in the July 28 Quebec general election campaign, sent a reply signed "the Liberal organization".

The reply said that "we have taken note of the message of July 9 from the apostolic delegation and we regret that the text of an advertisement distributed by the Liberal organization has appeared to be an exploitation of the words of his holiness for the ends of election propaganda in favour of one political party".

The Pope's words quoted in the advertisement, said the reply, previously had been given wide-spread publicity. The Liberal party felt that, without "irreverence" it could recall them to the public and remind the people of the Pope's invitation to men of good will to face up to the present dangers of humanity.

PROTEST "ARGUS" ARTICLE

July 19, 1948.

Rev. W. Almon Hare,
833 Kildare Road,
Windsor, Ont.

Reverend and Dear Sir:

Your letter which appeared in THE GOSPEL WITNESS of July 15th concerning the radical article reprinted in an earlier issue of *The Ontario Public School Argus*, seems to me to require some explanation on my part.

In the February issue of that magazine there appeared an article by Rev. Stephen J. Mathers, a minister of a United Church, concerning the person and work of Jesus. This was reprinted, I believe, from a book published by Mr. Mathers setting forth the extreme Liberal point of view. This article was called to my attention by a friend to whom it was sent from a school teacher in Hamilton, and my friend suggested that I should write an answer. Instead of doing that, most of the article I had duplicated and used it for a final examination in my class in Toronto Baptist Seminary in Modernism. Students were asked to write their answer to this article as if for publication in *The Argus*. Under date of May 28th I wrote to Mr. J. D. Mills, Editor of *The Argus*, saying that the article in question represented an extremely radical point of view. In fact I could say that it is completely unacceptable to the majority of Christians. I forwarded with my letter the best class answer, suggesting that in my opinion it was worthy of publication "as representing the point of view of most Christians, and as showing the keen thinking along Biblical lines of one of the cleverest young people whom it has been my pleasure to have as a student." Mr. Mills replied saying that the matter was closed. He had himself read Mr. Mather's article and thought it good and so printed it. Thereafter he had received from Dr. E. A. Hardy, who has long been on the School Board and formerly taught at Jarvis Collegiate, Toronto, a strong protest. This protest had been published and so the matter was closed for the magazine. Dr. Hardy's protest was a strong one. He pointed out that if the views of Mr. Mather were to prevail, real Christianity of the Bible type would be at an end. It was not, however, a detailed answer, occupying in the magazine something like three inches.

Finding *The Argus* editor unwilling to print Miss Cridland's article, I handed it to the Editor-in-chief of THE GOSPEL WITNESS, prefixing enough of Mr. Mather's article to make Miss Cridland's answer intelligible. It is unfortunate that Mr. Mills should see fit to give pages to the expression of the most radical statement against the truth of the Gospels, and then refuse a careful answer from the Biblical point of view. *The Argus* is published for Teachers and Trustees of Public Schools and is no doubt a good magazine. Recently THE GOSPEL WITNESS reprinted from it an article by Professor Cornish concerning the Roman attempt to do away with the three-mile limit within which students could be attracted to a Separate School.

With fraternal greetings, believe me, sir,

Yours sincerely,

WGB:M

(Signed) W. GORDON BROWN

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 12 Third Quarter Lesson 5 August 1, 1948

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

THE SOUL WINNER

Lesson Text: John 4:5-26.

Golden Text: "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"—John 4:29.

Supplementary Reading: John 4:1-4, 27-54.

I. The Occasion: verses 1-8.

Our Lord did not desire that there should be rivalry and controversy over Him among the disciples of John, hence He departed from Judaea for the northern province of Galilee, which was distant about three days' journey. The usual route from Jerusalem lay through the district of Samaria, although travellers sometimes journeyed along the eastern shore of the Jordan through Peraea. Older scholars will be interested in following these routes on the map. The geographical reasons for passing through Samaria were not the chief considerations. Christ followed the Father's plan for His life, and that plan included the salvation of the woman of Samaria and many of her compatriots. May we, too, walk in the paths marked out for us by the Master (Psa. 119:133)!

Reaching Jacob's Well outside the town of Sychar (Gen. 33:19; 48:22), Christ sat down beside it. Weariness is no excuse for slackness in service. Touched with the feeling of our human infirmities (Heb. 4:15), Christ experienced weariness, and yet, He took advantage of the brief respite from His journeying to bring help to a needy soul. He was ever "instant in season, out of season" (2 Tim. 4:2).

The disciples had gone into the city, or they probably would have supplied Christ with utensils for drawing water, but as He had none, He used this circumstance as the ground for His request for a drink. He gave the Samaritan the opportunity of showing a courtesy, which might arouse her interest and kindly feeling (Gen. 24:14; Matt. 10:42).

II. The Conversation: verses 9-18.

That a Jew should ask her for a favour was surprising to the Samaritan woman, for ordinarily there would be no social intercourse between members of the two races. Moreover, she was probably a social outcast and poor, since women of high standing and good reputation went to public fountains only in the evening, whereas this incident took place at noon, if we are to understand that John described the time in terms of Roman reckoning, as is most likely. There is no respect of persons with our God (Rom. 2:11); the barriers of sex, class, creed and nationality would not hinder the Son of God.

The Samaritan woman hesitated to confer the favour, but had she known about God's gift to the world (John 3:16), and had she recognized God's Messiah (Luke 19:42), their positions would have been reversed, and in humility she would have been praying to Him to bestow upon her the boon of eternal life. Dimly she sensed that this One talking with her must be greater than He seemed, greater even than the patriarch Jacob.

The water of the well of Sychar was an appropriate starting-point for the message on eternal life. Our Lord tactfully used the natural circumstances to bring the conversation to the vital topic (Compare Acts 8:30-35). Water is refreshing, purifying and necessary to human life, but it cannot permanently slake thirst. Eternal life through Christ is refreshing, purifying and quickening, and it satisfies the longing of the soul for God (John 6:35, 51). The powerful, life-giving flow never ceases, but it becomes a perennial spring (Rev. 7:16). The very life of God is planted in the hearts of those who love Him; His Spirit takes up abode with our spirits (1 Cor. 6:19), and as we yield to Him, indwells and infills us (John 7:37-39). Water is frequently mentioned in Scripture as a symbol of life (Ezek. 47:1, 9; Zech. 14:8; Rev. 22:1, 2).

The woman of Samaria expressed a desire for eternal life, and her prayer was the first step in her salvation. She realized her deep need. God will satisfy those who long for Him (Isa. 55:1; Matt. 5:6; Rev. 21:6; 22:17).

There must be personal conviction, as well as personal petition; sin must be forsaken. Christ exposed the sin which this woman was trying to hide (Prov. 28:13). All things are open before Him (Heb. 4:13).

III. The Revelation: verses 19-26.

The Samaritan perceived that this stranger must at least be

a prophet, but the conversation was becoming too painful, and it would seem that she endeavoured to take the Lord's attention from herself by commencing a discussion of the question of the rival claims of Mt. Gerizim (Deut. 27:12), which was situated near them, and Jerusalem. She thought that the prophet would settle this matter for her. In Christian work we shall encounter the same situation; the unsaved are apt to introduce theological discussions to distract attention from the main issue—their personal relationship to Christ. If we are wise, we shall follow our Master's example and keep to spiritual matters, remembering that most difficulties are not of the mind, but of the heart and will.

Christ explained that the method of worship was more important than the place of worship. God had revealed Himself in a special manner to the Jews through His servants and prophets. True worship is that of the Spirit, irrespective of whether the worshipper is on Mt. Gerizim or Mt. Zion or any other place. Notice that the sublime teaching about acceptable worship was given in the first instance to one individual. Time and effort are not wasted when concentrated on one person; in teaching the one's and the two's we may be accomplishing more than when addressing multitudes.

At the proper time Christ revealed to her his identity. The word "he" in verse 26, being in italics, is not in the original Greek, which would be translated: "I that speak unto thee am" or "I am speaketh unto thee." Christ is the great "I am" (Exod. 3:14); He is Jehovah, the eternal, self-existent God. Similar references to Christ as God occur elsewhere in this book (John 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5).

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

July 26—The Samaritan a Soul-Winner	John 4:27-42.
July 27—Philip the Soul-Winner	Acts 8:26-39.
July 28—Ananias the Soul-Winner	Acts 9:10-17.
July 29—Peter the Soul-Winner	Acts 11:5-15.
July 30—Paul the Soul-Winner	1 Cor. 9:19-27.
July 31—The Soul-Winner's Task	Jas. 5:13-20.
Aug. 1—The Soul-Winner's Joy	1 Thess. 2:13-19.

SUGGESTED HYMNS

Jesus the water of life has given. Jesus is tenderly calling.
 Jesus, Thou Joy of loving hearts. Hark! 'tis the Shepherd's voice.
 I heard the voice of Jesus say. Rescue the perishing.

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RUMANIA WILL RUN ALL R.C. SCHOOLS
State Move Made as Concordat With Vatican
In 1929 Denounced

Bucharest, July 19 — (Reuters) — Roman Catholic schools in Rumania will soon be taken over by the state, following denunciation Saturday by the government of the Concordat with the Vatican concluded in 1929.

The decision to denounce the Concordat, an agreement between the church and the state, defining the powers of the church and civil authorities in matters where both are concerned, was taken "to fulfil the constitutional provisions of complete freedom of religions".

The new Rumanian constitution, adopted after the abdication of King Michael, provides that all church schools shall be taken over by the civil authorities.

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