

# The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

### The Way to the Bubbling Spring

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto

"Jesus answered and said unto her, whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither."—John 4:13-16.

IT IS not unusual for youth to affect contempt for common things. Whatever instinctive desire for truth may seem to be in us, there is about us all a native affinity for the garish and unreal. A young man is by circumstances suddenly thrust out from home into the whirl of life in the outer world; and he is like a new-thrown peg-top before the gyroscopic laws have brought it to a true balance; he affects an unsteady attitude and a swaggering superiority to ordinary things, which, were it protracted, would speedily lead to collapse, and a roll in the gutter. Young ladies evince the same disposition by a contempt for the every-day things of domestic life. They become suddenly ignorant of such common things as dinners and dishes, but are versed in all the pretty deceits of what they think is polite society. But as life's day wears on, men and women come to themselves; not all, alas! to a realization of eternal values, but many who were early deceived do come to form truer estimates of the better things of this life. We observe in people of average normal judgment a growing distaste for everything that savours of ostentation, or affectation, or the optimism of mere bravado; and a correspondingly heightening enamourment of things that are simple, and true, and real. Hence their standards of value are altered, and their whole perspective is changed. In the days when they worshipped the remote and the unusual, they pictured great men as dwelling on some fanciful Mount Olympus, who, like the fabled Olym-

pian deities, quenched their thirst with nectar such as common mortals could not taste. But by the later wisdom, born of time and experience, they come to see that true human greatness does not tabernacle on some transfigured Tabor, but chooses rather to dwell on the common levels of life where human need cries out for human ministry. And by the light of that truer wisdom, in the case of so great a man as Luther, it is seen rather to be to his advantage than otherwise, that notwithstanding his great responsibilities, he considers it no derogation from his dignity to frolic with the children about the nursery floor.

And it is this simple, natural portrayal of life which gives the Bible its charm. The painted and artificial is attractive only in its own light—light that is artificial. The Bible comes into our lives to open the shutters and throw up the blinds, to let the pure sunlight stream in. And then it puts aside the gossamer, the tinsel, and all the tawdry things of life, to offer us instead the real and abiding.

Let us look at this picture. Like the Jews you or I naturally would have chosen a Messiah attended by all the pomp and pageantry of an Indian Durbar, so dear to the Oriental mind. You would glory in Jerusalem or Gerizim as "the place where men ought to worship", not knowing the judgment of the Eternal Father, that more important than place or form are the spirit and the truth.

I am not very old, and have not fared so very far

on the way, but I have learned to love a Saviour Who was wearied with His journey, and sat, thus on the well. You may sing to me of the morning sunshine, of the birds, and the flowers, and of the promise of the full long summer day, and tell me the world would rather laugh than cry: but I answer that I do not deny the brightness of life's morning-time, nor the beauty, nor the music of its happy life, nor the glory of the promise of the day, when I say that I am in love with a Saviour Who, though His soul was responsive to every good and beautiful thing, was weary about the sixth hour, and was glad to rest at the well-side at noon-day.

That was a very tender word of His which recognized the woman's weariness occasioned by her frequent comings to the well; and which pointed the way by which she might find the springs of life where rest abounds. Is there one of us who does not need just such a word this evening? May I hope to hold your interest as I try to lead you to the viewpoint of the text to learn something of the wearisome walks to the wells of life, the well where the weary find rest; and the way to the bubbling spring.

## I.

We have here a very striking picture. This picture of a woman carrying her pitcher to a well outside the city to draw water is hardly likely to be mistaken for a photograph of life in this modern city. And yet though the picture is bright with Oriental colouring, though Jew and Samaritan had no dealings with each other, beneath the distinctive Eastern characteristics of the picture there is one feature, which is not ancient, a human nature common to us all. We may not take a long walk each day to bring water in a pitcher from the well, yet there is a sense in which we are all familiar with THE WEARISOME WALK TO THE WELL. A man said to me recently, "Life is just one continual grind": and I doubt not there are some here who would subscribe to that sentiment.

I would have you observe that *Jesus did not make light of the water of the well, or of the labour of reaching it.* His very humanity forbade that. He did not tell the woman that she was wasting time in coming to the well. This is the same Jesus Who said of meat, and drink, and clothing, "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things". He knew she needed the water. He approved of her coming to the well by saying to her, "Give me to drink". Let none of us think that the Christian religion is an impracticable transcendentalism—that it has to do with the stars and the clouds, but knows nothing about the earth. The religion of Jesus has to do with going to the well for water; it has something to say about how we should go to our work every day.

It is to be noted, too, that our Lord *does not condemn the well as a poisoned spring.* He is not speaking of occupations that are sinful, of sources, of fountains, whence only evil can come. There are such paths, such wells in life. This is a much stronger word than if He had said, "Look not upon the wine when it is red". It is terribly true that whosoever drinketh of the water of sinful pleasure from whatever well or tap he may draw it, or from whatever cup he may drink it, "shall thirst again". So that I do not appeal from

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

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the folly of flagrantly sinful pursuits. Reason itself should teach us that a man might as well hope to quench his thirst by drinking of the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, as hope to satisfy the longings of his complex nature by drinking of immoral springs. This evening I take much higher ground for my appeal than that of the unsatisfactoriness of sin.

Christ is here speaking of the *unsatisfactoriness of a legitimate and necessary employment.* But as He does not ignore the necessity for it, He does not underestimate the value of it. There is a value in material, temporal things. "What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" are questions which we all must ask. And when they are answered we shall find some pleasure in the answer. Jesus surely taught us that the water of the well of Sychar was good to drink on a hot day in the midst of a weary journey. And it is likely we shall be temporarily satisfied with what we do, to-morrow: the water will quench our thirst for an hour or two. The teaching is, that these things will not satisfy us always. At whatever earthly springs we drink, we "shall thirst again". No one is excluded from this sweeping statement, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again". Who of us has not found it true? What if the path to all wells of earth were open to you? Have there not been times when you have been fully aware that there is a deeper thirst which no well accessible to you would quench?

I will not speak of the wells of questionable reputation, of the waters of certain pleasures and amusements which, to say the least, are not free from the suspicion of moral taint. But what of the wells that have been dug in some of the walled gardens of life? There is the well of honourable and remunerative toil. There is some reward in work well done. And there is some satisfaction to a man to feel that the labour

of his hands is rewarded, that he is getting on in the world, that there is reasonable ground for believing that he will always have something to eat and something to drink and something to wear. But go home to-night, thou thrifty man, and survey the situation. Take your bank book, your insurance policies, and any other securities you may have. Yes, do it on a Sunday evening. Take stock of all that you have. Put them all together, and wrap them around, and then write on the wrapper, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again". Then listen and see if that word does not echo and re-echo through the deeps of the soul, through the "aching void, the world can never fill".

Then there is the well which is fed from intellectual springs. The path thereto is trodden by the feet of the masters of all realms of thought, by the devotees of science, the chemist, the physician, the biologist, the engineer; by the lovers of art, by scholars of all schools, by statesmen and jurists, by the feet of all who think—with here and there a newspaper man—but when you have considered the sum, the reservoir of all human knowledge, you will be conscious that the void within is greater than the reservoir without:—"Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again".

Or, if you tread the flowered path to the well that springs in love's own garden, you shall find it true even of the water of that deep well. Of all earthly wells it is the deepest and the purest and likeliest to eternal fountains. Had I the tongue of an artist I would like to sketch a picture of home. What if I were to make it a composite picture—a home in a garden which has three wells. The builder of the mansion was supported in his labour by the water of the well of honourable and remunerative toil. The house and the garden were designed by one who drank inspiration from the well fed from intellectual springs; and the whole was cared for by one who was sustained by the well that springs in love's own paradise. Love so cared for the garden that noxious weeds such as anger and malice, and selfishness, unkindness and their numerous progeny were never allowed to grow.

Could you be content with a bower of beauty like that? You think you could. Could an eagle be happy in a golden cage? Could a hind of the forest be content in a mahogany stable? Could the hart that panteth after the water brooks be beguiled with music? Though love's Paradise be favoured, as the ancient Eden, by a river of four branches, one of which "compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold", even there we must heed the warning of the Prophet of the thirsty soul, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again".

## II.

But THERE IS A WELL WHERE THE THIRSTY SOUL IS SATISFIED AND THE WEARY REST. "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water". It is ever so, by the good grace of God, that while we are wearily seeking a well, the well is seeking us; and "if we knew the gift of God", if we knew and recognized the Voice which claims a partnership in our toil and its rewards, instead of turning away from religion, as from a wayfarer asking alms, or as from one who would add to

labour by saying, "Give me to drink", we should ourselves make request and receive "living water".

*Jesus Christ makes the great claim that He can satisfy "whosoever" have been disappointed at other springs.* It means that the gospel is either the most stupendous disappointment of human history, or else it is the reverse,—the gate of Paradise re-opened with all the rivers flowing free. The appeal from the well-side is far wider than to the Samaritan woman. Jesus seemed to say to her, "I can satisfy you, and everybody whom you know. Go back to the city and say to the multitude of thirsty souls therein, whom home and wealth, and fame, and power, have disappointed, that you have found the well at last. Tell them that whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."

Now that is the claim that Christ makes for Himself—the appeal He makes to you. I do not tell you how for the moment; I ask you only to admire the wide sweep of the gospel, the universality of its appeal, the adequacy of the wealth of its promise; that "Whosoever" drinks of its waters shall be satisfied. I wish I could so bring home to you the comprehensiveness of this "Whosoever drinketh" as to enable you to feel the intensity, the urgency, of its personal appeal.

Young men and women to whom life, for a brief space, has been so full of excitement and happiness, to whom the one cloud in the sky has been a fear that you may awake and find it all a dream—it is a dream! "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead; and Christ shall give thee light". But this is no dream. The promise of the text throws wide the gate into a life more ineffably beautiful than that which is painted by love's fairest imaginings. And there are others who are just tasting for the first time of the springs made brackish by human tears, and which once promised so much. How the bloom is brushed from the luscious fruit, and the leaves of the roses fall, and the briars beneath the beauty pierce, the charm of the distant music is lost in the hardness of its nearer tones, and the verdant lawns of the distant and enchanted view, are now seen to be tangled masses of rank grass and common weeds—in the pain and disappointment of our first great disillusionment, Jesus calls us to enter upon a life which grows richer and more beautiful and satisfying upon nearer acquaintance, which is "as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day": "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst".

Or could I gain the ear of men and women who look back upon life's day in the gloom of the evening twilight, or who look upon life's garden in the chill of an autumn day when the withering leaves fall down and the song-birds have departed, I would remind any such of the disillusionment awaiting even those who have approximated the variety of the experience of the Preacher of Ecclesiastes, "I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity. I said of laughter, It is mad: and of mirth, What doeth it? I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life. I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards: I made

me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits: I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees: I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me: I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts. So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do; and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun". To such an one the gospel of the Lord Jesus appeals, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst".

The reason for the superiority of the Christian religion to all other sources which promise rest and refreshment is this, that *its well of life is independent of earthly circumstances*. "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water". The fullest manifestation of the superiority of the Christian religion is wonderfully portrayed in John's picture: "And the city had no need of the sun neither of the moon to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof". The light was in it, an independent, inextinguishable, light. Thus our Lord says, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him"—no need for him to carry a pitcher to a distant well to quench his thirst. That is the distinctiveness, the very uniqueness of the salvation of Jesus Christ — it makes him independent of everyone save Jesus Christ Himself, for his spiritual life. It does not promise him easy circumstances, it does not promise exemption from trial and temptation, it does not promise that his lot may not be cast in a barren land, nor that his path shall not lie through the wilderness, but it does promise that spiritual life, health, meat, and drink, rest, refreshment—all that he needs shall be in him—not in something without him, but in him. It promises, you young men, not paved streets, but shoes for your feet; not a level plain, but strength to climb the mountain; not immunity from foes, but weapons with which to conquer; not freedom from temptation, but grace to overcome; it does not promise us the friendship of the world, but a triumphant faith to cry: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord".

And that is the salvation we all need. You need it, young man from across the sea; and you, my friend, from a distant city. I will tell you why you are here.

You persuaded yourself that a change of circumstances would accomplish a change of life; you thought that by fleeing from the temptations of the Old Land, or your home city, your whole life would be changed and saved. But you have been disappointed. You are living the same life here, taking the same downward course, with the same pain in the conscience, and the same unrest of soul. You could say, "Once I lived in Sychar and went daily with my pitcher to Jacob's well: I wearied of the frequent journeys, and left Sychar, and the pitcher and the well behind me. But I have had to get another pitcher and find another well, and I am weary as of yore". The explanation of your trouble is, that the cause of unrest was never in your circumstances at all, but in yourself, and while you left your circumstances behind, you must always take yourself along. Jesus Christ proposes to effect a change not in your surroundings but in yourself: "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water" — so that you can carry that salvation, that source of refreshment and satisfaction with you to business and in pleasure wheresoever you go—it shall be "in you".

And that well of life is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. When the woman went her way into the city it was to cry, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Jesus filled her whole horizon. It was not of religion, but of Jesus she spake; not even of her own awakening, but of the proof of it in her recognition of Jesus.

"O Christ He is the Fountain  
The deep sweet well of love;  
The streams on earth I've tasted,  
More deep I'll drink above:  
There to an ocean fulness,  
His mercy doth expand,  
And glory—glory dwelleth  
In Immanuel's land."

Here is the path to the Well: "The mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory". You will find Him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. It is a well whereat little children, and young men and maidens, the sick, and the infirm, and the aged pilgrims all may drink, under all circumstances, at every period of life, in time and in eternity, until we find ourselves in that city through which there flows "a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb".

### III.

WHAT IS THE WAY TO THE BUBBLING SPRING? This woman wanted to find it, as we all do; "Sir, give me this water that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw". Sooner or later every human soul gives expression to its weariness: "I am tired of carrying the pitcher, and weary of my continual thirst, Oh for a place of rest, of quietness for the soul!"

And Jesus points the way to the well: "Go call thy husband, and come hither". You know the dismal story. She had no husband. She had had five husbands, but was now living with a man who was not her husband. And that was the secret of her soul's

unrest, sin. She tried to evade the issue, she would have discussed religion in general and talked about the respective claims of Jerusalem and Gerizim as "the place where men ought to worship". But Jesus Christ told her the well could not be reached by going to Jerusalem or Gerizim, "Woman", He said, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth". You can never have the well of water within you while you consent to remain the servant of sin.

And that is ever the philosophy of the soul's unrest in you and in me, as truly as in the Samaritan woman. It is not our circumstances, low wages, or the high cost of living, it is not carrying the pitcher to the well with all which that typifies and represents in these modern days of industrial burdens and social inequalities. Nor is it the modern equivalent to the strife between Jew and Samaritan, between different schools of religious thought, it is not occasioned by the world-old controversy about the Jerusalems and Gerizims ancient and modern. You are not kept out of the kingdom of God or away from this bubbling spring of everlasting life by denominationalism, by other people's heresies or hypocrisies as you would fain persuade yourself you are. "Go, call thy husband, and come hither". Stand face to face with the sin of thy life and bring it into the presence of God for judgment. The way to the spring is the way of repentance and faith—not faith and repentance, but repentance and faith. Oh, that Jesus may remind you of all that ever you did! And that you may acknowledge the truth of it all, and repent of it all. Don't fear to call thy husband and come hither. Don't fear to tell him of thy sin. He calls thee to forgive thee. Seek His forgiveness, believe in His love; plunge in "the Fountain filled with blood," and then all will be plain, and thou shalt be in peace. And,—

"When all else is round you shifting,  
Earth, sky, home's pictures, days of shade and shine,  
And kindly faces to thine own uplifting  
The love that answers thine,"

thou shalt know how to pray:

"I have but Thee, my Saviour, let Thy Spirit  
Be with me then to comfort and uphold;  
No gate of pearl; no branch of palm I merit,  
No street of shining gold;

"Suffice it if, my good and ill unreckoned,  
And both forgiven through Thine abounding  
grace—  
I find myself by hands familiar beckoned  
Unto my fitting place;

"Some humble door among Thy many mansions,  
Some sheltering shade where sin and striving  
cease,  
And flows forever through heaven's green  
expansions,  
The river of Thy peace.

"There from the music round about me stealing,  
I fain would learn that new and holy song,  
And find at last, beneath Thy trees of healing,  
The life for which I long."

## SPANISH PHALANGISTS ATTACK GOSPEL MEETING

An Eyewitness's Account of the Outrage that took place in the Assembly Hall of the Plymouth Brethren in Linares, Spain.

On the 24th of June, 1948, we held our usual service at 8.00 p.m. At 8.45 about 30 well-dressed young men, a number of them belonging to the professions, came in and sat down for a moment or two. Then suddenly there was a cry of "Long live the Holy Virgin Mary!" This was evidently the signal, for they immediately rose and smashed the electric lights and some of the windows with rubber truncheons, the broken glass flying all over the place. They then, led by the chief of the Phalangists in this town, smashed some of the seats and the two organs, and assaulted the believers, using knuckle dusters with sharp points; several of our men received head injuries, three of them heavy blows on the eye (one was very bad but we are glad to say he will not lose his sight as was at first feared). One of the old believers was knocked down and trampled on, one woman was thrown down and hurt, many girls and women had their wrists and arms damaged — one girl was unconscious for a long time. More damage would have been done had not the police been sent for immediately. The young men threatened to fire with their pistols and escaped before the police came on the scene. Twelve of the injured had to go to the first-aid station for treatment, and a whole crowd went to the police station to give evidence.

We asked the judge for permission to continue our services as usual and this was granted. It was a great joy to us as we feared the Hall would be closed. Police guarded us day and night for the next few days, and they still come on Sundays.

At our first Sunday morning meeting after the attack a large number were present. How brave everyone has been and what a wonderful meeting we had! The meetings are fuller than ever, and there is such great reverence and thanksgiving to the Lord for His goodness! The town as a whole is in our favour."

There is no doubt that this outrage, like the others last Autumn in different parts of Spain, was the indirect result of the campaign against the Protestants initiated by Cardinal Segura last September, backed up by the Counsellor General of Spanish Catholic Action, Mgr. Vizcarra, though it is true they did not in so many words incite to violence. The reaction in other countries to the Autumn outrages, not only in Protestant circles, but among some Roman Catholics, was so strong that the Spanish bishops evidently felt that they had gone too far.

The general Pastoral issued by the Conference of Bishops in June, while pointing out that no Spaniard can be a Protestant, and that the Spanish Bill of Rights in its clause concerning religious tolerance only refers to foreigners, finishes by saying, "A public Protestant proselytizing campaign might cause harm in some simple people".

### A CABLE FROM DR. SHIELDS

OSLO, NORWAY SATURDAY, AUGUST 21st, 1948  
JARWITSEM:

IN COPENHAGEN YESTERDAY, STOCKHOLM TOMORROW, RETURN TO AMSTERDAM MONDAY. McINTIRE, SPRINGER AND WIVES WITH ME. AEROPLANE ALL THE WAY. PERFECTLY WELL. HAVING THE TIME OF MY LIFE. LOVE TO ALL.  
SHIELDS

# THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE

## The Meaning of the New Birth

Fifth in a Series of Week-Evening Lectures on the Doctrines of Grace

A Bible Lecture by Dr. T. T. Shields

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Thursday Evening, February 19th, 1931  
(Stenographically Reported)

THE way of salvation is so simple that even little children may be saved. There is much in the Word of God which is suitable for the understanding of spiritual infants. We are admonished, as newborn babes, to "desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby". Therefore, even the youngest may come to the Word of God and therein find instruction. And yet no one can measure the height and depth and length and breadth of this treasury of truth. It is higher than the heavens, it is deeper than the sea; it is, indeed, the word of the Infinite.

We need to begin very simply in the things of God, but we ought to leave the first principles and go on to perfection. We ought to desire "to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ". The Christian life ought to be one of continuous progress and enlargement. This evening, therefore, we shall think a little of this great central doctrine, not merely that we may learn more perfectly how to lead an enquirer to Christ, but that we may ourselves be more firmly established in the truth.

I knew a minister once who was a very thorough workman. He was really a genuine scholar, and was also profoundly taught of the Spirit in the things of God, a man of real intellectual strength; yet he was one of the simplest preachers I ever heard. One day a gentleman in his church, a member of the church, a banker, I think he was, came to the Pastor at the close of a service and said, "Pastor, I have thought a little about the subject you were discussing this evening. Has such a view (naming a particular line of thought) occurred to you?" "Yes", said the Pastor, "it has." "What do you think of it?" the member enquired. "Well, it is a large subject, Mr. So-and-So", replied his Pastor, "could you find a free evening some time when we could sit down together and talk about it?" He said, "I should be delighted."

They arranged a time mutually convenient, and the banker came to the Pastor's study. "Now, Mr. So-and-So, about that view of yours", said the minister, "what did you wish to say about it?" They talked for an hour or so, and I heard that man tell afterward the result. He said, "Because he gave us water in a little cup out of which a child could drink, I was foolish enough to wonder whether he could do any more, until I had an evening with him in his study, and then I learned that he had a better understanding of our capacities than I, at least, had of his. I found that he was a deep-sea-diver, and that he had gone to the bottom of things, that he had explored the subject in the height and length and breadth and depth so far as the human mind could, and that what

he brought to us was simply the result of his long investigation."

If you have a thorough knowledge of a subject, the unspoken word will give authority to that which you speak. It is often the reserve of knowledge of a certain subject that makes the authoritative teacher; and as we grow up as Christians, and become more mature in the things of God, our minds ought to be enriched. We ought to be thinking of these matters, and while dealing with enquirers, we shall still be as the traffic policeman who says, "Go this way", or "Go that"; but we shall have behind all that a wealth of knowledge of the whole subject that will give authority to our teaching, and will enable us to deal with it far more exhaustively as opportunity affords.

I am aware that this chapter makes the way of life so simple that it leaves everybody without excuse. There are verses in this chapter that are favourites with children: verses fourteen and fifteen, and particularly the sixteenth. Millions of people have committed these portions to memory. On the other hand, there is not a chapter in the whole Bible that is more profound than this. There is no subject that can engage our thought that requires a keener spiritual—and indeed intellectual—discernment than that of the new birth.

### I.

Very simply, in the first place, we are to learn its indispensability. "Ye *must* be born again." Whether you understand it or not, is another matter, but here it is laid down as a condition precedent to our seeing the kingdom of God, that that radical change, whatever it is, that is called being born again, must take place with every one of us. Not, Ye ought to; not, Ye may, but "Ye *must* be born again"; "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

There is a vast realm of truth before which the veil is drawn to the natural man, which no science, which no strength of human intellect, can possibly penetrate. There is a something behind that veil for whose understanding, naturally, we have no faculty to discover nor capacity to receive.

We are told, in the first place, not that we cannot enter it, but that we cannot even see it unless or until we are born again. Let us accept that truth, that it is an absolute necessity, that it is *indispensable to salvation*. We may not understand how. But sometimes we can understand the *why* of things when we cannot understand the *how* of them. There are a good many people now who are facing situations which they say must be remedied. They cannot tell how they are going to remedy them,



but they know why they "must" be remedied. That some change must be effected in order to a man's continuance in a certain position may be understood, but how it is to be effected is another matter. We can understand the why of it more easily than the how.

*It is not difficult to understand why we must be born again.* We face, first of all, the plain declaration of Scripture, that it must be. Whether we understand either the how or the why of it, if we are wise, we shall accept the fact of it, and adjust ourselves to this indispensable requirement, "Ye must be born again."

We might begin at that point by saying this, that even our meagre knowledge of the character—or, let me use a deeper word than that—of the nature of God, that He is spirit, and that He is infinitely holy, must teach us the necessity of it. Or, take the concept that knows no limitation, absolute holiness, that fact in itself suggests to us that if ever we are to dwell with Him in His immediate presence with any comfort to our own souls, to put it mildly, some very radical and thorough change must be effected in us. The divine holiness necessitates a great change, not in our outward character, but again to use the stronger word, in our very natures; a change must be brought about if we are to be at one with God.

That is why, in our study of this question, I first of all spoke to you about God, the absolutism of Deity in respect to all the qualities of the Godhead, because our understanding of God will determine our understanding of what is necessary in order that we may be rightly related to God. God being what He is, infinitely holy, and we being what we are, surely it is not difficult for us to understand that any salvation that can fit us for the immediate presence of Deity must be of a most radical sort.

And that is what the Bible says it is: it is so radical that it affects the entire nature: "Ye must be born again."

I say, a further consideration of what we are will show us why a new birth is necessary. Last Thursday evening we gave our thought to the teaching of Scripture respecting man's natural state, and I think we found from a study of the Word itself that there is sound scriptural warrant for the old-fashioned theological doctrine of total human depravity, that we are really depraved, not only in our outward character, in our general conduct, but in the very nature and essence of our complex being; that what we are is of such a quality that we must be made new if we are to abide with God. Thus the new birth is the inevitable corollary of the truth of natural depravity.

If, of course, there be something good in us, and if that can be developed; if there be truth in a divine development theory, that there is by nature something in us that is divine, and which may be developed, then that obviates the necessity of a new birth. But if there be nothing good in us at all, then it must be put there; and the only way it can be put there is through the impartation of a new life from somewhere; something that will change us at the very base, at the very root of things. It must be radical, it must be a salvation that goes to the root, or we are not saved at all.

The necessity of the new birth is further emphasized by a consideration of the nature of the kingdom itself. You cannot see the kingdom of God. For illustration, we might speak of many kingdoms, realms if you like, categories of human thought and desire.

There is a realm of music, of harmony. You cannot train everybody to be at home there. You can make a mechanical musician of somebody, one who can strum away on an instrument. But you cannot make a musician. You have seen a little child of only four or five years who is an incarnation of music from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet. Sometimes we hear of some youthful prodigy, a child that is almost an infant, who amazes people by reproducing some great symphony he has heard. Brother Hutchinson told me of hearing a famous orchestra in the city not long ago, that was conducted by a man every fibre of whose body participated in his conduct of the orchestra. He conducted with his shoulders, his head, his arms, his whole body, and you could tell bars ahead when a great climax was coming, as he gathered himself together and ultimately hurled himself at his players. You cannot make such musicians: they are so born. There are qualities within them that cannot be acquired. They can be developed, but they cannot be acquired.

Consider the world of art. There is a boy yonder who can sketch anything. He can take a pencil and put you on paper in a minute. It is probable he did not learn it at all. Most of us, were we to sketch a horse, would have to put underneath it, "This is a horse." Otherwise nobody would know what it was. But the true artist is born. He is native to the æsthetic realm of shade and proportion and colour. He sees things that you cannot see, and because he can see them he can reproduce them. All the training in the world will not make an artist of a man who is not so born.

Some people are ambidextrous. They use both hands equally well. Other people use their left hand almost exclusively, whereas most of us use our right. When people knew less than they do to-day they used to try to break their children of what they supposed was only a habit,—using their left hand instead of the right. But usually they could not. Why? Now we know that it is due to a certain construction of the brain, and that a left-handed person is left-handed because he is so born. You cannot make him otherwise. You may force him to use his right hand, but you are going against nature when you do it.

There is a spiritual realm, a spiritual kingdom where God dwells, for "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth". This chapter says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." I am speaking of a realm that does not belong to the flesh at all. As for the spirit: spiritually we are dead in trespasses and sins. Our spiritual nature has come under the dominion of sin, and under the curse of sin; and we have died. We have no correspondence with that spiritual realm in which God dwells, and which is God.

"God is a spirit." There are some people who would still try to define the kingdom of God in terms of the material and physical—as though a man's religion could consist in the sort of clothes he wears, or in whether he wears a tie-pin, or whether a woman has a ring on her finger. They would make religion consist of external things.—"forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats." But spiritual qualities are neither determined, nor necessarily manifested, by what we eat and drink and wear. These things are not without proper relation to the spiritual, but they are incidental.

"The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

The kingdom of God is a spiritual domain, and in order to enter it we must be born of the Spirit. It is thirty years since I read it, but I think I can recall, in principle, something of the teaching of a certain book. I could not subscribe to much that Henry Drummond taught. Much that he says must be carefully checked, and yet there is a good deal of truth in his book, "Natural Law in the Spiritual World." Those of you who have read it may remember how he explains that even in the natural world it is possible for a member of one kingdom to enter into another kingdom only as it is born from above.

The mineral kingdom cannot enter the vegetable kingdom of itself, but only as the roots of the tree go down into the soil, and lay hold of those mineral elements and transform and transmute them into wood and fibre and bark and leaves and fruit—only thus can the mineral kingdom get into the vegetable kingdom, by being born from above. The vegetable kingdom stoops and lifts it up to itself.

Nor can the vegetable kingdom get into the animal kingdom of itself: only as the animal stoops and lays hold of the vegetable kingdom, and potatoes and cabbage and all the rest of it are converted into blood and bone and muscle, and even brain tissue, can the vegetable kingdom be elevated to that of the animal. Thus the lower kingdom is lifted up into the kingdom above it only as the higher kingdom stoops and lifts it up into itself. There is in this principle at least a suggestion.

We can enter the spiritual kingdom only as the spiritual stoops and lays hold of us. Certainly if we are to be brought into harmony with its nature, then we must be made spiritual beings, we must be born of the Spirit.

The new birth is indispensable for many other reasons than the three I have mentioned: the nature of God, our own natural depravity, and the nature of the kingdom to which we are to be introduced.

## II.

We cannot understand this mystery. It is AS INSCRUTABLE AS IT IS INDISPENSABLE. Nicodemus was a great man, a man taught in the law; but when our Lord laid down the principle of the necessity for the new birth, Nicodemus immediately responded, "How can these things be?"

And you will note that *our Lord did not try to explain it to him*. And where He did not essay an explanation it is the part of wisdom surely for us not to do so. We cannot explain the new birth. Nobody can explain it. The *how* of it no one can possibly understand,—albeit we can all experience it.

For your comfort, however, let me say that when Nicodemus said that, our Lord replied, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Just as we cannot see the wind, nor tell whence it comes, nor whither it goes, but can see the effects of it and hear the sound of it, so this radical change is wrought in the souls of men. The effects of it are unmistakable enough. We may know that the change has taken place; but how, we could not understand even if it were divinely explained.

You called in a doctor in a case of illness, and he tried to tell you what was the matter with the patient. He gave you a long name, and even if you are a Latin scholar

and knew what it meant, you could not understand unless you had a thorough medical training. The doctor did not stop to explain it to you—not because he could not. He could explain it. He could make it as clear as day to one who had his capacity for understanding, to one who had his training; but he does not waste time explaining to you because he knows very well you could not understand it; one must have technical training in these matters. Instead, he very likely uses a general term to tell you what is the matter, and prescribes a remedy.

That which is a mystery to us is perfectly understandable to God, of course. He knows why and how; and the reason He does not tell us is that we could not understand it if He were to tell us. And furthermore, He affords opportunity for the exercise of faith, and leaves us to trust Him in the premises.

There is a theory abroad that in matters of religion everything ought to be measured by a square and compass, and that a man is somewhat of a simpleton who believes anything he cannot prove or cannot understand. Yet there never was a greater fallacy than that, because, as our Lord Himself here suggests, we believe a great many things that we cannot understand or explain.

There are many things about our own physical systems we cannot understand. Yet you know very well that if you are hungry, when you get a meal you feel better. You know you do! You do not know why! You do not know how, but you know that you do. I do not suppose you know exactly what sleep does for you. I do not know how you can, because you are asleep when you are asleep, and you are perfectly unconscious of the process! But you know how you feel if you do not get any sleep, do you not? And you know that what is written in the Scripture is true, not that He gives His beloved sleep, but that He giveth to His beloved *in* sleep, or while they sleep; and we awake refreshed and ready for the next day's task.

There are a thousand things that you and I believe most profoundly that we cannot explain; nor do we attempt to explain them. Therefore faith accepts this as a divine pronouncement: we believe it, though we cannot explain it: "Ye must be born again."

## III.

But though we cannot explain it, we know something of *How It Is Accomplished* after all. We do not know how the Spirit works within, but we know something of how this new birth is brought about,—by what Power, through what agency. How they work we cannot tell.

You take some medicine. The doctor says it will "tone you up". After you have taken it, perhaps you may feel "toned up", and you know there is some relation between that changed condition of yours and the medicine you have taken; but how it works you cannot tell. The doctor knows, but that is beyond your province, beyond your ability to understand.

Now this we know, that *the new birth is not natural, but supernatural*. We know that it is effected by a supernatural Power. The Bible tells us that we are "born of the Spirit". "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit", and the Agent which effects that change is the Spirit of God. We know that. There is a theory that the new birth can be psychologically explained, *that the new birth is really effected by resolution of the human will*, that it is wholly subjective, within the man himself, and worked out by his own power.



I am ready to grant you that many great changes are wrought in human life by the power of a human will; but the will is exercised because back of it there is that which always affects the will, namely, the emotions, the affections. You can never move any man's will until you engage his affections. The will and the affections are inseparably connected in a normal man. I have known the case of a young man who was very careless of himself, of his personal appearance, slovenly in his habits, careless in his general deportment. People have brought all sorts of pressure to bear upon him, in order to effect some transformation—but utterly without avail. Suddenly the man has changed. Now he appears in an entirely different guise. One wonders whether he has just come from the hands of a valet. His clothes are pressed; his hands are clean; he walks with the air of one who desires to create a favourable impression. Someone says, "See what the man's will has accomplished at last!" His will did not do it: it was his affections. You know what I mean! At all events, she knows!

Thus you may see a man possessed by a passion for gold. He has not been a very brave spirit. He has run away from many a duty. But he is out there somewhere on the frontier, and he hears of the discovery of a gold vein. It involves the greatest possible hardships to get to the place where it is to be found, yet that man is galvanized into action, into new life; he is willing to face death and everything else. You say, "What a transformation! What an iron will he has!" It is not his will; it is his affections, his latent covetousness, his passion for wealth, that have sent him forth to do the thing that he would not otherwise attempt at all.

I could multiply illustrations of how, when the affections are engaged in any particular direction, the man's will is brought into play, and his character apparently is transformed.

But that has nothing to do with the spiritual realm, for the reason that you cannot engage a man's affections toward God. He may learn to love some other person, or to love gold: he may learn to love a hundred things in the material world. But, on the other hand, he cannot see God, and he cannot love God Whom he has not seen. His affections are not engaged, and therefore his will is not exercised in that direction.

There is more than the will engaged in this matter of the new birth. The affections must somehow be laid hold of, and they can be laid hold of if the understanding is enlightened and that hidden kingdom becomes real to this blind man. It is not in the will. Somehow he must be born again; he must be born of the Spirit. He must have that divine anointing that will make the unseen real to his spiritual vision: then he will believe with his heart.

There is a great body of people in the South, and some in Canada, who teach that *the Spirit of God never works apart from the word*, that the truth of the gospel is the only instrument that the Holy Ghost employs, and that the Spirit of God is resident within the truth, and that whenever the truth is preached spiritual life will result apart from any subjective preparation of the heart by the Spirit.

For example: I remember once in London, Ontario, preaching a sermon on this text: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." A day or so afterward I received a letter from

a gentleman who was not a member of our church, but who regularly attended the services. His father had been a minister in the denomination to which I refer, the Campbellites, sometimes called Disciples. (They are essentially Arminian in their doctrine, not Calvinistic.) He said, "I enjoyed your sermon last Sunday evening very much, and I could see no reason why anyone present in your congregation could not be saved if he wanted to be saved. But your prayer following the sermon spoiled it altogether: for", said he, "having made the way of salvation as plain as it could be made, you asked God by His Spirit to lead men to an acceptance of the gospel. I write to ask you, What had the Spirit of God to do with it? The way of salvation was there: all they had to do was merely to accept it."

That is a very common theory, that the Spirit of God does at that point cooperate with the human will, and that the man accepts Christ; but that it is jointly a work of the will of God and the will of man. Oh no! "That which is born of the flesh is flesh."

I said to you the other day that the Holy Ghost never uses a metaphor without recognizing all its implications: when Jesus Christ described salvation as a new birth, He knew the new birth was as much a work of grace, as much of God and independent of man himself, as our natural birth was independent of ourselves. It is all of God.

In the parable of the sower there was the seed that fell by the wayside, the seed that fell upon stony places, and that which fell among thorns; other seed fell upon good ground and brought forth fruit, some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold. What was the difference? The seed was the same in the six instances. "Behold, a sower went forth to sow." What did he sow? The Word of God. The seed that fell by the wayside brought forth no fruit. Why? Because it was not fruitful, because it had no life in it? No! Because there was no preparation of the soil for its reception. The seed that fell upon the stony ground—what did that do? It sprang up quickly; it gave promise of life, but by and by when the sun came up, it withered away. Why? Because the seed was defective? No! Because the soil had not been prepared for its reception. In the third place the thorns and briars choked the growing seed. What was the difference there? The seed was the same, but the ground was full of other seed; they grew together, and the thorns and briars choked the good seed. What about that which brought forth thirty, sixty, or a hundred fold? Why was it fruitful? Because the ground had been cultivated, prepared for the reception of the seed.

The work of the new birth is the work of the Holy Ghost. While it is true that the Word of God is the instrument employed always—"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever,"—yet there is a very direct operation of the Spirit of God upon the hearts of men, preparing the soil for the reception of the seed. There is a difference between a capacity and a faculty. The subjective work of the Spirit of God creates in us a capacity for the reception of the Word. Then, when the Word of God is preached, and it falls into some heart which God has opened, it is energized by the divine Spirit and brings forth fruit.

That is why we have our prayer meetings, to pray that when the Word is preached it may fall into good ground.

Let us learn our absolute dependence upon God. "Mary, supposing him to be the gardener"—her supposition was not far wrong: He is the Gardener. "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." He prepares the soil; He makes all the difference between the good ground and the stony and thorny and hard-trodden ground of the wayside. It is all His work. The Holy Spirit then, in His own way, imparts the life of God to a soul that is dead in trespasses and in sins.

How does He do it? Through what instrumentality? "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever"; "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." The Word is described as a sword—whose sword? Yours? No! "The sword of the Spirit." And it is when the sword is used by the Holy Ghost that it cuts. David could not have done anything with the sword to the living giant, but anything will do to chop the head off a dead giant. When you are going to meet a giant on his feet you must have an instrument you can use. The word of God is the sword of the Spirit, and the Holy Ghost is the only one Who can use that sword. He knows how to use it that the slain of the Lord may be many. The word of the Lord is the instrument employed.

"We are begotten again by the truth of the gospel." The virgin birth is repeated in the conversion of every soul that is really born again. God in infinite mercy stoops to these dead and barren and lifeless natures of ours; the Holy Ghost communicates the life of God; and behold, there is a new life within,—new affections, new desires, new understanding; the understanding is opened, the heart is enlightened, the conscience is cleansed, the memory is revived, reinvigorated, the will is enfranchised—a new Tenant takes possession. Is that all He is? Nay! He is more than a tenant. I trust He is a new Master. The Holy Ghost comes to dwell within. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." But if we have indeed been begotten again by the Holy Ghost, then He dwells within us.

#### IV.

Is there an unconverted man or woman here who says, "That does not help me, sir. It is all a mystery to me. Can you tell me how I can get in?" It is very wonderful that the Lord said in that connection, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." As though He had said, "Nicodemus, salvation, from My point of view, is a new birth, a radical transformation, a work accomplished by a new power, the impartation of a new life, a new creation wrought by the power of the creative Spirit. But I will not tell you how it is done because you could not understand it. But I will tell you this, that as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." That was a miracle. The people were dying by the thousand, and somebody said, "There is a brazen serpent. Look at it; look and live." And some wise man who had just graduated from college said, "Do not talk to me about that; that is all nonsense"—or did they not have colleges in those days? Russell Conwell once spoke in a sermon about Martha

taking down something with her lead pencil. Afterward someone said to him, "Don't you know that there were no pencils in those days?" To which Dr. Conwell replied, "Poor Martha! It is about time we gave her one!"—"But", says someone, "I do not see any value in looking at that serpent. That will do no good." No; you cannot understand it. But if you will simply turn your eyes to the serpent God will work the miracle. Your looking to the serpent indicates the surrender of heart and intellect and all that you are, to God. If you do that, God will work the miracle. The man stands and looks, and as he gazes he is healed. Thus, says our Lord, the serpent of sin has bitten you, the poison is in every part of human nature. There is no remedy at all; you will die unless God intervenes. Look away to Him Who was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. Look away to Him, and the instant you look you will be made a new creature in Christ Jesus. The instant you look, the miracle shall be wrought. May He bless His word for His name's sake!

### FRENCH ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN ONTARIO

*Le Droit* of Ottawa gives the following statistical report of French Roman Catholic schools in Ontario. We translate this account for the information of our readers, who will not fail to remember that these schools are heavily endowed by the public funds of the Province of Ontario. In many of these schools orders of nuns and brothers teach the doctrines of their papal master without receiving a salary, though the salary is paid from public funds to the superiors of the order to which they belong. This is the report as given in *Le Droit*:

In the course of the school year that has just terminated, 553 schools in Ontario offered bilingual instruction in accordance with the regulations approved by the Minister of Education. These 553 schools include 1,619 classes and 43,969 pupils. Of these 553 bilingual schools 468 are separate (R.C.) schools and 85 are public schools. The 85 public schools have 127 classes and 2,915 pupils, while the 468 separate bilingual schools have 1,492 classes and 41,054 pupils. That is to say that 93 per cent of our pupils are following the bilingual courses in separate schools.

Our bilingual schools serve all parts of the Province. They are found in the counties of Prescott, Russell, Carleton, Glengarry, Stormont, Dundas, Renfrew, Simcoe, Kent and Essex and in the districts of Nipissing, Sudbury, Algoma, Cochrane, Temiscaming, Rainy River and Thunder Bay.

We know from first-hand information that these so-called public schools include some that are receiving grants as such but are violating the regulations of the Department of Education and the Public School Act by displaying religious emblems and being, in short, Roman Catholic schools directed by the local priest.—W.S.W.

### THE POPE'S LAW AND GOD'S LAW

Master Tyndale happened to be in the company of a learned man, and in communing and disputing with him drove him to that issue that the learned man said, "We were better to be without God's law than the Pope's". Master Tyndale hearing that, answered him, "I defy the Pope and all his laws;" and said, "If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou doest."

## TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY STUDENTS ON SUMMER FIELDS

By Rev. H. C. Slade

The Executive Board of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches believes that no better investment can be made of the Lord's money than to use it in supporting young men who are in training for the Gospel ministry, now serving on Summer Fields. Along with the invaluable experience which they will gain during five months of practical work each summer, their ministry in our Churches as Pastors, Pastors' Assistants, and on Home Mission Fields is being used of God to the salvation of souls and the building up of the Lord's saints. We trust that all our readers will enjoy supporting these young men, both by prayer and gifts, as much as they enjoy carrying the Gospel to the unconverted. Below we print a few interesting news items just received at the Union Office.—H.C.S.

### Frank L. Pickering

Assistant Pastor at Runnymede Baptist Church

Mr. Pickering writes:

"The work of visitation continues. It is not exciting but at times one can see that the Holy Spirit has preceded and prepared for the visit. The Sunday services, Sunday School and weekly prayer meeting are sufficient to fill up the remaining time to over flowing, for one who has not had a great deal of experience. A two-week Daily Vacation Bible School was conducted at Runnymede with real profit. Mrs. D. Woodley was in charge and another two weeks would not have made it a bit too long. The Lord is greatly blessing the ministry of His Word through the pastor, Rev. W. G. Brown, in this Church."

In the absence of Mr. Brown, Mr. Pickering is preaching at all services.

### Ellard Corbett

Pastor at Calvary Baptist Church, Picton

"Since my last letter there have been many developments in the work here at Picton. We managed to secure through the kindness of a Picton business man, the use of a new Display Room in his lumber establishment. It is a very attractive room and we rejoice that we have such a place to worship in each week. I might say that the last possible meeting place in the town was refused us and at the "eleventh hour" our present meeting place was offered to us without cost.

These summer months have been extremely difficult ones for our people. Some of our congregation of past summers have fallen off and we believe that it is due largely to the lack of a suitable building in which to worship. With our last "move", we find ourselves in a "dilemma"; we cannot stay indefinitely at our present location, and when we must move, there is no place to go. Therefore, we have been forced to put our premature building programme into immediate operation. On the fifth of this month, the first work was done for its erection. Since then the work has progressed slowly, and we expect that if nothing interferes, we shall have the "shell" of the building erected in a short time. Someone asked if we had the money. We have little, lacking some \$4,000.00 to be secured before the end of September. This amount will by no means complete the structure, but we shall build to the extent of our financial resources, hoping beyond hope, that we shall be able to erect enough of the building to accommodate us this winter.

Calvary Baptists are bearing these difficult times in good spirit. Our Junior Sunday School children must meet in a barn. One of our little girls said to another friend some time ago, "We have a nice Sunday School building at Calvary Baptist! We have little birds in it . . . and they sing too!" Because of the need of a building, we find it impossible to hold our Summer D.V.B.S. and our children's work in general suffers greatly.

We recognize that others are in similar circumstances in the Union, and there seems to be no riper time than now that the Churches of the Union be called upon to contribute generally to all truly needy small Churches which are acutely handicapped by local circumstances such as ours."

Any gifts for the Building Fund at Picton may be sent to the Union Office at 337 Jarvis Street. Small or large contributions will be acceptable and duly forwarded to the local Church Treasurer.—H.C.S.

### Glen W. Richardson

Pastor at Maple Grove Baptist Church

"Since we arrived in Maple Grove, we have endeavoured to systematically canvass the whole district. With three Churches to Pastor, this is no small undertaking. For one thing, the country is hilly and my only means of travel is by bicycle. So far we have called on about 100 homes, travelling about 160 miles. Recently the Lord has blessed in making it possible to begin a Prayer Meeting at Maple Grove, the main Church, also a Young People's service in connection with the Providence Church. One candidate is awaiting Baptism. We hope to hold a Baptismal Service on August 29th. We pray that by this testimony, others might be led to take this step of obedience."

### Misses Minnie Brison and Ann Gignac

Windsor, Ont.

From July 5th to 16th we held Daily Vacation Bible School with the assistance of many faithful helpers from Campbell Avenue Baptist Church. There was an average attendance of about 120. We believe that all had an enjoyable and profitable time, and trust that the Lord will bless our efforts. We are holding similar weekly meetings in the French district.

A visit in the home of an elderly French couple who showed a keen interest in the Bible, resulted in an introduction to a French priest. A Christian friend who is a next-door neighbour to the French couple, was with us and we had the opportunity of testifying to the way of salvation according to the Word of God. Expressing his desire to make good Catholics of us, the priest suggested that we meet again for further discussion. We quoted the Word of God as our authority, and we are confident that God is able to make known to him that He is God, and besides Him there is none other. We are praying that he will hear His voice of authority and receive His way of salvation by faith alone.

Next week we are looking forward to more canvassing, and we ask that you join with us in prayer that we may be used more effectively in His service.

### Reginald Snell

Pastor, South River

"We rejoice to report that God is continuing to bless in these parts. Our evening services in South River have been well attended all summer. We have not seen the results in these services we have been anxiously waiting for but we have seen them in our Sunday School. Only last Sunday five young girls ages 8-14 remained behind after our school to talk things over with the Lord concerning their relationship to Him. One of the workers and myself dealt with these young people and believe without a doubt their sincerity.

About a month ago we branched out in an effort to reach more souls with the Gospel to a place called the Gravel Pit, some 8 or 9 miles north of South River. Here there are a number of interested farmers having no place at all to worship the Lord; and so we go to them every Sunday morning at 11 with the Gospel. Already we have seen blessing when two weeks ago a big Finlander expressed his desire to accept the Lord Jesus as his personal Saviour. This work will only remain open during the summer because the winter with all its snow and drifts makes it impossible for these farmers to get out.

The work is not easy, there are many disappointments, but God is able to do the impossible. When we see things like this happening we are more convinced of that truth than ever before."

The last proceeding of reason is to recognize that there is an infinity of things which are beyond it. It is but feeble if it does not see so far as to know this. But if natural things are beyond it, what-will be said of supernatural?  
—PASCAL, *Pensées*

## NEWS FROM A EUROPEAN MISSION FIELD

THE name of Alsace awakens a whole train of historical associations in the minds of all of us, for who is not aware of the cruel German annexation of Alsace after the war of 1870? Almost everyone knows that this ancient province of France, one of the most fertile in Europe, has long been a disputed territory between powerful neighbours. Its central location and its proximity to the great highway of the Rhine have always given it a commercial importance and now it also possesses important industries. However, the spiritual needs of the Alsatian people are not so well known, and it is hoped that the following information condensed from a letter from a pastor in Alsace will serve to lay on our readers' hearts a burden for this war-torn land.

The pastor in question is Rev. Frédéric Martin Buhler of the city of Mulhouse, Alsace, himself a native of Sainte Marie-aux-Mines, a beautiful little town that nestles in the upper valleys of the Vosges Mountains near the summit of the range where the old frontier between France and Germany was fixed in 1870. Mr. Buhler speaks not only French and German but also the Alsatian dialect. The writer recalls discussing the future with him toward the close of the five years he spent in Canada as our first student-professor of French in Toronto Baptist Seminary. We assured him that he would be most welcome and useful in Canada, and that if he wished to stay we would do all within our power to make it possible. Knowing full well that the thick black clouds of war were gathering over his beloved France, Mr. Buhler told us that he had made his decision to return to Alsace because his own people needed him and because there were few Evangelicals there and a great dearth of pastors who could speak the languages currently used. And above all, he felt that they were his own people, to whom a stranger could not minister as could a native son. Within a year of the time Mr. Buhler returned, he received his call to the army and later his commission. During the difficult years of the German occupation he was miraculously guarded from all harm—we do not think the expression is too strong in view of the fact that the invaders regarded all Alsations as citizens of the German Reich. During those troublous times, he assisted Mr. Dubarry in the church at Nîmes and also found time to obtain from *l'université de Montpellier* the degree of *licence ès lettres*. For several years he taught in a technical school. In 1945 the way was opened up for him to return to Alsace, and with him went his wife, the former secretary of Mr. Dubarry, and his little girl.

The situation was most difficult, for, though the fighting had ceased, the sufferings caused by the war had reached their height, while the church was sadly disorganized, having been without any pastoral leadership for four difficult years. Mr. Buhler describes the condition of the church as he then found it, and then tells something of what has been done and of what he feels must be done in the immediate future if the work is to make further progress. Mr. Buhler writes:

When I came here in 1945, the church had been without a pastor since 1941. It had become accustomed to a great variety in visiting preachers, who were numerous. It was hard for me to get down to real business. The problems that confronted me were rendered more difficult by the fact that the people had been used to German preaching only, during the occupation, thus excluding per-

sons who spoke nothing but French. The Sunday-school had two teachers and some 15 or 20 pupils. Ten was a good attendance at the Young People's meeting; twenty-five was considered good at prayer-meeting. Since then all departments have improved: the Sunday-school has 7 teachers, with 40 pupils in actual attendance, there are 25-30 in the Young People's meetings, and the prayer meeting averages 40. Altogether the church is in a much healthier condition. Though we have received only 13 new members since I came, a number of others have requested membership but we do not accept them at once. Some indifferent members have left us. Our church is very active: we have regular evening meetings, teachers' meetings, a religious instruction course, and Young People's meetings for the more experienced Christians in which we discuss individual cases of visitors in our meetings or of friends whom we should like to see saved or making progress. From time to time we also have colporteur meetings for our house-to-house visitors in which we discuss methods of work, answers to objections and pray for blessing on the seed sown.

### A Working Church

We are particularly anxious to give our young people a good start in the Christian life. Out of the last ten we have received into the church, none are over twenty-five years of age, and five of them are under twenty years of age; two of them are public school teachers, three others have their first baccalauréat, two of whom await the results of their second baccalauréat. We are particularly thankful for the spiritual quality of these new members. They are desirous to serve in the Bible-school or in the colportage work. Though our method may not be spectacular, we find that it has lasting results. We have also had some meetings in a non-religious hall in the city in order to reach non-church-goers.

Mulhouse has a population, with its suburbs, of 140,000. The language generally spoken is the Alsatian dialect, especially among the working class, both in town and countryside. The government officials and the middle-class all speak French, and the young people are taught French in the schools and use it in their ordinary conversation. Hence it is necessary for us to have German services to reach the working-class, though I use the Alsatian in informal Bible study gatherings in the homes. The work at the Bible School and among the Young People is done exclusively in French. That is where the future of our work lies, unless political upheavals continue.

### A Cosmopolitan City

It is impossible to speak of absolute racial unity in any part of France and even less in the frontier territories. The history of the city explains the mixture of races. To the Germanic element were added certain Latin elements, while a good number of Huguenot refugees also left their descendants here, and there are also some Swiss immigrants. Mulhouse itself in the course of its long history has been a free town, a Swiss town, a German town and later requested to be linked with France. Since the war, a number of Algerian workers, Italian labourers and also some Poles have come to work in the factories, in reconstruction, and in the mines.

The people are mostly Roman Catholics of a more or less indifferent type. There are about 15% Protestants, though unfortunately they are too generally liberal in theology. Biblical Christians, therefore, constitute a very small minority. Our teams of visitors have not met many Evangelicals in spite of systematic visitation work. In the rest of the district the spiritual darkness is even greater. We hold regular meetings twice each month at Colmar, twenty-five miles away, which has a population of 50,000, and at Ste-Marie once a month. The pastor also preaches each Sunday in the nearby mining town of Wittenheim, and once a month he supplies on the Montbéliard-Valentigney field which is still without a pastor. In our small Département of Haut-Rhin there are half a million people packed into an area of 1,400 square miles, which gives us a small compact field in which to work, with great opportunities.

### An Urgent Problem

Since last January the church in Mulhouse has been faced with a peculiarly difficult problem: that of finding a suitable meeting-place. We have had, until now, the use

of a very fine building situated in the heart of Mulhouse, with a larger auditorium for the church and a smaller one for the Young People's meetings and apartments for the pastor and the caretaker. The building was rented to the church during the early days of the war when it appeared that the Nazis would commandeer the hall, with the verbal assurance that the lease would be continued after the war. Unfortunately the man who made this promise was killed just after the war, and now we have been asked to vacate. Thus far we have not found any suitable place to rent and we have not the necessary funds to buy or build a place. We are attempting to obtain another delay in the eviction in the hope that we may gather funds to enable us to meet the challenge. We would require \$20,000 or \$25,000 to do that. Thus far, we have almost \$1,000, but our church cannot do much more than it is now doing. Wages are far from being in keeping with the cost of living. A good average salary here is 15,000 francs a month, or 500 francs a day. At this rate, two days' wages are required to buy a shirt; one day's pay will buy two pounds of meat, or a tie, but it is not enough for a quart of oil. But many people in our church do not receive wages as high as that, some indeed are paid as little as 10,000 francs a month, that is \$33.00. More and more our people are discovering that everything they earn is needed to buy food, and after that it is impossible to squeeze anything for other needs.

Since writing the above, we have learned that Dr. Shields plans to visit the church at Mulhouse in order to be present at the regional Young People's Conference on August 29. We invite all our readers to pray for the Lord's blessing upon this gathering and also upon our sorely tried brethren of the Mulhouse Church in their search for a much-needed building.—W.S.W.

### THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES LOOKING TO ROME

THE newspapers of last week all carried news items about two councils of churches holding sessions in Amsterdam, Holland. The International Council of Christian Churches with representatives from twenty-six countries and sixty religious bodies, has elected as president, Dr. Carl McIntire, pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Collingswood, New Jersey. Dr. McIntire is a former president of the American Council of Christian Churches. The International Council of Christian Churches has by resolution declared its purpose to "foster a loyal and aggressive revival of Bible Christianity all over the world. . . and to seek to awaken Christians everywhere to the insidious dangers of modernism and Roman Catholicism. . ." It described the World Council as "radically modernistic, anti-Biblical, anti-evangelical and un-Protestant," and its leaders as "some of the most notorious and near-blasphemous unbelievers of the day." It deplored the fact that the Greek Orthodox Church was affiliated with the World Council, which had also extended an invitation to the Roman Church to participate in its sessions.

This is strong language to use, but the evidence shows that it is in conformity with the truth. We believe that the International Council will do good work in laying bare the festering sore of unbelief in modern churches and in diagnosing the cause of its morbid hankering after Rome. News dispatches from Amsterdam dated August 22 reporting the meetings of the World Council of Churches give the following information:

The Roman Catholic Church elected not to send any delegates on the ground that direct representation would be incompatible with tenets of the Vatican, but it has nominated observers.

A pastoral letter addressed to Dutch Catholics said the unity Christ wanted could be found only in the

Roman Catholic Church. The letter urged Catholics to pray for the council conferees and their communicants, who, "longing for unity and though separated from the flock of Christ, are looking up—perhaps often unconsciously—to the Church as the only harbor."

What could constitute a stronger condemnation of the attitude of the World Council of Churches than the pastoral letter addressed to Dutch Roman Catholics by their bishops, who observe that those who participate in the World Council of Churches "are looking up—perhaps often unconsciously—to the (Roman) Church as the only harbour"? We wonder what answer the delegates at Amsterdam from the United Church of Canada have made to this friendly bear-hug from Rome. Do our Canadian and American Church people realize what their leaders are doing at Amsterdam and whither they are headed?

Of course it will be said that Rome is not participating in the World Council at Amsterdam, but that does not change the fact that it was invited by so-called Protestants. Nor ought its refusal to send delegates blind our eyes to the fact that "observers" are to be sent by it. As an evangelical French pastor remarks: "What will Rome do at Amsterdam? Its position does not change: it does not parley; you cannot discuss matters with Rome, you submit! But it sends its mouthpieces hither and yon to state its point of view, to accelerate the evolution, to catalyze the movement towards Rome. That is less compromising, much more efficacious, and up to now it has succeeded well enough. Why change its method? It does not act on the stage in the bright light that beats down on public discussions, but behind the scenes, hoping thus to draw all possible advantages from Protestant unbelief. Rome displays 'an extraordinary; prodigious interest' in the ecumenical movement."—(*Le cri d'alarme*, Pastor W. H. Guiton).

With this Methodist pastor in France we heartily agree: "What Protestantism the world over needs is not the modernistic and Romanizing Ecumenicalism which kills, but an evangelical revival which will make it live."—W.S.W.

### DR. J. B. ROWELL CELEBRATES ANNIVERSARY

DR. J. B. ROWELL is well known to our readers for his informing articles on Romanism which have appeared in these pages from time to time. His latest contribution was the one in last week's issue entitled, "Why Are We Protestants?" Next month he will have completed twenty-one years as pastor of the Central Baptist Church, Victoria, B.C. The church plans to undertake extensive enlargements of the building to provide additional space for the Young People's Society and the Bible School. In the name of our GOSPEL WITNESS family, we extend to Dr. Rowell and Mrs. Rowell our heartiest congratulations on their coming-of-age in Victoria and our earnest prayers and good wishes for the years to come.—W.S.W.

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## News of Union Churches

Acting Secretary—H. C. SCADÉ

### Lavigne Holds Third Annual Meeting

Just three years ago, the believers at Lavigne organized themselves into a Regular Baptist Church, thus forming the first French-speaking Protestant Church in Northern Ontario. During this brief period, these Christians have proved themselves to be an exemplary New Testament Church. It was the privilege of this writer to accompany Rev. John Boyd of Sudbury and Rev. William Frey, now of Tramelan, Switzerland, to this field in the winter of 1943, and in order to reach the homes we had planned to visit at that time, it was necessary to wade through snow knee-deep, for about five miles. So far as we knew then, there was not a person in that entire district who knew anything about the joyful tidings of salvation by Grace.

Under the Apostolic teaching and leadership of Rev. J. Boyd, of Sudbury, the Word of the Lord has not only been received by many in that district, but through them, has been sounded out into other parts of French-Canadian territory as well. We firmly believe that their courageous stand for the truth in the midst of bitter hostility and their aggressive ministry of spreading the Gospel has already, and will yet cause many French-Canadians in other areas, to wax confident and also speak forth the Word of God without fear. The new Church building is not yet completed, but the frame work is covered and they already have the windows in. There is considerable yet to be done on the inside.

The following news report of recent happenings on the Lavigne Field was written by Miss Marion L. Ford. Miss Ford is engaged in full-time French-Canadian Missionary work in the Sudbury district.

"There always seems to be some kind of news from the Sudbury-Lavigne Field, and this time is no exception, though primarily we report about Lavigne.

"Two special meetings were held in the district last week, one being the erection and dedication by the Priest of a huge Roman Catholic cross opposite our new Church building, which the people of the community falsely suppose will offset the effects of the Gospel of Christ as it is preached in our little Church. The other was the Annual Meeting of our own Church. As we reflected upon the work we have much for which to praise God. During the year, three have publicly professed faith in Christ, two have followed Him in believer's baptism and four new members have been added to the Church roll. The Financial Report shows that the Lord's stewards here also have learned the meaning of sacrificial giving, since in addition to a special amount given toward the building, two missionaries to French-Canadians are still being partially supported."

Mr. Guy Appéré of Paris, France, now a student at Toronto Baptist Seminary, who is spending the summer months on the Lavigne field, also tells of some recent experiences.

"By these few lines I would like to draw for you a picture of this corner of God's vineyard. Almost all of my time is spent in visiting contacts made through the radio work and previous canvassing in the outlying villages and towns of Sudbury. Through this follow-up work, we were able to find a few new homes interested in the Gospel. In doing visitation in the Lavigne district, we have found that the reason for their hostility has been misunderstandings caused by rumours, i.e., our peculiar ways, eating grass certain days of the year.

We are happy to be able to continue holding open airs at Sturgeon Falls, in spite of the work of the priest, and the hostility of the people allied with the Police. I had the opportunity at the request of some young boys, to call at the home of the priest, whom I found smoking. Our discussion was concerning the Word of God, which he advised me to preach in Paris, France, because it is being proclaimed in Sturgeon Falls (by himself I guess).

Our hearts are rejoicing to see the progress made in the building of the little Church. Although its completion

presents many problems for us, yet not for the Lord, Who can supply the needs through the means of His people."

### All People's Mission

All People's Mission is a branch of Temple Baptist Church, Sarnia. About two years ago, Rev. Frank Vaughan, then of Norland, was called as the overseer. We rejoice in the blessing which has attended Mr. Vaughan's faithful preaching of the Gospel as manifested in the following report. Mr. Vaughan writes:

"It is a joy to report some definite progress in the work at All People's Mission. On a recent Sunday evening when an invitation was given to believers who had not followed the Lord in baptism, three responded. Later a young man and his wife also expressed their desire to be baptized. So a baptismal service was held on a Wednesday evening in Temple Baptist Church.

It was a glad occasion as we met with our Mother Church, and they with us rejoiced as these five believers were buried with Him by baptism."

### Sawyerville Has Record Year

While building up the home base, the Sawyerville Church, under the leadership of the Pastor, Rev. Donald L. Day, has endeavoured to establish a Gospel Testimony in other neighbouring centres as well. Mr. Day sends the following report:

At our Annual Business Meeting, Wednesday, May 19th, we were much encouraged by the various reports, each showing definite progress in the work. The Treasurer of the Church in giving his report, stated that in the '26 years he has held this office, the year '47-48 was the best financially. The Lord has been pleased to bless spiritually, too. During the past year there have been seven conversions. One young married woman and her two sons, ages 9 and 12, were saved last summer, and have since been active, happy Christians, bearing a real testimony in the community. Two little girls were saved in our children's meetings at Eaton Corner, and two other little girls accepted Christ at Lawrence Colony in our Sunday School. The work in the Colony, while still a new work, is very encouraging. We have a service there in the school-house every second Sunday afternoon. The interest is increasing, and we believe that the Lord is speaking to the hearts of the people there. Two weeks ago, there were not enough seats to accommodate the people. Several had to stand at the back of the hall. We have recently started a Young People's service on Saturday night, and have a good group of Young People attending.

## ACCEPTED OFFICE FOR QUEBEC, ST. LAURENT TELLS WELCOMERS

The following dispatch is reprinted from "The Globe and Mail" "for the record" without comment, apart from the fact that "Quebec" in this context means the influence of the Roman Catholic Church in Canadian politics.

QUEBEC, Aug. 19. (CP).—External Affairs Minister St. Laurent told a crowd welcoming him home to Quebec City tonight his selection to succeed Prime Minister King was "the Canadian nation's tribute to the French part of Canada."

The new Liberal Party leader and Prime Minister-designate spoke to cheering Quebecers packing the concourse of Palais Station in a reception ceremony arranged for his first visit since the Ottawa Liberal convention at the start of the month.

The gathering, carrying posters bearing the words, "Unity, Security, Liberty," and "Quebec Province with St. Laurent", was held back by rows of city police and RCMP in dress uniform.

In his quiet-spoken address, Mr. St. Laurent said there was great honor attached to the position in which he found himself now and that he chose to accept it "not for me, and not for my family," but for Quebec Province.

"It is Quebec that is honored once again," he said. Mr. St. Laurent noted that at the Ottawa convention he had been chosen leader by a majority, showing that "the Canadian nation as a whole wishes to share in the Quebec motto 'Je me souviens (I remember)'."



## IMMIGRATION vs. BIRTHRATE — SEES FORMER LOSING OUT AS QUEBEC POPULATION UP

From *The Toronto Globe and Mail*, August 14, 1948

By HARVEY HICKEY

OTTAWA, Aug. 13 (Staff).—Before many years pass, Quebec will outstrip Ontario in population unless Ontario attracts thousands of immigrants in the meantime.

This was the conclusion drawn by experts here today as the Dominion Bureau of Statistics issued a report on the increase in the number of Canadian families between 1941 and 1947. Due to wartime and postwar prosperity, the marriage into has skyrocketed and the number of Canadian families increased by 20 per cent in the six years.

An interesting comparison was provided as between the two biggest provinces, each largely composed of a different race. During the six years, the number of Quebec families increased by 25 per cent, as compared to an increase of 18 per cent shown by Ontario.

For generations the average Quebec family has been larger than the Ontario family. This still holds good. In Quebec the average number of children per family in 1947 was 2.2, while in Ontario it was 1.4. Moreover, Quebec had 159,000 families with four or more children, against 92,000 such Ontario families. Of these, there were in Quebec 54,000 with seven or more children, as against 12,000 in Ontario in this category.

Quebec's estimated 1947 population was 3,712,000, against Ontario's 4,189,000. That this position may be reversed within a few years was plainly indicated by the statistical evidence of more marriages and bigger families in Quebec. Quebec's rate of natural increase is said by experts to be declining slightly, but it is still so much greater than Ontario's that increased immigration appears to be the only means of Ontario holding its population advantage.

British Columbia, third largest of the provinces, seems likely to be the fastest growing if marriages are an indication. Between 1941 and 1947, the number of British Columbia families increased by 47 per cent. Apart from prosperity, this increase in family formation is attributable to a wartime shift of population to the Pacific Coast, particularly from the Prairie Provinces.

The high marriage or family formation rate and the concomitant conditions of full employment and rising wages form the basic reason for Canada's housing shortage, according to authorities here.

A one-year gain of 301,000 jumped Canada's population to 12,883,000 in the biggest annual increase in history.

The former record was the 275,000 increase between June 1, 1946, and June 1, 1947.

Population at the 1941 census was 11,507,000. The increase since then, 1,376,000, is almost 12 per cent.

"Both natural increase and greater immigration contributed to the latest gain," the bureau said. "Births were at the highest level for a year, while deaths continued at the low level of recent years. Immigrants during the period totalled about 90,000."

(All provinces but Prince Edward Island showed population gains during the year).

Ontario had the greatest increase, with an estimated rise of 108,000. Quebec was second with 80,000; British Columbia third with 38,000. Next in order of increase: Alberta, 24,000; Manitoba and Nova Scotia, 14,000 each; New Brunswick and Saskatchewan, 12,000 each. Population of Prince Edward Island declined an estimated 1,000, and that of the Yukon and Northwest Territories was unchanged.

Estimated population of the provinces and territories at June 1 this year, with estimates for June 1, 1947, in brackets: Prince Edward Island, 93,000 (94,000); Nova Scotia, 635,000 (621,000); New Brunswick, 503,000 (491,000); Quebec, 3,792,000 (3,712,000); Ontario, 4,297,000 (4,189,000); Manitoba, 757,000 (743,000); Saskatchewan, 854,000 (842,000); Alberta, 846,000 (822,000); British Columbia, 1,082,000 (1,044,000); Yukon, 8,000 (8,000); Northwest Territories 16,000 (16,000).

## Among Ourselves

Devoted to Activities of Former and Present Students of  
TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY

By W. Gordon Brown, Dean

The Daily Vacation Bible School at Harrow Baptist Church, Rev. D. Burns pastor, was a greater success this year than last, the highest attendance being 76, reports the leader, Mrs. Doris Woodley, L.Th. The seven girls who made a profession of faith last year, though all are from homes where the parents are not professing Christians, are going on with the Lord. Their enthusiasm this year helped others. Several older boys made profession of faith in Christ as personal Saviour.

Harrow Church is now raising full support of one missionary and half the support money for each of two others.

From Harrow Mrs. Woodley went to Queensville, where Mr. R. K. Penny is student-pastor. On the first day of their school 55 attended, and 65 the next. Sunday attendance has increased well.

On Sunday evening, August 1st, I visited Churchill Baptist Church, right out in the country, near Tottenham, and found Student-Pastor R. Holmes, enjoying his full programme of work. His visiting has increased the interest. The walls of the church basement have been painted. Other improvements are anticipated. The church has a fine sign facing the road. The pastor conducted the service in an easy but dignified style. It was easy to preach here.

Student-Pastor R. Hussey had the joy recently of leading a young man to Christ the first time he had been in Calvary Baptist Church, Belleville, Ont. He and a friend were attracted to the church because the ad. in the local paper announced that it had a prayer meeting.

The closing of the D.V.B.S., which averaged 53 children in attendance, attracted a number of parents who had not been in church for years. Six new scholars enrolled in the Bible School the following Sunday.

The Seminary family congratulates Prof. and Mrs. W. S. Whitcombe on the birth of their second daughter, Beth Adele.

Our sympathy is expressed to Rev. D. Macgregor and Mr. H. P. Hawkins on the recent deaths of their respective fathers.

Greatest need of our single men's residence is for book-cases. We could also use a few occasional chairs.

### THE TOWN OF MANSOUL

The walls of the town were well built, yea, so fast and firm were they knit and compact together, that, had it not been for the townsmen themselves, they could not have been shaken or broken for ever. For here lay the excellent wisdom of him that builded Mansoul, that the walls could never be broken down nor hurt by the most mighty adverse potentate, unless the townsmen gave consent thereto.

—JOHN BUNYAN, *The Holy War*

## Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 12 Third Quarter Lesson 10 Sept. 5, 1948

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

### THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Lesson Text: John 9:1-11, 35-38.

Golden Text: "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."—John 8:12.

### I. Christ Gives Physical Sight: verses 1-11.

In some quarters it is a common practice to attribute affliction to the presence of sin in the individual or those associated with him, as did the disciples on this occasion. It was foolish of them to suggest the man's own sin as the reason for his being born blind: that would be putting the result before the cause. Affliction may be sent as chastening or discipline (1 Cor. 11:29, 30), but not necessarily so. When trouble comes, we should not conclude that God does not love us (John 11:5, 6), or that He has cast us away (Isa. 41:9; 48:10), but we must remember that God desires the affliction to be the occasion for a manifestation of His love and power, that it may redound to His glory (John 11:4; 1 Pet. 1:6, 7).

The works of God were to be manifest in the blind man through Christ (John 5:36). For the sake of the disciples the Saviour spoke in terms of human limitation. The day represents the time of opportunity for labour. The night was approaching for Christ in the sense that the period of His personal ministry upon the earth was drawing to a close. As He laboured earnestly and incessantly, so should we (John 4:35; 5:17; 2 Tim. 4:2).

In order to see well, two conditions are necessary: good light and good eyesight. A man whose vision is unimpaired cannot see in the darkness, nor can a blind man see in the light. The same principles apply in the realm of the spirit. Spiritual perception is impossible until the truth be illuminated, and until the heart and mind be enlightened by the Holy Spirit. Christ came as the Light of the world to reveal the truth to men (Psa. 36:9; Isa. 9:2; Mal. 4:2; 2 Tim. 1:10), and also to anoint their eyes and quicken their hearts to comprehend that truth (Isa. 42:6, 7; 2 Cor. 4:4-6).

Christ exercised His sovereign will in the manner of the cure, as well as in the fact. He used material means—the clay of the ground and the water of Siloam—and He restored the man's sight instantly, while others were healed differently (Matt. 9:29; Mk. 8:24, 25). The man was asked to exercise faith in the word of Christ by washing in the pool of Siloam (2 Kings 5:10; Lk. 17:14); an act which illustrates cleansing from sin by the blood of Christ (Zech. 13:1; Tit. 3:5; Heb. 9:22; 1 John 1:9).

The neighbours of the man born blind questioned his identity, for the change wrought in him was so great (2 Cor. 5:17). Our associates will soon know when Christ has transformed our lives.

### II. Christ Gives Spiritual Sight: verses 35-38.

The hostile Pharisees attempted to cast reflection upon the character of Christ (v. 24), but the one who had been healed of his blindness had just one answer to every word of criticism, and his honest testimony could not be gainsaid (v. 25; 1 Pet. 2:15). His very presence among them, and his joyful acknowledgment of the change which Christ had wrought in his condition were more powerful, perhaps, than an eloquent sermon would

have been (John 12:9; Acts 4:13, 14). Let us tell men that we who were blind now can see, and that we who were lost are now saved in Christ.

But, faithful testimony does not always result in the conviction and the conversion of the hearer; he may become angry. The truth is often unpalatable to the guilty heart, and the rejection of the message may lead to hatred of the messenger (Isa. 29:20, 21). This was not the only instance of men being cast out of the synagogue because of loyalty to the truth. Many have suffered like persecution for Christ's sake. We must be true to the Lord, regardless of consequences.

Although men may revile and persecute, God will reward His faithful disciples (Matt. 5:10-12; Mk. 10:29, 30; 1 Pet. 4:14); if not here, in the hereafter. Christ sought and found the outcast.

The man who had been blind now beheld for the first time the Christ Who had restored his sight, and recognizing Him, perhaps by His voice, addressed Him as Lord. He already knew that his Healer must be a Prophet from God (v. 17), and his quest for further light met with instant response. The eyes of his understanding were enlightened, and he was given faith to see in Christ the Son of God: He had been delivered from the power of darkness and had been translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col. 1:13). He confessed Him with joy and worshipped Him as God.

Men cannot behold the light which Christ brings and remain unchanged. Those who see not, yet desire to do so, will be shown the truth, as was the man born blind (John 7:17). Those who, like the Pharisees, pose as having superior wisdom (Rev. 3:17, 18), and close their eyes to the revelation which God can give, will remain spiritually blind, and dead (Rom. 1:18-20, 28; Eph. 4:17, 18). That being the case, their sin lies not in the fact of the absence of light, but in their act of disobedience to the light (John 3:19; 15:22). There is a poem which goes like this:

"Light obeyed means increased light,  
Light refused, darkest night;  
And who shall give the power to choose,  
If the love of light we lose?"

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Aug. 30—The light anticipated ..... Isa. 42:1-12.  
Aug. 31—God's word is lamp and light ..... Psa. 119:89-112.  
Sept. 1—Jesus is the light of the world ..... John 8:1-16.  
Sept. 2—Ye are the light of the world ..... Matt. 5:1-16.  
Sept. 3—God is light. Fellowship ..... 1 John 1.  
Sept. 4—Are you in darkness or in light? ..... 1 John 2:1-17.  
Sept. 5—The Lamb is the Light of heaven Rev. 21:22; 22:1-7.

#### SUGGESTED HYMNS

The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin. Do you fear the foe will in the conflict win? Jesus bids us shine. There is sunshine in my soul to-day. Blessed assurance—Jesus is mine. I wandered in the shades of night.

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