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## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

# Why I Am Not a Roman Catholic

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, October 13th, 1940

(Stenographically Reported)

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

"Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."—I Tim. 2:5, 6.

"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."—Revelation 22:8, 19.

### PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON

We have come together this evening, O Lord, that we may worship Thee. We acknowledge our dependence upon Thee, the God of all grace. Thou hast been pleased to reveal Thy glory in the face of Jesus Christ; and we worship Thee as we have seen Thee in Him Who is the express image of Thy person, and the effulgence of Thy glory.

We thank Thee that Thou hast had compassion upon us in our sin, and that Thou hast taken knowledge of the limitations of men and women in the flesh. Therefore hast Thou given to us Thy Holy Spirit, that He may enlighten our understandings, illuminate the sacred page of His own writing, and help us to understand the truth as it is in Jesus. Help us this evening that we may be as scholars in Thy school, ready to receive the truth in the love of it, desirous that it shall be mixed with faith as now we hear it.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for this occasion when multitudes throughout the land render praise and thanksgiving to Thee for all Thy goodness. Notwithstanding the prevailing darkness, notwithstanding the clamour of war, we are able to see by faith in Jesus Christ that the Lord reigneth; therefore may the earth—and especially the isles—rejoice. We thank Thee for Thy goodness to us as an Empire. We bless Thee that Thou hast saved us from capitulation to force, and to the powers of darkness. We thank Thee that thus far Thou hast preserved us, and given us strength for the battle. We thank Thee for the victories which have been won, and for the strength of the defense which has stood so valiantly against the foe. We look to Thee now for further blessing, and we are confident that the eyes of the Lord run to and fro in the earth to show Himself strong in behalf of those whose hearts are perfect toward Him.

We pray, above everything, that the hearts of Thine own

people, and of the peoples of the Empire, may be so disposed toward God that we may be channels of Thy grace and power to save the world from being shrouded completely in the threatening darkness. We thank Thee for Thy good hand upon us. We commend to Thee most earnestly once again all the Governments of the Empire, and especially the government in Britain. We pray for the King and Queen, and for the whole Royal Family; for the Prime Minister, his colleagues, the commanders of all our armed services, and for every man engaged therein; for all fire-fighters and rescue workers; for all war workers, wearied often at their benches and shops; for mothers and children, Red Cross workers, nurses and physicians. How weary the multitudes yonder must be! Give them nightly rest in their shelters as Thou dost give to Thy beloved sleep. Nerve them for the battle we beseech Thee; and grant a speedy victory. Meanwhile, help us that with grateful hearts we may recognize the blessing of the Lord, and give Thee thanks continually for Thy goodness in this land, in this highly-favoured hemisphere.

We pray especially for the Republic to the south of us; that Thy hand may be, not only upon the President and those associated with him, but, in this time of crisis, upon the great multitude, the millions who may have so much to do with hastening a happy issue of this great conflict. The Lord bless them and use them as His instrument, and bring them speedily and with ever-increasing might to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

Instruct us out of Thy Book this evening, and help us that we may profit by an examination of Thy Word. For Christ's sake, Amen.

**WE** IN this place, without apology, stake our all upon the authority of Holy Scripture. This, to us, is the supreme court, the last court of appeal. To us, the plain and unmistakable teaching of Scripture is an end

to all controversy. All religious errors, all departures from the truth, all heresies, if I may use a word of ugly association, have this common characteristic: they consist either in additions to Scripture, or subtractions from Scripture, or a little of both. All heresies may be put in one of three categories: the Bible-plus, the Bible-minus, or the Bible with some deletions and some additions.

What is Christian Science? The Bible *plus* Mrs. Eddy's, "Science and Health, or Key to the Scriptures". What is Mormonism? The Bible *plus* the Book of Mormon. What is that crude cult called Russellism? The Bible *plus* Pastor Russell's "Studies in the Scriptures". What is Pentecostalism? The Bible *plus* the authority of an emotional experience which they call "the baptism". What is Modernism? The Bible *minus* its supernatural elements, and when it is finished, *minus* its supernaturalism in general. What is Romanism? The Bible *plus* the authority of the Church and the efficacy of its sacramentarian system.

I propose to try to show you this evening that a true Christian should not be subject either to a *plus* or to a *minus*. I believe for myself in the authority and sufficiency of the Holy Scripture without any *plus* or *minus*. So far, I have found nothing better.

Some years ago at the close of a service a minister came forward and with him another whom he introduced as one of his deacons. I greeted him, and he said, "I have heard you preach before, and was converted through a remark you made at that time." "Where and when was it?" "At the close of a service that I had attended at the invitation of a friend. He took me up and introduced me and told you I was a Roman Catholic. You did not say much, just that you were glad to meet me, and then you said, 'Keep this clearly in mind. There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.' That single text led me out of the darkness of Rome, into the marvellous light and liberty of the gospel." I have selected that text this evening as a foundation for my remarks.

But here let me note that the term, "Roman Catholic", is in itself a misnomer. Catholic means universal; or, literally and etymologically, "according to the whole". John three: sixteen is a *catholic* text: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The whole world is embraced by the love of God, and whosoever is in it may receive the provisions thereof. That is true catholicity. Said Paul, "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." That is a truly *catholic* text. It embraces everyone who is related to Christ.

I am, I dare to believe, a Catholic according to the creed: "I believe in the holy Catholic Church." I would not be offensive, but I am unable to believe in the *Roman* Catholic Church. The terms "Roman" and "Catholic" are mutually exclusive. The two words ought never to have been married. Though without judicial authority, I would pronounce a decree divorcing them forever.

I shall try to tell you why I am not a *Roman* "Catholic". Romanism, as I prefer to call it, has in it very much of truth. In some aspects, Romanism is biblically orthodox. The Roman Church teaches the divine inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. No Modernism is

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long tolerated within the pale of Rome. Unless I am mistaken, it was a Pope who labelled departure from the faith by the term, Modernism, in an encyclical denouncing it, and excommunicating its advocates. The Roman Church never denies the essential Deity of Jesus Christ. It proclaims that Jesus Christ is God. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick may say that the Virgin Birth involves a biological miracle that is "unthinkable" to the modern mind, but the Roman Church never denies the scriptural record of the virgin birth of Christ, that He was born of a human mother but had no human father. The Roman Church does not deny the supernatural in the character and life of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no disposition on the part of Rome to put a question mark after the biblical records of miracles. It holds that He was supernaturally born, and that He supernaturally lived.

The Roman Church never denies the vicariousness of the death of Christ, that He "died for our sins according to the Scriptures". The Roman Church never denies the historicity, the actuality, the reality, of His bodily resurrection. All these great principles are denied by branches of what is called Protestantism. It has become a Protestantism with the protest eliminated. But Romanism does not deny the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

Nor does it deny the great biblical doctrine of sin, that we are all sinners. Such denial is left to some Baptists, and Presbyterians, and Anglicans, and United Church men, and Unitarians, and Nothingarians. But Rome does not deny the reality of human sin. Nor does it ever attempt to make light of the scriptural doctrine of future retribution. The Roman Church does not play fast and loose with sin after that fashion.

You say, "Then what is wrong with Romanism?" I shall try to show you that all these truths, while theoretically accepted and proclaimed, are practically nullified in every instance by a *plus* or a *minus*.

## I.

For instance, THE ROMAN CHURCH ACCEPTS THE PRINCIPLE OF THE DIVINE INSPIRATION AND AUTHORITY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE. There is no question about it. But it adds not a little to that. I said just now, it is the Bible-plus.

Let me read from their own works:

I quote the first two articles from the creed of Pope Pius IV.:

"1st. I most steadfastly admit and embrace apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions, and all other observances and constitutions of the same Church.

"2nd. I also admit the Holy Scriptures, according to that sense which our holy mother the Church has held, and does hold, to which it belongs, to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Scriptures: Neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers."

Again, the Council of Trent receives,

"With sentiments of equal piety and reverence, all the Books, as well of the Old as of the New Testament, since one God was the author of them both, and also the traditions relating as well to faith as to morals, inasmuch as coming either from the mouth of Christ himself, or dictated by the Holy Spirit, they have been preserved, in the Catholic Church, in uninterrupted succession."—(*Canons of Trent, page 17, Paris, 1832*).

Do you see? It is the Holy Scriptures *plus* the authoritative interpretation of the Church, and the denial of the right of private judgment. Hence it is ever the practice of the Church of Rome, where it has power to do so, to deny to the people the possession of and privilege of reading the Scriptures for themselves. The Bible is the Word of God, but you cannot understand it—only the Church is qualified to interpret it. The knowledge of God contained in the Scriptures must be diluted by the addition of the traditions of the Church and the interpretations of the fathers; and at least this Pope (Pius IV) declares as part of his creed, "I will accept no interpretation of the Scriptures that has not the unanimous support of the fathers." That excludes us altogether!

In some places when it suits them, they quote the Scriptures. There used to be a very famous man in Toronto, Professor Goldwin Smith, tutor at one time to the late King Edward VII. He lived in what is now The Grange on Beverley Street. He was recognized as a very scholarly man, but holding very radical ideas. One day one political party would quote him as though his word were the final authority on every subject—but only when he agreed with them. When he did not, the same party, either Liberal or Conservative as the case might be, would say, "He is only an Annexationist." So people sometimes quote Scripture to support their own positions when it suits them; when it does not, they discard it. Such is the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church.

I wish I could continue that argument and spend the rest of my time citing texts of Scripture which would assure you that the Scripture itself claims to be the supreme authority in all religious matters, for it abounds with such contentions; but I shall assume you understand that. It is sufficient to say that the Roman Church nullifies the authority of Scripture by interposing its own interpretation thereof between the Bible and the individual soul. The truth is there, but as I shall show you in many other cases, the Roman Church plays middleman all the way through.

## II.

I am not a Romanist because THE SCRIPTURE TELLS US THAT THERE IS BUT "ONE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN." How full the Scripture is of that truth, of the privilege of direct access to God, of the competency of the soul unto God! No individual here needs anyone to stand between him and God.

There is a lovely story in the Old Testament which is illustrative of that great truth. When the brethren of Joseph came to Egypt the second time when as yet they did not know who he was, when they knew him only as the governor of the land of plenty, when he had wrung from them a confession of their sorrow for what they had done in the long ago, and when he saw they were truly penitent and resolved never to do it again, when Judah pleaded to be allowed to remain as surety for his brother Benjamin, saying, "How shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father," I think Joseph heard them saying in their hearts, "We did it once—oh, we did it once, but we will never do it again." When he heard that, he could no longer restrain himself and said, "Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren." The throne room was cleared, and Joseph stood alone while he "made himself known".

That is the gospel. The Lord of the storehouses needs no one to stand between the soul and Him. "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" "Go to confession?" "Go to Mass?" "Do Penances?" "Follow the prescribed rules of the Church?" No! "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Saul of Tarsus, one of the bitterest enemies of the church of Christ of all time, heard—not the voice of a pope, or of the Church, but a Voice from heaven calling him by name, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest"—thus our Joseph still makes Himself known to His brethren.

When the Philippian jailor came in trembling, saying, "What shall I do to be saved?" what was the answer? Was he told to confess to the priest? Accept the prescribed penances? Receive absolution? Come to Mass? Go through the whole sacramentarian system? Not so reads the Scripture. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

But Rome interposes many mediators. First there is the intercession of the Virgin Mary. I have a book in my hand, "Glories of Mary". It is rather an old one, but it exalts Mary to an equality with God; calls her "the queen of heaven"; and declares that her intercessions are absolutely indispensable to salvation. You may not come to God, nor to God as revealed in His Son Jesus Christ; you must go to Him through the Virgin Mary. What scriptural warrant is there for such teaching? None whatever. The Bible does not contain a word that justifies such exaltation of Mary.

But that is not all. We must come not only through Mary, but through the saints. This book I hold in my hand is well bound, is nearly one hundred and forty years old—I have some two, three, nearly four hundred years old. This book is for the use of the laity, containing

the Masses appointed to be said throughout the year. There is a calendar, and a saint for every day of the year. The faithful are exhorted to pray, not directly to Christ, nor even only to the "holy mother", but to the saints.

For instance, here is a prayer to "Saint Patrick". I think there is good historical evidence to show that Saint Patrick, so-called, was not a Roman Catholic, but a Baptist. Even I may be a saint some day!

Here is a prayer to be said in connection with the Mass on the seventeenth of March.

It is a prayer pleading the "merits" of St. Patrick:

"O God, who wast pleased to send blessed Patrick, thy Bishop and Confessor, to preach thy glory to the Gentiles: grant, that by his merits and intercession we may, through thy grace, be enabled to keep thy commandments."

Here is a prayer pleading the "merits" of St. Joseph, the husband of the mother of Jesus:

"Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord, that we may be assisted by the merits of the spouse of thy most holy Virgin-mother, and that what we cannot obtain through our own weakness, may be granted us by his prayers."

And this pleads the "merits" of St. Richard, Bishop of Chichester:

"O God, who hast enlightened thy Church by the merits and resplendent miracles of blessed Richard, thy Confessor and Bishop, grant that we thy servants may, through his intercession, obtain eternal glory."

In this "Roman Missal for the use of the Laity" provision is made for the faithful day by day to plead the "merits" of someone whom the Church has canonized, and who is supposed to have some power of intercession in heaven, though centuries dead, as to their bodies. I looked up my birthday to see if I was in it, but it was one hundred and forty years old, and all I could find on the first of November was that it was "all saints' day", so possibly I may be included!

But how serious a matter it is when any system that is called Christian should presume to add to the mediatorial merits of our glorious Lord, the intercessions even of His mother, and the further intercessions of saints so-called. The book, "The Glories of Mary", was written by St. Alphonsus M. Liguori. A saint! Those of you who know anything about his writings know that he must have had one of the vilest minds that ever cursed the earth, vile as the pit itself.

I am not a Romanist. I do not need the Virgin Mary, or Saint Patrick, or Saint Richard, and least of all Saint Alphonsus M. Liguori, to intercede for me. Why? "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

### III.

I am not a Romanist BECAUSE THE SCRIPTURES EXPLICITLY TEACH THAT A COMPLETE, ADEQUATE, FINAL ATONEMENT FOR MAN'S SIN WAS EFFECTED BY THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST. Rome teaches that that Sacrifice finds its complement in the perpetual sacrifice of the Mass. It does not teach salvation without the blood of Jesus Christ, but the blood of Jesus Christ plus the bloodless sacrifice of the Mass.

It is always well to quote the words of people from whom you are obliged to differ. That, they cannot deny. Here is the first article of the creed of Pope Pius IV.

"I profess likewise, that in the Mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead. And that in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist, there are truly, really, and substantially the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood: which conversion the Catholic Church calls transubstantiation. I also confess, that under either kind alone, Christ is received whole and entire, and a true sacrament."—*Extracted from the "Ordo Administrandi Sacramenti", page 67; London, 1840.*

The doctrine of the Mass is founded upon that of Trans-substantiation. The council of Trent says:

"And since in this divine sacrifice, which is performed in the Mass, the same Christ is contained, and is bloodlessly immolated, who once offered himself bloodily upon the cross; the holy council teaches that this sacrifice is truly propitiatory, and that by its means, if we approach God, contrite and penitent, with a true heart, and a right faith, and with fear and reverence, we may obtain mercy, and obtain grace in seasonable succour. For the Lord, appeased by the oblation of this sacrifice, granting grace and the gift of repentance, remits even great crimes and sins. There is one and the same victim, and the same person, who now offers by the ministry of the priests, who then offered himself upon the cross; the mode of offering only being different. And the fruits of that bloody offering are truly most abundantly received through this offering, so far is it from derogating in any way from the former. Wherefore it is properly offered according to the apostolical tradition, not only for the sins, pains, satisfactions, and other wants of the faithful, who are alive, but also for the dead in Christ; who are not yet fully purged."—*Canons of Trent, c. 2, Sess. 22.*

According to the teaching of Rome the celebration of the Mass is a repetition of the Sacrifice of the cross, and is a perpetual sacrifice, indispensable to salvation; and that it has efficacy, not only for the cleansing of the living, but for the purging of the souls of those who are dead, but whose souls are not yet wholly purged.

But what saith the Scripture? "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." What is the teaching of Scripture? "Christ died for our sins, according to the scripture"; that "once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself"; "Every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." The rending of the veil, Hebrews tells us, was a symbolic event, indicating that through the rent veil of His flesh Christ had manifested a new and living way, "consecrated forevermore".

The Scripture says that "where remission of these ("sins and iniquities" forgiven through the blood of Christ) is, there is no more offering for sin." The Mass is the grossest perversion of Christianity. It is sheer, unadulterated, idolatry; an evidence of the densest kind of superstition.

I went into a factory during the course of the erection of this building to see about a certain matter, a steel-working plant where they make safes. I saw something there and enquired what it was. "That is a tabernacle, a sanctuary." It was made of steel, and was to be fitted with a lock, for a Roman "Catholic" Church. It was to be dressed up on the outside, and the Host was to be

placed inside. There it was amid the litter and confusion of the place, and I said, "So you are making a home for God, are you? You are going to lock the Creator of the universe in a little safe about a cubic foot in measure?"

Some Protestants assume Romanism is just another form of Christianity. No it is not. It is not Christian. It professes Christianity, but it neutralizes and nullifies every single principle of the gospel. Romanism is not Christian. It is a pagan system. Cowper was right when he wrote long ago,—

"There is a Fountain filled with blood  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,  
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,  
Lose all their guilty stains."

Therefore we do not need the Mass.

#### IV.

I am not a Romanist BECAUSE THE SCRIPTURE TEACHES THAT IT IS THE PRIVILEGE OF EVERY INDIVIDUAL TO CONFESS HIS SINS DIRECTLY TO GOD, AND NOT TO A PRIEST. What did the Lord Jesus say when He spoke of the publican and the Pharisee? The publican had no priest: all he did was to cry with bowed head—because he dare not look up—"God be merciful to me a sinner." He did not go to a confessional: he went directly to God—and went down to his house justified.

The Bible abounds with that teaching. For example: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Does the Bible say nothing about confession of sin? It certainly does. "Confess your faults one to another." If you have wronged anyone, you had better go to the one you have wronged. If it is a public offence, the acknowledgment of your penitence ought to be as public as the offence, that people may know that you are repentant. But there is no warrant in the Scripture for the practice of auricular confession. It is contrary to the Scripture. I shall not argue as to the evil of the thing, though it is an evil practice. But suppose it were not, the Word of God does not require us to tell the secrets of our hearts to a priest. Tell them to God, and He will forgive you.

#### V.

I am not a Romanist BECAUSE THE SCRIPTURES TEACH THAT BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER ARE MERELY SYMBOLIC ORDINANCES OF REMEMBRANCE, AND NOT EFFICACIOUS SACRAMENTS. The Roman Church teaches emphatically, unmistakably, that it is not possible for even unconscious infants to be so saved as to enjoy the felicities of heaven unless they are first baptized. Because of that, they have invented means of prenatal baptism. Otherwise, an unborn child, that has done neither good nor evil, would fail to enjoy the delights of heaven.

My soul recoils from that teaching, rebels against it, because it is such an infamous caricature of God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the Saviour Who took the little children up in His arms and blessed them, and said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." He did not say, "Suffer little children to come to the font", but, "Come to Me." I proclaim with all the vehemence of my soul that the doctrine that baptism performed in an emergency by anyone—a doctor, a nurse, a janitor, or anyone but by someone—the doctrine that the sprinkling of water upon the head of a child is in-

dispensable to salvation, is a horrible doctrine that is not taught in the Bible. It is as contrary to the Word of God as anything could be.

Whether baptism be infant sprinkling (which is not scriptural baptizing), or adult immersion, no one was ever saved by baptism. A man may be baptized a thousand times, and go to hell. The brother who was baptized this evening had no confidence in any cleansing power in the water of the baptistry, but believing that he had been made by the grace of the Spirit, a partaker of the life of Christ, that His death and burial and resurrection had become his own, and that baptism is an outward expression of that spiritual experience, he was baptized as a matter of obedience and witness. It is only an outward symbol of that inward grace.

But the Roman Church teaches there is a saving efficacy in baptism, and teaches furthermore that one cannot be saved without it.

The Lord's Supper is a memorial feast. The bread is only bread, the wine is only wine. When Jesus Christ, standing before His disciples took the bread and said, "This is my body", can any rational man think He meant that while yet He stood on the other side of the cross, His body unbroken, He meant the bread was His literal body? Or when He took the cup and said, "This is my blood", can any reasonable man suppose He actually meant that that was the veritable blood of Incarnate Deity? Of course He did not mean it. "This do in remembrance of me . . . for as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew (proclaim) the Lord's death till he come." We do not thus repeat the sacrifice, but proclaim it. It is a memorial feast designed to keep us everlastingly in remembrance of our glorious Lord Who died, and Who rose again.

Rome has not only made the Mass a sacrifice, but a perpetual sacrifice. Against that we set the fact that the Scripture teaches that the death of Christ effected a complete and final atonement.

#### VI.

I could say that I am not a Romanist BECAUSE IT TEACHES THE DOCTRINE OF PURGATORY. That, I affirm, is an intolerable assumption that is absolutely without scriptural warrant, but is wholly a Romish invention. It is an invention which a Roman priest described as "The Church's Klondyke",—because it enables the priest to wring the last penny from the hands of the superstitious on the assumption that the souls of the departed are in an agony in purgatorial fires, and may be released, or their terms of suffering shortened by prayers said by the priest for a price! Purgatory is an atrocious doctrine which so blasphemously caricatures God, that only the devil himself could have invented it. The Scripture teaches that salvation is eternal life, that you and I may enjoy here and now, and know it, and be sure of it. To the praise of the glory of God's grace, I dare to say I am as sure of salvation this night as I shall be when I have been in heaven a million years. Why? Because salvation is all of grace, and by the Word of God Who cannot lie, it is assured to all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### VII.

I am not a Romanist BECAUSE I CANNOT AFFORD IT. I am not a Romanist because the Scripture teaches that salvation is by grace; and that is what I, a poor bankrupt

sinner, need. The Roman Church teaches salvation by works, and on that ground you cannot afford to be a Romanist—neither can I. And when the Bible teaches us that "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord", it means there is nothing to pay; we have only to receive it in simple faith. That is what I meant when I said I could not afford to be a Romanist. I am too poor. Like Jack the Huckster,

"I'm a poor sinner, and nothing at all;  
But Jesus Christ is my All-in-all."

### VIII.

Last of all, I am not a Romanist because THE ROMAN CHURCH TEACHES THAT SUBMISSION TO THE ROMAN PONTIFF IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL TO SALVATION. That is to say, no one can be saved unless he submits to the sovereign authority of the Pope of Rome. But I must give you proof of the truth of this amazing Romish claim. I quote from a volume entitled, *Church and State*, printed in London, by "Burns, Oates & Washbourne Limited, Publishers to the Holy See". It bears the imprimatur of the Vicar-General, signed at Westminster, February 13th, 1936; ("*Westmonasteru, die 13a Februariu, 1936*") ; so that this is not an old book, but is quite up-to-date. The book consists of "papers read at the Summer School of Catholic Studies, held at Cambridge, July 27th to August 6th, 1935; and the author is Rev. Father Alphonsus Bonnar, Professor of Dogmatic Theology at Forest Gate, London. I quote from this author on the subject of, "*Unam Sanctam*":

"There is one document, the Bull *Unam Sanctam* of Boniface VIII, which proved a storm-centre at the time it was issued and has ever since been pointed to as the classic example of the outrageous nature of the Church's claims. It has been wrenched from its historical setting in order that its meaning might be distorted: though, even if we had nothing but the text of the Bull itself, its evident meaning goes no further than the doctrine which we have expounded in this essay . . . It was the considered pronouncement of a Synod in which there were thirty-nine French bishops. Nor is it a document which the Holy See has ever in any way retracted. It was confirmed by the Fifth Lateran Oecumenical Council in 1513. The point in its teaching, to which exception is taken, is reaffirmed in the Syllabus of Pius IV."

But let us see what is involved in this doctrine of submission to the Roman Pontiff:

"The Gospel tells us that in the Church and in its power there are two swords; viz., the spiritual and the temporal . . . The latter is wielded for the Church, the former by the Church: the former by the priesthood, the latter by kings and soldiers, but by the bidding and consent of the priesthood."

So, in order to bring about submission, the sword is to be wielded by kings and soldiers in the interests of the church, "*but by the bidding and consent of the priesthood.*" That is to say, men are to be compelled to submit to the Roman Pontiff "by the sword", which is to be wielded by kings and soldiers, "*but by the bidding and consent of the priesthood*"—as, we suppose, it was done in Spain!

But I quote further from the same author, who again quotes from *Unam Sanctam*:

"For in truth the spiritual power instructs the temporal power and judges it, if it be not good . . . Hence we declare, affirm and define that it is of necessity to salvation for every human being to be subject to the Roman Pontiff."

As for myself—and I am giving my testimony to-night—I have not submitted to the Pope. I have no intention, and certainly no inclination, ever to do so. Notwithstanding, I conceive the salvation of the soul to be the supreme consideration of every rational being. I want to be saved. I desire that the salvation of my soul be placed beyond all possibility of mistake. In spite of the insistence of *Unam Sanctam*, I refuse submission to the Roman Pontiff; and therefore, according to the teaching of Rome, I cannot be saved.

The reason I do not submit is that the Bible teaches that salvation consists, not in submission to the Pope of Rome, but in submission to the Lord Jesus Christ. I have submitted to Him. I joyfully acknowledge Him as my Saviour and my Lord.

While telling you why I am not a Romanist, I have tried to preach the gospel to you. I want you clearly to understand that salvation is of grace alone, through faith—and that without works. I want you to believe that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin.

Romanism, in a word, is a system which makes merchandise of the souls of men. Salvation has been provided on a wholesale scale; it is free to everyone. The Roman Church insists that she has been given an exclusive retail license; and that salvation cannot be obtained directly from the divine Warehouse, but must be obtained through the Roman retail store of which the Pope is President and General Manager; and that which the grace of God provides for bankrupt souls, the Roman Church claims to monopolize, and to sell for a price. Thus the Roman Church stands between the Storehouse and the bankrupt sinner, and decrees,

"We declare, affirm and define that it is of necessity to salvation for every human being to be subject to the Roman Pontiff."

I want and need salvation wholesale, and for nothing. I like a wholesale religion. The Roman Church is the biggest racketeering organization in the world, and the Pope—others may call him "His Holiness" if they will—but I declare to you that the Pope of Rome is the biggest racketeer the world has ever known, professing to sell the things of God for a price instead of proclaiming the freedom of sovereign grace to all. May the Lord help us all to come directly to Christ! Do not come to me, to the Church, to any preacher or any priest, with the idea that it is within the power of any human individual or organization to save a soul. All you need to do, if you are not a Christian, is to let your heart cry out to

## BOOKS AND BOOKLETS

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*The Gospel Witness*

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God, as you are sitting there in that pew, God, be merciful to me a sinner—and you shall go down to your house justified.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper have their place, but neither of them is made a condition of salvation. Indeed, they have no proper place in any life until the individual soul has been regenerated by the power of the Holy Ghost through faith in Jesus Christ. The faith that appropriates the merit of Jesus Christ alone is the one thing that is indispensable to salvation. May the Lord help us to take the short cut, as the Irishman did, and get past the church, the priest, the bishop, the cardinal, and the Pope—and go to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself!

*The issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS containing the above sermon was quickly exhausted, as was also the pamphlet which was issued on the same subject. Therefore by special request we republish this sermon.*

**CABLE FROM DR. SHIELDS FROM LONDON**

C. N. T. LONDON, SEPTEMBER 11, 1948

JARWITSEM:

SUPREMEY HAPPY TO BE BACK UNDER THE BRITISH FLAG TO-DAY. WILMOT JOINED US AFTERNOON AND DINNER. WE HAD A GLORIOUS MEETING WITH A CROWDED HOUSE FRIDAY EVENING IN PARIS. ALL WELL. LOVE TO ALL THE CHURCH FAMILY. SHIELDS

**TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY  
OPENING**

As a reminder to friends of the work, we print below our calendar for the current school year. We know that there are a host of faithful helpers in the Seminary cause who will not be following the schedule there set forth in the way that our students will follow it, yet their interest in it, though different, is quite as real. Soon our student-pastors will be saying a farewell to their people and turning their faces to these halls again. They will return with joy for the Lord's blessing upon the preaching of the Word—a minister never forgets his first thrill in seeing God work through the spoken Word. They will also return wiser and more able to profit by the class instruction. There will be happy reunions and the blessed expectation of hard work, and beyond it all the day of graduation when the student takes his final leave of these halls of learning to go out in the field white already unto harvest. Pray for these young people and for those who instruct them in the things of God, that we may all be blessed together to the honour of His name and the salvation of many.

—W.S.W.

**TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY**

Calendar for the Year 1948-49

- Registration .....Monday, September 27  
at half past two
- Lectures Begin .....Tuesday, September 28  
at half past eight a.m.
- Convocation .....October 21
- First Quarter Examinations .....November 9-12
- Christmas Vacation .....December 23-January 4
- Second Quarter Examinations .....January 11-14
- Third Quarter Examinations .....March 8-11
- Fourth Quarter Examinations .....April 26-29
- Graduation .....May 3

(Lectures cease on the Friday before the examinations for each quarter and are resumed on the Tuesday following all but the final examinations.)

**DEWEY AND FRANCO**

**How the Roman Church Pulls Political Strings in U.S.A.**

A NEWS dispatch from Spain informs us that a military man high in the Spanish Army reports in Madrid, Spain, that prominent but unidentified United States representatives recently conferred secretly with Franco. Likewise, said this Spanish general, "assurances had been given by a group favourable to the election of Gov. Thomas R. Dewey that in event of a Republican victory, United States policy toward Franco will be changed radically."

We do not need to ask who the group is that promises a change in the United States policy to Franco, if Dewey is elected. The Roman Catholic Hierarchy is very thoroughly organized in the United States and knows how to bring pressure to bear on political parties. And like politicians in Canada and elsewhere, there are always leaders who are willing to listen to the voice of the priests who promise them a solid Roman Catholic vote. How solid it is, is an open question. While there are many loyal Roman Catholics who put the interests of their church and the commands of the pope above the interests of their country and above the dictates of their own conscience, there are also many Roman Catholics, we are convinced, who use their own judgment and follow the bidding of their consciences rather than the dictation of priests and pope.

Voters in the United States who imagine that it is only to the north of the international border and to the south of the Rio Grande that the pope and his agents interject their influence in politics, would do well to pay attention to the manoeuvres of their own political parties when they go a-courting to the well-organized Roman Hierarchy in the United States—W.S.W.

**DIGNITY OF THE PRIESTHOOD**

The Knights of Columbus' magazine, *Columbia* (which claims to be "the largest Catholic Magazine in the world"), in its issue for August, 1938, dramatically explains how the power of the Roman priest depends solely on the legal authorization of his office, as follows:—

"A PRIEST'S existence would be justified if he never did anything but give us the infinite boon of the Mass. If he said it on an old crate in a ramshackle barn, in the most barbarous Latin, with no music but the cackling of hens and the mooing of cows; if he paused after the gospel to preach the purest balderdash, mingled with constant appeals and demands for money, or the dullest observations on the weather, if he were ugly, ignorant, dirty, tactless, profane, greedy, cantankerous, intolerant, even immoral—if all these conditions existed, and the man was properly authorized to say Mass, and said it, he would be conferring on his parishioners a favour so great that they ought to be glad to crawl for miles on hands and knees, if necessary, to receive it."

—Protestant Press Bureau, England.

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# THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE

## THE ATONEMENT

A Bible Lecture, by Dr. T. T. Shields

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

Delivered in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Thursday Evening, March 12th, 1931

(Stenographically Reported)

Lesson read: Romans 3:19-31.

I HAVE been a little concerned in my own mind as to how far we should try to go in these Thursday evening studies. Someone wrote me to-day saying he liked the "sincere milk of the word", but that he thought he was old enough to take a little strong meat, and that he found in these Thursday evening discussions some "strong meat". I should not like to assume that we have gone beyond the comfortable capacity to think with us in these matters of any who are here, but I do believe it is desirable that the people of God should be a little more thoroughly instructed in these great verities of the faith.

It seems to me that modern orthodoxy is very thin and very superficial. I believe profoundly in the second personal coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. I go farther than that, and say that I believe in the premillennial coming of Christ. I cannot see, from the Word of God, that there is any prospect of a millennium this side of the Lord's coming. I differ from some of my brethren, however, at this point, that I am not half so sure of what is involved in that term "millennium" as some of them are. I read recently a summary, a digest, of an address in one of the city papers. It was an address on the parable of the lord of the vineyard, who went out from hour to hour, and at the eleventh hour hired certain men who had been standing all the day idle. With apparent solemnity the speaker called his hearers' attention to the fact that the Armistice became effective at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of the year! If you call that exegesis, I fear I cannot. One can prove anything if that is how we are to use the Word of God.

A man came to me just before I left my office this evening, to be married. He told me that it would have been more convenient for them to be married to-morrow, but that neither of them liked the idea of being married on a Friday, especially when that was the thirteenth day of the month!

Because the doctrine of the Lord's return has been passed over so generally, and almost ignored by a great many people, there has been a swing of the pendulum to the other extreme, until now one can scarcely find a so-called Bible-teacher who has anything else to talk about but the coming of the Lord, or Mussolini, or Russia, or the Jews, or some other of these eschatological guesses. Very few of them know anything about it. It is largely speculation. These things have a legitimate place in our study of the Scripture, but I submit that it is far more important that you should have a well-balanced meal than that you should have an aeroplane.

I believe it is more important that a man should have a house to live in, than that he should have a motor car. I think it is far more important that he should be respectably and comfortably clothed, than that he should have the most powerful telescope in Toronto. These things which relate to the future have their value, but when they are emphasized at the expense of the great doctrines of grace that are indispensable, first, to our salvation, and then to our growth in grace, to the formation of Christian character, and to our effective witness for Christ,—I say, when people are led into a habit of sky-gazing and speculative Bible study, it is neither good for their minds nor their spirits.

That is why I have chosen to speak to you on these Thursday evenings on these great matters that affect the soul's salvation, and our establishment as Christians on the one Foundation which is laid, even Christ.

How far shall we go in our study of the Atonement? It is an infinite subject. There is no end to it. I am sure that I could engage your thought from now until this time next year every Thursday evening with a discussion of it. But I have had some thought of putting these lectures together in book form, as I did once before, and perhaps they would make a theological text book,—not too profound, but put in a form that will enable you to study them further.

In the treatment of this subject it seems to me it is desirable that I should call your attention to some inadequate, defective, views of the Atonement—and I will tell you why. There is a great deal of preaching to-day the defect of which consists, not in its speech, but in its silence; not in what is said, but in what is left unsaid.

I suppose it would be possible, if one were determined to destroy another's life, to use the weapon of poison; but I read only yesterday of a woman who was being charged with murder for having starved somebody to death. Think of that! No poison was administered. It was not that she gave this person the wrong sort of food: she did not give the victim any food at all. I am not a chemist, but I suppose it would be possible to put a man's food through some sort of chemical process and extract from it all the nutritive elements, so that even though the man should eat a big breakfast he would get no nourishment at all.

I am sure that is what some preachers do. People sit under their ministry. They hear Christ preached, so they say, and sometimes "Christ crucified"; yet there is not a bit of food in it, because the vital things are omitted; the vital principles of the gospel are not set before the hearer as a foundation for faith to rest upon.



## I.

What do I mean by atonement? I shall not, for the moment, attempt to define it except in a very general way, because it means one thing to one person and something greatly different to another. But in general terms, we mean by the atonement—its particulars we will study at another time—but there is something between God and the soul of man which prevents their union, their commerce, their fellowship, one with another. Atonement is that which removes that something; whether that something is related to God or to man, is another question; it depends upon the view entertained. But the atonement is that which removes from between God and man all hindrances to their union.

Atonement—our English word, atonement—is a combination of three words—at-one-ment. And the hindrance to oneness between God and man being removed, God and man are once again made “at one”; and that which removes the obstacle, that act, whatever it is, is called atonement. Whether that thing which prevents their union, is in man or in God, is a question that we shall later consider.

## II.

THE PRINCIPLE OF ATONEMENT OCCUPIES A VERY PROMINENT PLACE IN THE BIBLE. You will find it in the early chapters of Genesis; you will find it in the book of Revelation. You cannot understand the Bible, you cannot become orientated in this great storehouse of truth unless you know what the atonement is. The Bible is inexplicable apart from it.

You remember the offerings presented by Cain and Abel. The New Testament tells us that Abel presented a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. Cain's sacrifice was rejected: Abel's was accepted, though we need not say why for the moment.

Noah, when the waters had receded and he stepped from the ark to a purified earth, built an altar and offered sacrifices to Jehovah, “and the Lord smelled a sweet savour.” Abraham offered sacrifices; so did Isaac; so did Jacob. Coming to the book of Exodus, you will find the whole Mosaic economy, the entire Levitical system, involved the offering of sacrifices continually, which were called offerings of atonement. You will discover the same principle in practice all through the Old Testament, in Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, and so on right through, until you come to the great passage on the atonement in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. There is equally prominent recognition of the principle in all the other prophets.

In the New Testament, John introduced Jesus as the “Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world”. Our Lord Himself said, “The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for (instead of) many.” In the Acts of the Apostles you will find that the apostles always preached that doctrine, that the remission of sins was somehow connected with the death of Christ. This great epistle from which I have read leads you into the heights and the depths of it. Paul argues the principle of salvation by faith, not by works, and always on the ground of grace in the atonement. You will find it in all the epistles, but notably in the epistle to the Hebrews, which is an exposition of the Levitical system, as the shadow of the reality in Christ, our great High Priest. Peter has it, John has it; and in the final book of the Bible you see

the great multitude which no man can number who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. There is no temple there; “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.”

Thus from Genesis to Revelation the principle of atonement runs through the whole Bible. I mention it that you may know how important it is.

## III.

Let me point out A FEW OF THE MORE IMPORTANT THEORIES OF THE ATONEMENT, ALL OF WHICH HAVE IN THEM SOME ELEMENTS OF TRUTH.

There is a theory that Christ came, that He lived and died to set us an example; that He lived as men ought to live, and that right to the end He did the will of God, and that, as we follow His example, all hindrances to our communion with God will be removed. Christ is an Example: “Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps.” But that is only a part truth: He is vastly more than an example.

Then there is another theory that is generally spoken of as the “moral influence theory”, which teaches that Christ came and identified Himself with our sin and our suffering, and that by His own sacrificial life He set before us not only an example, but He liberated a moral influence into human life which affords a stimulus to everyone who will study the life of Christ, who will view Him as their great Exemplar. It is akin in some respects to the example theory, except that it does recognize some sort of subjective power exercised upon the one who is to follow the example.

Well, there is a moral influence in the atonement. Surely no one of us can think of what Christ did for us without being moved to desire somehow to show our gratitude to Him. “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” There is a tremendous moral influence exerted upon the one who views the Crucified as thus identifying Himself with our cause, and suffering for us, the “Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God”. “He died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again.” But the moral influence theory is far short of what the Bible teaches in respect to the atonement which Christ has wrought for us.

There is another theory that is sometimes spoken of—I simply name these now, without exhaustively discussing them—there is a theory spoken of as the “governmental theory”. I have heard a good many orthodox people, and have read a good many sermons of supposedly orthodox ministers who preach the governmental theory without knowing it!—Christ died in order to honour His government, to magnify the law. It is as though a king should say, “I should like to forgive this offender, but it would be setting a bad example; thus, in order to maintain my honour, and to magnify the law, he must be punished”—not that the king is wounded by the offence, but purely to maintain the government of his kingdom, this man must be punished.

There is, however, much truth in that, for God has to maintain His position as the supreme Governor. And the law of God must be magnified; it must be upheld. But Jesus Christ did not die merely for the maintenance of the integrity of a system of law. There was something vastly more than that in the death of Christ.

I heard a very distinguished preacher preach in this pulpit once. He preached a theory of the atonement which is not quite correctly represented by any of these theories I have named. I think I should call his theory the "identification theory". He spoke from two texts: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust"; and, "Verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." The preacher said the atonement was really God's way of making Himself and the soul of man once more at one; that sin had affected a breach in their fellowship, and Christ came to remove the hindrance, and to bring them together again. So, he said, because man could not climb up to God by his own efforts, God stooped to man's low estate, and He took on Him our nature in order that we thereby might be made partakers of the divine nature.

That is true so far as it goes, but the preacher continued by saying that in the process of bringing God and man together, sin came in the way, and therefore Jesus Christ came into contact with sin; suffering was in the way, and therefore He suffered; death was in the way; and therefore He died. But there was nowhere in the sermon a suggestion that justice had been outraged, that any satisfaction had to be rendered on account of sin. There was no place for penalty or expiation, in short, there was no recognition of the principle of there being any moral necessity in the divine nature for the atonement.

I was not at all surprised when the Great War broke out to learn that that preacher was a pacifist, that he believed in a policy of non-resistance, because his view of the divine government, and his view therefore of the atonement, philosophically would drive him inevitably to pacifism—and, after all, that, logically and ultimately, is only another side of anarchy.

There is far more than identification in the atonement. While there is truth in all these views they are but part truths, and because of that they are all the more dangerous. People listen to them and say, "That is true, is it not?" Yes. "Christ is my Example, is He not?" Yes. "He did it that we might take on His nature?" Yes. But in none of these views is there any recognition of the necessity of the payment of a penalty, except in the governmental theory—and that not as finding its necessity in the moral nature of God, but rather, finding its reason in the necessity of maintaining law and order in the universe.

#### IV.

Let us now try to get a little nearer to the heart of the matter. In the first place, *you cannot separate God from His law*. I have frequently called your attention to the difference between the divine government and all forms of human government. Whether it be a republic, or a limited monarchy, or an absolute despotism, the government of a country, the laws by which the king's dominions are regulated, may have no relation at all to the character, and much less to the nature, of the king. As for example—you read on the statute books of this province, or of any other part of the British Dominion, something to this effect: that His Majesty, by and with the consent of his counsellors, enacts as follows. His Majesty, there, is a mere abstraction. His Majesty,

personally, does not know there is such a law on the statute books. If half the laws were violated it would not hurt the king personally, because he would not know it.

But every law of God is related to God Himself. Whether you view the realm of natural law in this physical universe, or the moral and spiritual realm, the laws of the divine kingdom are really a transcript of the divine nature. God's laws are what they are because He is what He is. He could not amend or change His laws without changing His own nature.

A certain American friend told me that he had great trouble when travelling in England. He said, "I am not a crank respecting the use of tobacco. I do not like it, but I am not a faddist. Yet unfortunately I am so constituted that tobacco and I cannot stay in the same room together. If any man smokes in my presence it so nauseates me that I am ill in a few minutes. I must keep out of the way; that is all."

When this man was travelling by train in England he would search out a compartment that was marked, "non-smoking", or rather, that was not marked, "Smoking". If no one else was in the compartment he would say, "Now I may have a comfortable ride." If a man came in and there were no ladies present almost invariably he would begin to smoke. My friend said, "Again and again I have had to say to such an one, 'I am sorry, sir, but either you must go out of this compartment, or I shall have to, for tobacco and I cannot dwell together'."

What do I mean by that? It is a poor illustration, I know, but I mean there was something in that man's physical constitution that reacted against tobacco. It was not an arbitrary thing with him at all, but he was so made that tobacco smoke upset him.

I used to have dinner with certain people a few years ago—I do not go very often now—and invariably I found, before I got away, that I had a splitting headache. I said to myself, "What is it about the company of these dear friends that makes me so ill?" They were delightful people. I discovered it was simply this: after dinner they served black coffee. In order not to be odd, and to accommodate myself to circumstances, I asked no questions for conscience' sake, or for my stomach's sake! I took the coffee, and at last discovered that I might almost as well take a glass of poison. I took it again and again when out, simply because I did not want to be odd. But I found out I could not afford to touch it. I had to decline.

Let me go back to my friend who could not ride in a smoking-carriage. Let me suppose him to be a king, not an ordinary man. Let me suppose him to be lord of a wide dominion. He enacts a law that within the limits of his dominion nobody shall smoke. You say, "That would be a very selfish, arbitrary, thing." No; it would not be arbitrary. The man must enact such a law, and have it obeyed, or else he must abdicate his throne, leave his kingdom.

Such a law as that would be related to the constitution of the king; not merely an abstract law upon a statute book, but a Transcript of the law of the king's physical nature. The illustration is inadequate, I know; but it is at least suggestive of the principle of a natural necessity.

God is not localized. I know He is in heaven, but He is everywhere: "God is a spirit." He dwelleth not in temples made with hands. There is a great truth in the doctrine of the divine immanence.

The doctrine of the divine immanence means that God is everywhere. Many of you have read Tennyson's "Higher Pantheism." There is a pantheism that is not biblical,—the idea that God is in every stick and stone, and that He is nothing but a part of the universe. God is in everything, but He is not only immanent, He is not only a spirit permeating everything in the universe, but He is personal and transcendent. He is possessed of personal qualities, and is over and above His laws. While they are related to Him, and in harmony with His nature, yet He is above them all. Keep in mind the two principles—divine immanence and divine transcendence.

My preacher friend upon whom, for illustrative purposes, I put a crown a few minutes ago would still be local. He could say, "If any of my subjects will smoke, then smoke; but stay in your own house." But God could not say that. He is everywhere, and His whole nature is outraged by sin, for sin is something that violates not only the law of the King's dominions, but it violates the law of nature of the divine Law-giver.

If God be infinite and fills all space, He cannot be localized. I could use those big words that theologians used to use to describe the Infinite, "immensity" and all the rest of them, but you would be no wiser. They are just figures of the Infinite. But God is everywhere, and God, Who is everywhere, hates sin. Sin is antagonistic to the nature of God. So, you see, the atonement that is to remove the hindrance between God and man must be something that will minister to the Divine Nature, and that will satisfy the divine holiness and make it possible, without violating His own nature, for God to forgive the sinner.

I do not know any better illustration of the truth I am trying to make clear to you than this: Jesus of Nazareth was Deity Incarnate. He was God manifest in the flesh. A friend of many years' experience, who has since gone home to glory, told me that once he heard in the days when people went to church in New York City, and when some of the world's greatest preachers were to be found there—he heard one of those noble preachers, a theologian, once at a ministerial meeting. He said it was very simple but very profound, and was to this effect: "We thank Thee, O God, for Jesus Christ, for He is the only God we know." We cannot know God, what He is, who He is, apart from Christ. He is "God manifest in the flesh".

When He took our place at the place called Calvary the soldier took a spear and drove it into His heart. Sin, wherever it begins, however small, never stops until it reaches Golgotha, the place of a skull, and drives its spear to the very heart of God. Sin is a protest against the divine Sovereignty—not only against God's rule, but against God as God. And so the atonement must deal with that.

I think I had better stop there to-night, and resume our study, next Thursday evening, when I shall try to show you the relation of the death of Christ to the divine nature, to all the qualities of Deity; and how God was "in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself".

May God graciously bless our evening's meditation to our good and His glory.

In the olden days there was a John Knox, whose prayers were more terrible to the adversary than whole armies, because he pleaded in faith.

—Charles H. Spurgeon.

## HOME MISSION APPEAL

It is, we believe, the earnest desire of all the pastors and people of our Union to expand our missionary enterprises just as far as it is financially possible. In our Home Mission work, which includes French-Canadian evangelization, aid to weaker causes, grants to students on summer fields, etc., we have endeavoured to do this to the utmost of our ability.

Therefore, owing to the extra heavy demands this year, our Home Mission funds are naturally somewhat reduced. We felt that if our Churches were informed of this fact they might wish so to direct their September contributions as to give the Home Mission account a proper balance before our books are closed the end of this month.

If this suggestion can, without inconvenience, be acted upon by all our Churches and contributing friends, the Board would greatly appreciate it. September is usually one of our best months, both spiritually and financially. We are confident that by prayer and special effort on the part of us all, this one can be made to exceed all others. With so much Mission work to be done even here in Canada, surely this is how our Lord would have it!

THE ANNUAL CONVENTION WILL BE HELD IN JARVIS STREET BAPTIST CHURCH, TORONTO, OCTOBER 19-21. PLAN NOW TO ATTEND.

## PERSECUTION: TWO VIEWS

### The Roman Catholic View

"If it is just that false coiners or other malefactors should be promptly handed over to death by secular rulers, much more can heretics be not only promptly excommunicated, but even justly killed, on the ground that they are convicted of heresy"

—Thomas Aquinas, a Saint and Doctor of the Roman Catholic Church

### The Protestant View

If they were in the true faith, they would never use racks, prisons and fines to persecute and force others . . . This was not the practice of the apostles and primitive Christians, who witnessed and enjoyed the true faith of Christ; but it was the practice of the faithless Jews and Heathens so to do.

—George Fox, the Quaker

## BEN KARSHOOK'S WISDOM

"Would a man 'scape the rod?"

Rabbi Ben Karshook saith,

"See that he turn to God

The day before his death."

"Ay, could a man inquire

When it shall come!" I say.

The Rabbi's eye shoots fire—

"Then let him turn to-day!"

—ROBERT BROWNING

# Grace Abounding

## The Spiritual Autobiography of John Bunyan

*Grace Abounding* was written by John Bunyan some ten years before he penned *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Like that great allegory, it, too, was composed while the author was in jail. As he says in the first edition, "I was had home to prison again, where I have now lain above five years and a quarter, waiting to see what God will suffer these men to do with me." In the sixth edition he adds that he has lain now complete twelve years. Though *Grace Abounding* is not so well known as *The Pilgrim's Progress*, it well deserves the praise bestowed on it by Lord Macaulay who described it as "one of the most remarkable pieces of autobiography in the world". To be permitted to gaze into the secret chamber of another human soul is a privilege that is rarely granted, but when that soul is one that has not only thought deeply, suffered much, and accomplished great things for God and for his fellow-men and is also recognized as a master of the English language as well as a great saint, then the privilege of seeing down into the depths of his soul is one that will not be lightly passed over by any who give themselves in a serious way to the study of literature, or of life, or of Christianity. For that reason we welcome the reappearance in print of John Bunyan's spiritual autobiography after a period of years when it was impossible to obtain it due to the famine of good books caused by war conditions.\* We sincerely wish a wide diffusion for this book as an introduction to the life and works of one who must be numbered among the greatest of Englishmen and the noblest of Christians. We venture to hope that this brief discussion of John Bunyan will provide an incentive to some to turn again to *The Pilgrim's Progress* and then to his other less known works.

### The Purpose of the Book

The author's purpose in writing this book is indicated in the title, the full text of which covers a page in the edition of 1666, but the gist of which is given in the first few lines and in the last paragraph: *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners: or a Brief and Faithful Relation of the Exceeding Mercy of God in Christ, to His poor Servant, John Bunyan . . . All which was written by his own hand there (in prison) and now published for the support of the weak and tempted people of God.* It is not of the external details of his life or of the history of his own day, thrilling as that was, that the great Puritan writes, it is of the inward battle that took place in his soul. He was too humble to suppose that anyone would find an interest in John Bunyan's outward life and circumstances but he does not hesitate to recount the most minute details of his own harrowing spiritual struggles in order that he may comfort those in like affliction and point sinners to the Saviour Who gives rest to those that labour and are heavy laden.

Bunyan adheres to this purpose with rigid insistence so that though he speaks in plain direct speech, not in the allegories and similitudes he was to employ later in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, yet we learn almost as little about the material condition and circumstances of his life as we know of the allegorical figure of Pilgrim. He

does not trouble, for example, to enlighten us as to who his parents were except to say that, "My descent then, it was, as is well known by many, of a low and inconsiderable generation; my father's house being of that rank that is meanest and most despised of all the families in the land." Though he had been a soldier, he tells us nothing of his experiences save that through the goodness of God he escaped death because another soldier, who was later killed, took his place at the siege of "such a place". Historians have spilled much ink in attempting to identify the place referred to, but in Bunyan's mind the name of the place was of no importance: it is the workings of God upon his own soul with which he is concerned, not in the facts of history. Even so good a historian as Froude thought it probable that Bunyan had fought on the side of the Royalists during the Civil War, and he offers as proof of his supposition a quotation from *Grace Abounding*. Since then, however, an old muster roll of the Parliamentary army has come to light which lists Bunyan's name among the soldiers of Newport Pagnell garrison. Even his courtship and marriage are passed over in one brief sentence: "Presently after this, I changed my condition into a married state, and my mercy was to light upon a wife whose father was counted godly." And even this is mentioned merely to introduce the fact that his wife possessed two books on religious subjects, "wherein I also found some things that were somewhat pleasing to me."

### "The Religion of the Times"

This is not the usual way of writing biography or history, and those who look here for names and facts and dates will be sorely disappointed. This man did not set out to describe the clothes his contemporaries wore, or the houses in which they lived, or the battles they fought, or the reasons for them; he set out to lay bare his soul in order to show men the way to the Cross which he had found. This he does as few men have ever succeeded in doing in any language. Take, for instance, his account of the first stirrings of spiritual inquietude, brought about by the books his wife brought with her to their new household:

Wherefore these books with this relation, though they did not reach my heart, to awaken it about my sad and sinful state, yet they did beget within me some desires to religion: so that, because I knew no better, I fell in very eagerly with the religion of the times; to wit, to go to church twice a day, and that too with the foremost; and there should very devoutly, both say and sing as others did, yet retaining my wicked life; but withal, I was so overrun with a spirit of superstition, that I adored, and that with great devotion; even all things, both the high place, priest, clerk, vestment, service, and what else belonging to the church; counting all things holy that were therein contained, and especially the priest and clerk most happy, and without doubt, greatly blessed, because they were the servants, as I then thought, of God, and were principal in the holy temple, to do his work therein.

Even better known is his graphic description of the voice from heaven, which, as he played a game of cat on the village green, "did suddenly dart from heaven

into my soul, which said, Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?" If the easy conscience of our modern age is not capable of seeing any wrong in playing an innocent game on the Sabbath day, to Bunyan the thing appeared as the vivid symbol of the world and the flesh, of the things of time as opposed to the unseen and eternal things of God. In the soul of this poor tinker there was being waged a greater battle than any hard-fought field of the Civil War, and he spares no detail of this fierce great inner conflict. Falling under the conviction of sin, one by one he gave up the things that he had delighted in, and his neighbours all wondered at the reformation in his life. He himself remarks that at that time he felt that he "pleased God as well as any man in England." He was gratified at his new reputation for godliness and proud of his self-righteousness.

### A Brisk Talker Silenced

But one day an incident took place that was to change the whole course of his life. "The good providence of God," he says in telling the story, "did cast me to Bedford, to work on my calling." There he overheard three or four poor women sitting at a door in the sun talking about the things of God. Though by this time he was "a brisk talker also myself in the matters of religion", he recognized to his great surprise that these poor women spoke a different language from his. Their religion did not consist in external rites and in self-reformation, but in a personal experience of the presence and power of the Saviour Himself. This was something startlingly new and the brisk talker was silenced and convicted:

And methought they spake as if joy did make them speak; they spake with such pleasantness of Scripture language, and with such appearance of grace in all they said, that they were to me as if they had found a new world, as if they were people that dwelt alone, and were not to be reckoned among their neighbours.

But the discovery that a new world existed was not the same as to breathe its celestial atmosphere, and poor Bunyan, like his Pilgrim, "looked this way, and that way, as if he would run; yet he stood still, because (as I perceived) he could not tell which way to go." Beset by doubts and temptations, he saw with increasingly great despair the sinfulness of his own heart, and yet did not know the way to the Cross. Finally, through the good offices of the poor people of Bedford, he was introduced to Evangelist in the person of Mr. Gifford. This man had been an officer in the Royalist army, had narrowly escaped shooting after falling into the hands of the opposing forces and lived a life of debauchery, from which he was converted to become the beloved pastor of the despised little group of Dissenters. From him Bunyan received "more conviction and from that time began to see something of the vanity and inward wretchedness of my wicked heart, for as yet I knew no great matter therein." Mr. Gifford was apparently less desirous of adding new converts to his church roll than he was of insuring that when they took the step they would come in utter dependance upon Christ, having no confidence in the flesh.

### Trials and Temptations

Readers of *The Pilgrim's Progress* have perhaps wondered at the slowness of the journey from the City of Destruction to the Heavenly City, and at the many

setbacks that Pilgrim suffered. They marvel at his struggles in the Slough of Despond, and at his folly in heeding the deceitful advice of Mr. Worldly Wiseman. They are even more perplexed at the difficulties that Christian encounters at the very moment when he enters in at the Wicket Gate. And even after he has finally set his feet in the Way of Salvation, he is by no means immune from temptation nor exempt from fears and doubts. When he crosses the last river, he sinks in its waters and loses heart and not until he is almost over does he find firm ground to stand upon. Readers who are troubled at the many doubts and fears that beset Pilgrim in the famous allegory, will be even more perturbed over the seemingly endless struggles and strife which John Bunyan describes in great detail in *Grace Abounding*. But in principle his spiritual history was the same as that of the saints of all ages. Does the Bible not warn us that the Christian life is a battle? The meek and gentle Jesus will not have those to follow Him who are not willing to take up their cross. This English saint was too sincere, too much in earnest about sin and salvation, to accept the opinions of others secondhand, or to model his religious experiences upon theirs. In his quest for the Heavenly City he would not be put off with ritual or sacrament, or outward conformity to the manners of his age. In our day, as in Bunyan's, too many easy-going persons equate Christianity with baptism or church membership or decent living or perhaps with raising the hand or making some other public sign of profession of faith in Christ. All these outward tokens have their rightful place if they are really the expression of an inward reality, but apart from a personal knowledge of the grace of God in Christ, they are meaningless gestures which only too often become fetiches that usurp the place which Christ alone can fill.

### Comfort for the Afflicted

Like *The Pilgrim's Progress* this book is filled with comfort for the afflicted. It is "a drop of honey, . . . taken out of the carcase of the lion." The details of "the strange and unusual assaults of the tempter" are not given, as we have said, to satisfy idle curiosity, nor are they the fruits of a morbid introspection. Bunyan's method has something of the scientific objectivity of modern psychiatry. Skilful physician of souls that he is, he understands the temptations of others because he has been through them himself, and he can comfort others with the same comfort wherewith he himself has been comforted. "I preached what I felt," he tells us, "what I smartingly did feel, even that under which my poor soul did groan and tremble to astonishment . . . I went myself in chains to preach to them in chains; and carried that fire in my own conscience that I persuaded them to beware of." Those who read the book with such little sympathy and understanding as to miss the author's purpose, may think, as the relations of Pilgrim thought, that "some phrensy distemper had got into his head." If this be madness, we sincerely wish that more in our day could be thus smitten in order that they might write books like *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and preach sermons such as he preached, and live as he lived, and be willing to suffer imprisonment and death, if necessary, for the sake of the Gospel.

A closer reading of Bunyan shows that he was far from being an unbalanced fanatic. He had, on the

contrary, a large fund of hard-headed common sense that in no way clashed with his otherworldliness. We think, as an example of this, of the incident he recounts which took place during a period of great darkness when he was labouring under the fear that he had committed the unpardonable sin. Writhing in agony and unable to find comfort in the Scriptures, he went to an "ancient Christian", as he calls him, and told him all his case:

I told him, also, that I was afraid that I had sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost; and he told me he thought so too. Here, therefore, I had but cold comfort; but, talking a little more with him, I found him, though a good man, a stranger to much combat with the devil. Wherefore, I went to God again, as well as I could, for mercy still.

### The Danger of Seeking After Signs

This story exhibits not only the author's common sense and shrewd insight into human nature, together with a certain grim humour, but above all his characteristic singleness of mind in determining to deal with God alone and to lean upon His Word rather than upon the advice of any man. Voices from on high and supernatural interventions may seem to play a large part in the mystic experience of Bunyan, but he was keenly aware of the dangers inherent in basing one's spiritual hope on subjective signs. Indeed it is no small part of his purpose in writing *Grace Abounding* to warn against that very tendency. He was aware of the power and vividness of his own imagination and the sensibility of his mind, but he also knew the hearts and minds of others well enough to realize that all men were not cast in the same mould as he. While he does not belittle or deny the supernatural visitations of God upon his soul, he does not limit them to the outward signs and voices. He is so rooted and grounded in the principles of Scripture, so imbued with English common sense, as to refuse to build a theological system or to base his hopes of eternal life on visions and voices. Would that all religious persons were as wise as he, both Protestant and Roman Catholic! Take, for instance, his careful interpretation of the voice that came to him when he was labouring under great distress of soul because he feared he was not included among the number of the elect. He tells in his quaint, yet direct way, of walking to and fro in a good man's shop meditating upon his fearful state, praying in his heart that God would reveal him some ray of hope:

"And being now ready to sink with fear," he says, "suddenly there was, as if there had rushed in at the window, the noise of wind upon me, but very pleasant, and as if I heard a voice speaking, Dost ever refuse to be justified by the blood of Christ? And, withal my whole life and profession past was, in a moment, opened to me, wherein I was made to see that designedly I had not."

Had our author been a Roman Catholic instead of a Puritan, he would have built a shrine at the spot and set out to found a new order of monks or nuns to the apparition of a saint or angel or perhaps to some new Virgin with a strange name. But in the light of the revelation of God in Christ and in the Written Word, he has this comment to make:

"But as to my determining about this strange dispensation, what it was, I knew not; or from whence it came I know not. I have not yet, in twenty years' time, been able to make a judgement of it; I thought then what here I shall be loth to speak . . . But I say concerning this dispensation, I know not what yet

to say unto it; which was, also, in truth, the cause that, at first, I did not speak of it in the book; I do now, also, leave it to be thought on by men of sound judgement. I lay not the stress of my salvation thereupon, but upon the Lord Jesus, in the promise."

And perhaps most significant of all, is his statement in the same connection that "the savour of it" lasted for about three or four days, and "then," he says, "I began to mistrust and to despair again." He will not base his hope of eternal life on visions and voices but on the Word of God which liveth and abideth for ever, and so he warns others also away from the shifting sands of man's opinions and feelings.

### A Man of One Book

Bunyan is a man of one book, but it is the best of books, the Bible. He not only believed it and meditated upon it day and night, he lived it; its truths, its language, its ideas, its imagery, its point of view, its power and grace were woven into the warp and woof of his language, his thought, and his life. It is to this source of inspiration that he owes his high place as one of the great English authors. So high an authority as Lord Macaulay says of him, "The style of Bunyan is delightful to every reader, and invaluable as a study to every person who wishes to obtain a wide command over the English language." This converted tinker represents English Puritanism at its best. Milton is the poet's poet, admired of all but probably read by few; Cromwell symbolizes the harsh and unlovely traits of the movement, great man that he was. But Bunyan, who harmed no one and who has helped thousands by his words of good cheer, has come to be a household name not only in English but in almost all the languages of the world. His *Pilgrim's Progress* has pointed myriads to the Wicket Gate and to the Cross where their burden has been loosed from off their back, and his message of sympathy and comfort have consoled and strengthened unknown multitudes through the Slough of Despond and in Castle Doubting in the grip of Giant Despair and opened their eyes to the joy and brightness of that Heavenly City whence he himself pressed onward.

### Freedom of Worship

He was one of a host, and of them not the least, who not only by speaking and writing, but more by his suffering, purchased our common right to say the thing we will and best of all to worship God after the dictates of our own consciences.

Of course there have not been wanting those who have represented Bunyan as unreasonably obstinate in asserting his rights of free speech. They excuse his imprisonment on the grounds that his intransigent attitude forced the magistrates and judges, against their will, to visit upon him the full rigours of the law. The fact remains that he was in prison for twelve years, and that the charge against him was that he "devilishly and perniciously abstained from coming to church to hear Divine service, and is a common upholder of several unlawful meetings and conventicles, to the great disturbance and distraction of the good subjects of this kingdom contrary to the laws of our sovereign lord the King." It is doubtless true that had he promised to abstain from preaching, he would have been liberated. But those who advance that as an excuse for the obnoxious crime of his judges cannot at the same time claim to defend free speech and freedom of worship. Socrates also could have escaped death had

he been willing to hold his peace. And another Prisoner, too, greater than either of these, could have escaped death had He been willing to temporize with those who opposed Him. Any system of religion, or any code of law that imprisons men of the spiritual temper of the author of *The Pilgrim's Progress* does not condemn its victims but itself. The Inquisition is not lovelier for being conducted in English instead of in Latin or Spanish. We ought to thank God for men of the conviction and spiritual fortitude of Bunyan who, by suffering with patience, abolished the English version of this diabolical system of repression and left for us our heritage of liberty.

\*GRACE ABOUNDING TO THE CHIEF OF SINNERS, by John Bunyan (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1948. U.S. price \$1.50).

We congratulate the Zondervan Publishing House for its enterprise in making this great book again available to the reading public. In our judgment it is regrettable that the "Author's Preface" has been omitted, and it seems to us that the brief "Author's Conclusion", together with the longer "Relation of the Imprisonment of Mr. John Bunyan, etc.", usually published with this book, add a sense of completion to the autobiography that is lacking in this edition. The latter addendum, however, is not from Bunyan's hand, and those who wish these and other interesting details of his life and times may find them in the monumental work on Bunyan by Dr. John Brown. We sincerely wish a wide diffusion of *Grace Abounding* as an introduction to one of the greatest Englishmen who ever lived and as representative of a theology and of a spiritual experience of which much modern preaching is unblissfully ignorant.

## A FRENCH PASTOR REPORTS DR. SHIELDS' VISIT TO ALSACE

In last week's issue we printed a letter written by Dr. Shields from Geneva, Switzerland, describing in glowing terms his time of fellowship with the brethren of the French Bible Mission in both France and Switzerland. Now from one of the pastors, Rev. Frédéric M. Buhler, L. ès L., B.D., of Mulhouse, Alsace, we have a report, which we requested from him, of Dr. Shields' visit to the regional conference of some of the Baptist Churches of the *Association Evangélique*.

**A**LREADY over! This applies both to Dr. Shields' visit to Alsace and to our regional conference of churches held in Mulhouse on August 29th. For some time past, we had been planning this conference and we arranged the date so that Dr. Dubarry, who was to come to our Bible Camp beginning on September 1st, would also be able to attend this regional gathering in August. Little did we think at that time that we should have the joy of having with us Dr. Shields from Toronto, Canada, and also Dr. Springer and his wife from Englewood, Colorado, and Rev. Carl McIntire and his wife from Collingswood, New Jersey. But the Lord made all things work together for good to us all.

On Saturday afternoon, it was our happy privilege to go and meet our Canadian and American visitors who arrived at Basle, Switzerland, from Amsterdam, Holland, by plane. We took them to Mulhouse from the airport to our modest home for tea and dinner. What a thrill to see Dr. Shields again for the first time in ten years!

Sunday morning, our out-of-town visitors arrived from Bienne, Court, Colmar, and Sainte Marie. We even had representatives from Paris and Nîmes. Together with our Mulhouse people, some five hundred in all gathered in the rented hall of the *Fraternité*. It was

my dreadful but happy lot to preside at the morning service. After the singing of a hymn, the reading of Psalm 19, and prayer, all the visitors were welcomed, and Dr. Springer and Rev. Carl McIntire were presented to the congregation. They gave us both a word of greeting and also of appreciation and encouragement. After the choir of the Court Church had brought a message in song, Dr. Shields was introduced and the audience rose as a token of gratitude for what Dr. Shields has meant to us all, and for what he has done for us as pastor of Jarvis Street Baptist Church, President of the Toronto Baptist Seminary and of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec. It will be of special interest to your readers to know that the desk from which the messages were delivered was made of wood from the boxes in which relief parcels were sent by the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec.

Dr. Shields preached in his usual attractive and impressive way from Ephesians (1:15-23), and Brother Frey, another Seminary graduate, translated the message into French. After the service we all went to different restaurants where some 300 out-of-town guests were fed.

Before we returned to the meeting-place, a photograph was taken of the group. The programme for the afternoon session was left as it had been planned some two months ago. Dr. Dubarry presided and our Canadian and American guests were on the platform with our Swiss and French pastors. Brother Frey started the development of the theme for the day by discussing the topic, "A Remedy for This World's Ills". I spoke of the "Nature of Sin"; Pastor Waecker of Court spoke of "The Punishment of Sin", and after another choir selection by our friends from the Court Church, Pastor Weber spoke on "The Deliverance from Sin", drawing attention to the objective work of Calvary's Atonement. Dr. Dubarry concluded by describing the subjective work God proposes to accomplish in us, of regeneration and sanctification.

After tea and dinner, we had another meeting in our hall composed chiefly of our local Mulhouse people, for most of the out-of-town visitors had to leave for home. It was perhaps the most enjoyable meeting of the day, for we had come to know each other and there was nothing conventional about it. Rev. Carl McIntire began by speaking on the "Heavenly Places" as described in Ephesians. Dr. Springer impressed upon us the necessity of a good knowledge of the Bible; then Dr. Shields added an appropriate word. It seemed that we should be unable to close the meeting for we realized that we were, indeed, already in the heavenly places in Christ. The meeting, however, was brought to a conclusion by the singing of "Blest Be the Tie that Binds" and prayer was offered by Dr. Shields, Rev. W. H. Frey and Dr. Dubarry.

On Monday, two brethren from the Court Church in Switzerland came to take our Canadian and American guests, and Brother Dubarry, my wife and myself. We visited the church building at Court and had fine fellowship at tea-time with Brother Weber's family. When we arrived at Tramelan, Brother Frey's church, a goodly number of friends had gathered to welcome us all. It was decided that we should have a meeting which turned out to be very much like the one of Sunday evening. After this, we drove to Evilard, Bienne, where we were the guests of Pastor Waecker.

The following day our brethren from the Court Church again called for us to take us through the Swiss Alps. We had lunch at Interlaken and dinner at Lausanne. What a wonderful time of fellowship we had with our visitors and our Swiss hosts in the beautiful setting of God's marvellous handiwork. But alas! the time to part had come. Our visitors from across the sea were to go to Geneva by train in order to take the plane for Rome. We were never so thankful for the lateness of a train as we were that night.

We were so thankful for the joy of having Dr. Shields with us, and we were also happy for the fellowship we had with Rev. and Mrs. McIntire and Rev. and Mrs. Springer, who came to us as strangers but left us as real Christian friends. We could only be comforted by our visitors' promise that they would visit us again two years hence, God willing.

"To God be the glory, great things He hath done."

## Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 12 Third Quarter Lesson 13 September 26, 1948

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

### REVIEW, or TEMPERANCE LESSON

Lesson Text: Proverbs 4:13-19.

Golden Text: "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

—Prov. 4:18.

#### I. The Path of the Wise: verse 13.

The illustration of "the path" or "the way" is a familiar one to the readers of Scripture (Psa. 1:6; 119:32; Jer. 12:1; Rom. 3:17). A path is simply a track, a course along which someone moves from one place to another. It suggests a starting point, a goal to be reached and a journey from the starting-point to the goal. Christ is the Way to the Father, the only One through Whom we can approach the Father (John 14:6).

It is well to study the path of the wise man, the methods he adopts and the course he follows in his pursuit of the wisdom which is from above (Jas. 3:17). The starting-point is the fear of the Lord (Prov. 1:7, 29; 9:10; 15:33); not the craven fear of a slave, but that holy fear which includes such elements as reverential love, respect and esteem. How shall one proceed to attain to the state which is characterized by holy, heavenly wisdom?

Wisdom must be highly regarded; it must be recognized as a valuable standard of excellence toward which one may strive (vv. 8, 9; Prov. 3:13-15; 8:10, 11). Wisdom is associated with knowledge and with understanding (Prov. 1:2-6; 8:14; 10:13, 14). These terms are not exactly synonymous: knowledge stresses the intellectual aspect, understanding the intuitive aspect and wisdom the moral and practical aspects of learning. Wisdom is sometimes defined as knowledge perfected and applied.

The medium of wisdom is the Word of God (vv. 10, 20-22). If we would be wise in the things of God, we must appropriate the Word of God (Psa. 119:30, 32, 33, 105).

Wisdom is to be obtained as a result of long and hard training, stern discipline and strict education (vv. 11-13). It is not an immediate state of perfection, but the final consummation of a painful process. The one who would become wise must continue undaunted in his course in spite of hardship, difficulty, trial and affliction. Like Christian in Bunyan's immortal "Pilgrim's Progress" he will meet temptations and experiences of every sort, but with the Book in his hand he will persevere till he reaches the Celestial City.

#### II. The Way of the Wicked: verses 14-17.

The figure of "the way" suggests not merely a journey from one point to another, but also the outstanding characteristic of the life of an individual or of a class. It denotes their conduct or manner of life. For example, "The way of the transgressor is hard" denotes that the life of the sinner is characterized by hardship. Similar uses of the phrase "the way" or "the path" will frequently be found in Scripture (Gen. 6:12;

Prov. 3:31; Jer. 10:2). Christianity, like its Founder, is called "the way," as it is the method of salvation (Acts 19:9).

We are solemnly warned not to commence a life of sin (v. 14). Probably very few intend to become confirmed drunkards. One should never take the first glass, for the first leads on to the second, the third, and so on. Point out the danger of taking the first step in the downward path.

The way of the wicked may seem at first glance to be attractive and pleasing; it is broad, well travelled and popular (Matt. 7:13, 14). But at all costs we must avoid it. We must not approach it, lest we be enticed, but we must turn decidedly away from it, and then walk in the opposite direction (Prov. 1:10-15). The example of Lot is given to us for a warning. He lifted up his eyes and beheld the plain of Jordan, chose it, journeyed east, dwelled in the cities of the plain, pitched his tent toward Sodom, then dwelt in Sodom (Gen. 13:10-13; 14:12).

Sleep implies rest, contentment and the cessation of activity (Psa. 127:2). The wicked know no rest until they have accomplished some wicked deed, for their waking thoughts are concentrated upon the pursuits of wickedness (Psa. 36:4). They are not contented unless they are causing another to fall. Such teaching applies, alas, to our own time. There are those, even those who call themselves Christians, who judge and condemn the just in their midst, plotting and contriving to bring about their downfall (Psa. 34:11-20; 37:12-14, 32). Such men the Lord will judge, if not here, then hereafter (Psa. 37:38; Prov. 17:15; Rom. 12:19).

Just as the Word and the will of God sustain, strengthen and satisfy the Christian (John 4:13, 14, 34), so do their wicked deeds seem to satisfy the evil ones (Prov. 2:14).

#### III. The Way of the Just: verses 18, 19.

The just walk along a pathway which is bathed in light (2 Sam. 23:4; Matt. 5:14; Phil. 2:15). Light in Scripture is associated with knowledge (Psa. 36:9; 43:3), holiness (1 John 1:5-7) and life (Prov. 12:28; John 8:12). On the other hand, the wicked walk in the darkness of ignorance, sin and death (Psa. 82:5; Prov. 2:13; 14:12; John 3:19, 20; 12:35).

The path of the just is compared to "the shining light", most probably the sun. Just as the sun shines with more power and brilliance as the day advances toward noon, so should the life of the Christian be one of steady advancement in radiance and glory (Isa. 62:1).

Just as the sun finally reaches its zenith in the heavens, here referred to as "the perfect day", so will the righteous man, the man whose righteousness is in Christ, at last reach perfection. He will be clothed in the perfect righteousness of Christ, and he will shine as the stars for ever and ever (Psa. 17:15; Dan. 12:3; Rom. 8:29; 1 John 3:2). It is this goal toward which the Christian pilgrim strives (Rev. 22:3-5).

#### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Sept. 20—If sinners entice thee .....	Prov. 1:1-19.
Sept. 21—Trust in the Lord wholeheartedly .....	Prov. 3:1-18.
Sept. 22—Beware of the strange woman .....	Prov. 6:20-35.
Sept. 23—Forsake the foolish .....	Prov. 9.
Sept. 24—The doom of the drunkard .....	Prov. 23:17-35.
Sept. 25—The value of friendship .....	Prov. 27.
Sept. 26—A virtuous woman .....	Prov. 31:10-31.

#### SUGGESTED HYMNS

Yield not to temptation. More holiness give me. Standing by a purpose true. Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole. More about Jesus. Show me Thy face.

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