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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

CAN THE H-BOMB DEPOPULATE THE EARTH IF THE BIBLE IS TRUE?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, March 12th, 1950
(Stenographically Reported)

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning,
that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."
—Romans 15:4.

OUR text succinctly defines the divine purpose in giving to men the Holy Scriptures.

The Bible was not given to terrify us, much less to torture us: it was given rather for our learning, that we might learn from its inspired pages something of the methods and results of the operations of divine Providence from the beginning of time until now. And, learning this, that we might, through "patience and comfort of the scriptures," receive comfort from the scriptures, and "have hope."

Direful Threatenings

But are there not some direful threatenings in the word of God? Yes; there are some terrible passages in the word of God, as we shall see; but none of them need be terrible to us. It is for us to say whether or not they shall fill us with fear.

I read to you this evening "the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." If such godly fear is wrought in our hearts by the ministry of the Holy Ghost, we need fear no one else—we need fear nothing else. The scriptures were written that through them we might be comforted, that we might learn patience, and above all, that we might live in hope of better days to come.

The Bible opens a wide window into a new world, a new life, where there is nothing to fear, but everything to enjoy; and to see it is to be filled with hope, for we are saved by hope.

People Being Frightened Out of Their Wits

There are people in the world who, with the best of intentions, seem to have been exerting themselves to

frighten the world out of its wits. Before Mr. Lilienthal said it, frankly I said it myself, that it was a lot of "intellectual nonsense." Not that these things may not be true! The atom bomb is not a theory: it is a terrible historic fact, of which Hiroshima and Nagasaki are witnesses. What the hydrogen bomb may portend I do not know. I know little of nuclear science. I can only read what scientific investigators have been pleased to write for our information; but having these things before us, we can make our own deductions, and bring them into the light of Holy Scripture, so that we may have some experience of this "patience and comfort of the scriptures" and not be plunged into a night of utter hopelessness.

The Earth to be Converted Into Globe of Fire?

We have been told that the H-bomb would convert this planet into a burning sun; that it would become a globe of fire, like the sun, and that in a matter of minutes the whole earth could be depopulated. We cannot afford to laugh at these things, as though they were idle tales. But we ought to learn to measure, and to appraise these fell predictions by the light, and by the standards of Holy Scripture; for whatever the scientists may say, of one thing we are sure, and that is, that the word of the Lord abideth for ever.

Current Blasphemy

I said something this morning which I will repeat: I don't want to say it unkindly, but to me it was a shocking thing when I read an announcement in the paper last night that in a United Church, which was formerly

a Methodist Church, which was built for the worship of God, dedicated, I doubt not, to the proclamation of the gospel of saving grace—that in this church called Bathurst Street United Church, they have a Sunday night forum, and to-night in that Christian Church so-called, they are debating the question, "Is God Necessary?" with a man from the United States, the editor of a humanist magazine, taking the negative position, and answering, "No!", and someone else, with what qualifications he is endowed I do not know, who takes the affirmative to answer, "Yes!" To ask in a house dedicated to the worship of God, "Is God Necessary?" and to import a man dedicated to an ethical system, which eliminates God, to give an answer in the negative, to me is utter blasphemy, (Amen!) You may convey that message to the Pastor of that Church, Rev. Gordon Domm, with my compliments.

I could wish that an atomic bomb, or some such thing, would utterly blot Jarvis Street Church from the face of the earth, rather than it should ever afford hospitality to an expression of such infidelity. Surely Christian people of any faith at all ought to rise up and protest against blasphemies of that sort! At one time that would have rocked the Methodist Church to its foundation; and everyone in it who has any faith at all to protest against such near blasphemy.

You say, "That is censorious!" Yes; someone ought to protest against things of that sort; and if no one else will do it, I will do it myself!

A Wicked World

We live in a wicked world. I think there is no difficulty, surely, to anyone who has any spiritual, or even moral, discernment, in accepting the truth of the scripture which says that this world "lieth in the Wicked One," and which calls Satan, "the god of this world"—a world that is in rebellion against its Maker; a world that in all continents and islands, everywhere, is at war with God,—wishing, in some cases, that there were no God, trying to eliminate Him completely from human life, and to elbow the Creator out of the world He has made.

Many Inventions

The wise man long ago observed, "God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions." I should be the last to undervalue the achievements of true science. I should be the last to belittle the accomplishments of the human intellect. This is a world of wonder, and of beauty, filled with the goodness of God; and yet, in sharp contrast thereto, everywhere it is marked by the fact that man has "corrupted his way upon the earth."

Blessings Converted to Curses

When Sir Frederick Banting discovered insulin—it was not an invention: it was a discovery, a discovery of something which God had already prepared—it was patented in order that it might not be monopolized and commercialized. Like a true man of science, he gave it to the university, and it was patented that it might be available for the benefit of mankind generally, and not be used for anyone's personal gain. If all human inventions could similarly be monopolized in the interests of human welfare and the promotion of righteousness, what a wonderful world this would be!

I cannot name the thousands of inventions. It is not necessary that I should do so. Your minds will gather them up. Take the art of printing, first of all employed

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

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in the printing of the Word of God—the first printing press that ever printed anything, printed the Bible. I doubt not that those who discovered it, and proceeded to improve and perfect it, were animated by a desire to make God known. But the printing press—good as it is—has become an evil thing sometimes. What evil books, what volumes of iniquity have poured forth from the presses!

If you have read of it, you will remember how people feared the consequences of the invention of the cotton gin. It was going to put multitudes out of work. But it did not!

What a blessing steam has been! The utilization of natural powers, harnessing them for human service, has been an inestimable service to mankind. The principle of the internal combustion engine has made the automobile universal. It is everywhere. There was one spot without it—Toronto Island—but they are going to let it in there now! I don't know whether they have allowed it in Bermuda or not. You can go back to the ox cart if you like. I prefer a motor car, and even that gets pretty slow at times.

Then you remember those two young men, sons of a Methodist preacher, who taught the world how to fly, and revolutionized all the nations of the earth. But that which might have been an unspeakable blessing carries bombs of destruction. If you had been over the devastated parts of the earth, as I have, and looked down on the awful destruction wrought by human agency, you would say, "What a pity!" But it seems to be impossible for men to discover how to do something that could be of value, without its suddenly being monopolized, and pressed into the service for evil. We had to use the bomb for ourselves in self-defense.

The radio, the telegraph, the telephone, television, and how many more things I cannot say—how they have all been used for evil purposes, just because men are evil; and I know of no way of preventing it.

Think of the science of chemistry. I have heard a phrase over the radio, "Better living by chemistry." That

is true. Wonderful things have been wrought by the chemist in his laboratory. The things they are making nowadays seem to border on the miraculous, but they are not all good. Even alcohol itself is good for some purposes; but the devil seems to have secured a monopoly on that business. If that is not populating hell, I don't know what is. It is obvious that many inventions are used for evil purposes.

The Acme of Destructiveness Coming

Now we are told that the nuclear scientists have added another regiment of destroyers, and they are releasing something more devastating than anything yet known. The A-bomb was bad enough, but we are told that that was a pretty small affair, a sort of squib, compared with what they can now do.

And people are being kept awake nights by being told that the H-bomb can depopulate the whole earth, and that we may all be burned up in so many minutes. I do not say such destruction could not take place. I do not know. But I do, with the utmost, and on the highest authority, dare to say that no human power will ever be allowed to effect such devastation.

No Second Flood

This old world has been visited with judgment. You all know that. You are familiar with the story, but let me read it to you again:

And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth. (Gen. 9:8-17.)

Surely, that is a comfort. There will never again be a flood of judgment. The word of God assures us of that. And He has established a covenant with all flesh to that effect.

A Combustible Heaven and Earth

But that is not what people are now fearing. We are not going to be destroyed by water. But what about fire?

Let us see what the word of God has to say about that.

"Knowing this first, that in the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they wilfully forget, that there were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the word of God."—(II Peter 3:3-6, R.V.)

That is our proof—God said it:

"There were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the word of God."

Now listen:

"By which means the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished."—(II Peter 3:6, R.V.)

That is history.

Personally I am not absolutely sure whether that reference is to the Noachian deluge, or to some prehistoric catastrophe. It does not matter. Whatever it was, it was by the word of God, "by which means the (same) world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished."

Thus we close that chapter of history.

"But the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored with fire." (II Peter 3:7, R.V.)

Once again observe that:

"The heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored with fire."

That is suggestive of the potentialities of the A-bomb and the H-bomb but we knew it before—there is plenty of fire! There is no difficulty in believing in a fiery judgment that shall devour the adversary—not at all. But listen: What about these heavens that now are, and the earth that is stored with fire? Is it waiting for the experimentation of scientists? They may and will experiment. But listen again:

"Being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men." (II Peter 3:7, R.V.)

Let me tell you, my dear friends, the awful power of destruction in the elements about us, is not going to be handed over to the caprice of men. There is still a Sovereign Ruler in the heavens, and these things are there; but they are "reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men."

God has His "stockpile"—to use the current phrase—of bombs, and of fire in reserve. He needs no Atomic Control Commission to tell Him how to control it. He will control it Himself, after the counsels of His own will.

I should be sorry to have to believe that this world was now the victim of hap or chance, and wholly subject to the whims of men, however worthy their original motives; so that after they have made the discovery, its powers may be used by wicked men for the destruction of their fellows. No; these things are "reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men."

Reserved Only for the Ungodly

Of this we need not be afraid, because we need not take our place among the ungodly. There is a man in Quebec fearful of the verdict of a jury to-morrow, or the next day, or whenever it may be rendered. You and I will not be without interest, as we read of it; but personally we need have no fear: it has nothing to do with us. The sentence will fall, and will be executed upon someone who deserves it, but upon nobody else. If God had not been minded to have mercy upon this wicked world, He would never have spoken to us at all. He could have unloosed His thunderbolts upon us, and the world would have been destroyed. But the things that were written aforetime were written for our learning. It was mercy that wrote them. It was abounding grace that penned them "that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope"; that there might be no night so dark as to be without a star for the believer; no situation so evil, so

HAVE YOU ANSWERED THE EDITOR'S ANNUAL LETTER?

bad, as to be utterly hopeless to him who knows anything about the God of all comfort. And in these days, when "men's hearts (are) failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming upon the earth", we do well, as believers, to familiarize ourselves with these things that were written aforetime for our learning, for the days are upon us now; and the necessity for it will be intensified in the days to come. We shall need the patience and comfort which only the inspired Scriptures can give us, and by means of which alone can we entertain a hope for the future.

But let me read on. I think sometimes it would be well for us occasionally to read Scripture without comment. Let me repeat:

"The heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored with fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to youward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (II Peter 3:7-9, R.V.)

Stays the Thunderbolts of Justice

Hence He stays the thunderbolts of judgment, and the day of reckoning is postponed that men may have space to repent and turn to God. That is what the Scripture says. That is why He does not immediately come. But listen again:

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief."

And when it does, what will happen?

"In the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements (or heavenly bodies) shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (II Peter 3:10, R.V.)

One will say, "But does not that bear out what the men of the H-bomb have told us? The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Yes; that is what the Scripture says. That is true of the awful day of the Lord that is inevitably coming. But it will come in His time. It will come when He wills it.

But let me go on:

"Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God." (II Peter 3:11, 12, R.V.)

A New Heavens and a New Earth

Is it possible that we should earnestly desire "such a day as this: the coming of the day of the Lord"?

"By reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." (II Peter 3:12, R.V.)

Truly, a perfectly terrible prospect!

"But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." (II Peter 3:13, R.V.)

This old earth is going to be purged of all its iniquity, and there is to be a new heavens. You know what the Scripture says, that even the heavens are unclean in His sight, and His angels He charges with folly. It is said that the things of the heavens had to be sanctified, or consecrated with "better sacrifices" than those offered in the temple. Oh, the far-reach of this horrible, hellish, thing called sin that has even tainted the heavens! And

the far-reach of the efficacy of the atoning blood, for He hath entered not into temples made with hands, but into heaven itself, with His own blood, there to appear in the presence of God.

The Earth Will Not Be Depopulated

You will tell me, "But you have not yet disproved the possibility of the earth's being depopulated. It sounds to me as though that is what is going to happen from what you have read,—the heavens and earth dissolved by fervent heat, and everything in the earth burned up."

Signs in the Heavens

What about it? Let me read another passage:

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (Matt. 24:29, 30).

The Present Dispensation of Grace "The Last Days"

On the day of Pentecost the Apostle Peter identified the whole dispensation of grace with the last days:

"It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: and I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come." (Acts 2:17-20).

People are interested in "flying saucers"—or dishpans, I don't know what they are. It is amazing the credulity of some people. I do not say there may not be something in it. Some scientist remarked that perhaps the Martians have got ahead of us, and have paid us a visit before we had a chance to visit Mars. But they are subject to the same limitations as ourselves: they cannot get back, as we cannot get there.

The Gathering of Elect and the Rapture the Same Event

Then there is that alleged twenty-three inch man who was/the pilot of one of these saucers! I don't know what has become of him. It is surprising that the Roman Catholic Church did not get hold of him! He would be a curiosity, more so, than Peter's bones, which they have discovered for an attraction for "Holy Year".

"Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (Matt. 24:30, 31).

Before that flood of vengeance is let loose, He will gather together His elect: and so—

"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (I Thess. 4:16-18).

You know that I do not subscribe to the doctrine of a secret rapture. No; it is all part of this general judgment scene. The angels gather together the elect.

Then it is put in another way:

"With the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together."

Will the Earth Be Depopulated?

We shall not be in the fire, my dear friends, in that great judgment day. But what will be the condition of the earth when this takes place? Depopulated?

You remember the story in the New Testament of the members of the Sanhedrin sitting on the judgment seat, and sending messengers to the prison to "bring forth" the prisoners. The messengers returned—I like to read that record. To me there is so much humour in it—and said, "The prison is there all right; the doors are shut all right; we got inside all right: but there were no prisoners." So the judges had assembled for nothing. While they were wondering, someone said, "Those men you put in prison are down in the market place preaching."

How do you suppose those judges felt? Rather small I should imagine. But when the great Judge of all the earth comes down the skies, and the sign of the Son of man shall be seen in heaven, will He come to a depopulated earth, and set up His judgment seat when there is no one to judge? Listen:

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."

As It Was in the Days of Noah, and Sodom

And then the Scripture says:

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (Matt. 24:37-39).

They will still be eating, and drinking, and marrying, and giving in marriage,—there will be plenty of people on this earth to answer the call. "Come to judgment."

Let me read you Luke's version of that passage:

"For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day. But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation. And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." (Luke 17:24-30).

Still Eating and Drinking, Marrying, Etc., When Christ Comes

This old world will be going on its way just as it is now, eating and drinking, and marrying, and giving in marriage, buying and selling, and planting, and building, and holding stupid services like that in Bathurst St. Church, to ask the question, "Is God necessary?" Whether

He is necessary or not, we shall all find that He is very real, and that the Judge of all the earth will do right.

Are we to be frightened out of our wits, by believing that the earth is to be swept clean of all people, and of all living things? No; a bomb may be loosed upon parts of the earth; but if it has such power as they say, no human hands will ever be allowed to drop it, because the heavens that now are, and the earth, are reserved by the word of God to the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

The Divine Judge Will Not Abdicate His Authority

The Judge of all the earth will not abdicate His throne. He will not hand over His sovereign powers to men, however clever, and however great. Understand, I am not belittling the advances of science. They are enough to terrify us, even on the smallest scale. God grant that He may send us—as I think this passage in Second Peter, chapter three justifies us in hoping—a great revival that His long waiting may not be in vain, and that all may come to repentance. It would be just like our gracious God, as we have said again and again, to give this wicked earth another chance before the judgment. I believe we have warrant here for expecting it.

A Day of Judgment Coming

But to make this applicable, and practicable to ourselves. What is the argument in all this? Just that there is a terrible day of judgment coming.

I looked even into this Sankey Hymn Book to see what collection of hymns there were on the judgment. I found none. You don't hear much about that now. But the day of the Lord will come "as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

That judgment day is coming, and there is only one way by which we may face it with equanimity and security and peace:

"Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

I doubt not that when the Judgment Seat is set, it will be found that the voice of science has been released as a warning, as a storm signal to us all, as well as the voice of Revelation. "I did not go to church." No; but you might have known these things from reading your newspapers telling of what was coming, if you had any moral sense at all. We shall be without excuse on that dreadful day of judgment. Our only safety is in Jesus Christ.

If Any Man Sin We Have an Advocate

A man was charged with a capital offence. He was already in prison. He was waited upon by a lawyer, well attired, and bejeweled, with every evidence of prosperity, who offered to undertake his case, and plead his cause at the great Assize at which he was to appear. The poor prisoner was caught by his blandishments, and overwhelmed by his persuasion, and he said, "All right, I will put my case in your hands. I will retain you as my advocate."

They had several interviews, and the day of the trial was approaching, when one day there was admitted to his cell another man. He had "no form nor comeliness" as had the other. He bore no special evidence of prosperity; but he had a gracious, kindly, countenance, and

he said to the prisoner: "I know all about your case, and I come to offer you my services against the day of the great Assize." "But," said the prisoner, "I am sorry, you come too late. I have already retained my counsel, and I have put my case in his hands." The stranger said, "It is not too late. You can take your case out of his hands, and give it to me." "No; I do not think I will do that." So the stranger retired.

A few days later he came again, and said, "Have you considered my proposal of a few days ago? I thought perhaps you might have changed your mind by this time. Are you willing that I should undertake your case?" Again he declined, and the stranger was dismissed.

Later he called again, and this time he was more persistent than ever. He said, "You know I am an advocate, and I come in your interest. I will promise you acquittal. I have a way of securing your liberation, and your escape from the penalty of your crime." "My crime!" "Yes," said the stranger. "You are guilty. You know you are guilty." "But how do you know that?" "I saw you do it. I was an eye-witness of your crime. Notwithstanding, if you will trust me I will secure your freedom."

"No," said the prisoner, "I cannot do it. It is too late. I think my chosen advocate has it well in hand, and I shall leave it to him."

The day of the trial came. The prisoner was brought in, and brought to the bar, and all were waiting, when the Court Crier indicated the approach of the judge. Everyone rose, and the judge took his place on the bench, arrayed in all his legal robes.

The prisoner looked on him—and behold, he was the stranger who had called upon him and promised him acquittal! But he was not his advocate: now he was his judge. As his chosen advocate called his witnesses, and pleaded his case, the prisoner sat with ashen face, looking to the judge on the bench. There was no gracious smile now, but a stern look of inexorable justice. Said the prisoner, "He saw me do it. He knows I am guilty. What do all these pleas mean?"

In due course, by the gracious lips that promised him life, the sentence of death was pronounced.

Some day the Stranger Who begs us to have wisdom, even the fear of the Lord, some day He will come to be our Judge, and when that day shall come, it will be too late—too late—forever too late!

Let us pray:

Oh, Thou God of all grace and comfort, is there one man or one woman here to-night not ready for that day of fiery indignation, that shall devour the adversary? If so, help him or her to hear. Oh, Thou God of grace, Thou Saviour of sinners, help such an one, even if there is only one here to-night, to hear the knocking—knocking—knocking of the

Wounded Hand: Behold, I stand at the door and knock. Lord, give us wisdom to open the door, and to bid Thee come in. And when that great day shall come, we shall greet it with joy, and not with grief. We ask this all in Jesus' Name, Amen.

I can think of no better hymn than that from which I quoted, which we shall now sing:

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head.

When, from the dust of death, I rise
To take my mansion in the skies;
E'en then shall this be all my plea—
Jesus hath lived and died for me.

Bold shall I stand in that great day,
For who aught to my charge shall lay,
While, through Thy blood, absolved I am
From sin's tremendous curse and shame?

This spotless robe the same appears
When ruined nature sinks in years;
No age can change its glorious hue:
The robe of Christ is ever new.

Oh, let the dead now hear Thy voice!
Bid, Lord, Thy banished ones rejoice:
Their beauty this, their glorious dress,
Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness.

W.C.C. SQUEEZES OUT EVANGELICAL MISSIONARIES

FROM a good friend in Edinburgh we have just received the following note, by air mail, which we print herewith as a further example of the kind of religious monopoly which is being planned by the modernistic World Council of Churches.

Edinburgh, February 18, 1950.

Dear Mr. Whitcombe:

A lifelong friend of mine, a minister who has been a warm supporter of the World Evangelization Crusade (W.E.C.) wrote to inform me some ten days ago, that their missionaries in India had been notified by the Government of India that they must join in the World Council of Churches (W.C.C.) or leave India; and that their (missionary) council has been summoned to meet, and consider what course of action they should take in the case they are now face to face with it.

I have been communicating this news to all the circle of friends who have become alarmed over the news that reached me through THE GOSPEL WITNESS; and to some others who seemed still to be in doubt as to whether THE GOSPEL WITNESS report was quite reliable.

To me it looks as if the efforts of the delegates of the International Council of Christian Churches, as reported by Dr. McIntire in THE GOSPEL WITNESS of December 15 last, have been counteracted by the leaders of the W.C.C. But it may still be that the Indian Government officials will again change their minds if from Britain strong representations can be made as to the great and lasting damage to all the best interests of India that would result from the expulsion of loyal missionaries of the Gospel.

With every cordial good wish.

Yours very truly,

(Signed)

The above report appears to be based on reliable information and was sent to us as such in good faith. We print it for the information of our readers and shall look for news of further developments. In any case, it is evident that the modernistic W.C.C. is bent on barring the mission fields of the world to all but those missionaries who are either modernists themselves or who will bend the knee to modernistic unbelief.—W.S.W.

BOOKS AND BOOKLETS

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"The Christian Attitude Toward Amusements"05
"The God of All Comfort"05

The Gospel Witness

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2

Canada

EVANGELIST ABDUCTED IN QUEBEC

WHILE the Roman Catholic press of this continent plays up the persecution of priests and bishops behind the "Iron Curtain" it completely and totally ignores or blandly denies the persecution of the Protestant minority in Roman Catholic countries such as Spain, Portugal, Italy and South America. Too often the "secular" press of the world follows the line laid down by the news organs of the Hierarchy, and passes over in silence the many evidences both at home and abroad of the totalitarianism of the Church of Rome. THE GOSPEL WITNESS, however, is free and untrammelled and therefore dares to call attention to another instance of religious intolerance in the Province of Quebec that has not been noticed, so far as we know, by any of our English-language newspapers of Canada. The source of our information is certain good friends of the Gospel generally known as "Plymouth Brethren" who have been carrying on a quiet but effectual work of evangelizing French-Canadians in the Province of Quebec. We have often protested against the persecution to which have been subjected the misled persons who name themselves "Jehovah's Witnesses". We have also pleaded the cause of Baptist missionaries who were jailed for preaching the Gospel in Northern Quebec. Now we call attention to similar treatment that has been meted out to the evangelists of still another group. We do so in the interests of free speech, and especially of religious freedom, which is the source of all our freedoms, as our English history demonstrates to all who have eyes to read and understand it.

Rome Connives at Mob Rule

What would be said in the papers of this continent if an organized gang of hoodlums laid violent hands on Cardinal McGuigan and other Roman Catholic priests in Toronto and escorted them to the station, compelled them to pay for their fare to Montreal and then put them on the train with the warning that if they were to return it would be at the risk of their property and their persons? THE GOSPEL WITNESS would be the first to protest with the utmost vigour against such violence as being not only un-British but un-Christian, and deserving of the strongest condemnation by all decent citizens and of the severest punishment by the proper authorities. But in Quebec, what happens? The priests of the Roman Church have no word of condemnation for mob rule when it is exercised in favour of their religion, and the civil authorities are apathetic. The minority finds that it faces a wall of hostility and indifference, the same kind of wall that in Europe is called an "Iron Curtain", but in Quebec it is a curtain that protects the Church of Rome and has been brought into being by her zealots. If indeed it has not been called into being directly on the command of the Hierarchy, it is the only undertaking we know of for the protection of the papal church that has not been created by express orders of the priesthood.

We give publicity to the account we have received from these Christian friends in Quebec because we believe that the white light of publicity exercised by a free press possesses great powers of sterilization for the hidden things of darkness. The creeping things of shade always flee from the light because they know its power to do away with their evil works. It is a sad fact that, even in this land of freedom, the daily press is reluctant to turn the light of its news columns on the machinations of Rome. We speak because we are unfettered, and because the fight for the liberty of others

is our fight, whether they be "Plymouth Brethren," or Baptists, or Jews, or so-called "Jehovah's Witnesses".

Romanist Gangsters at Work

The story as we have received it from our Christian friends in Quebec is as follows: An evangelist working in Shawinigan Falls, Quebec, received an invitation to visit a French-Canadian family who professed an interest in the Gospel. As the evangelist's car was undergoing repairs, those who asked him to make the visit offered to come and get him in their car. The driver took the evangelist to the railway station where four men entered the car and took his wallet from him. They thereupon warned him never to enter the town again and drove him to the station in Three Rivers.

The account continues thus:

"On arriving at the OPR station in Three Rivers one of the party went in to purchase the ticket. (They bought it with the evangelist's money and gave him back the change.) Then, instead of taking him through the station, by a word to a railway constable, they took him through the gate directly onto the platform. They kept him surrounded until the train pulled in, put him on it, and repeated their warnings not to return. A Christian from the Three Rivers assembly was taking that train on his way to New York on business. Seeing the brother and realizing what was taking place he walked up and down the platform and took in the situation. He believes he knows two of the abductors.

"The bandits then phoned the evangelist's wife, told her what had happened to her husband, that he would not be back in Shawinigan Falls, and that she must be prepared to move away by Tuesday. They added that if she needed money or food to get in touch with the Chief of Police, but we cannot be sure that they were authorized to say that.

Apathy of Quebec Officials

"We interviewed both the Mayor and the Chief of Police, and demanded protection for the evangelist and his family. Neither would promise to protect him, nor to prosecute the criminals, but the police cruiser did patrol the street where he lives. We were also able to track down the driver of the taxi, who confessed before witnesses to being the driver of the cab and to have overheard all the conversation, but he disclaimed knowledge of the names of the abductors.

"To-day (Monday) the Three Rivers paper carried a front-page account of the 'expulsion' (though badly distorted). They have thus changed it from a private to a public matter. Police departments of both the Canadian National Railways, on whose property the abduction was committed, and the Canadian Pacific Railway, whose constable made it possible for them to consummate it, have been notified, and have promised to investigate. On the advice of our lawyer we are endeavouring to bring sufficient pressure on the local authorities to cause them to take action, and are planning to take the matter to higher authorities should they refuse.

Our Right to Freedom of Worship

"We should like to call to the attention of the Lord's people that this is the third time that missionaries commended by assemblies of Christians have been kidnapped in this Province of Quebec. These kidnappings have invariably followed the same pattern: request for a visit, seizure, expulsion from the locality; and on at least two

occasions they have happened during Lent. In the past we have made practically no fuss about it, but we feel that a stop must be put to such occurrences, and that our rights as citizens must be insisted upon. We would therefore urge all to pray especially that the Lord may cause the authorities to bring justice to bear to put a halt to such practices. Remember this brother and his family, that they might be protected by a mightier hand than that of the law. Pray also that we might be guided by the Lord in all things."

We would join our friends in Quebec in urging our readers to pray for this evangelist and his family. We are particularly happy to note their determination to insist on "their rights as citizens" and to bring pressure to bear on the authorities, and, if necessary, to "take the matter to higher authorities should they refuse". This, we have discovered, is the only language that Quebec priests and authorities understand, for it means that when such matters are brought before the courts even the newspapers dare no longer be ruled by the Roman Catholic ban on news of activities displeasing to the Hierarchy. Paul stood on his rights as a Roman citizen, of which he was proud, why should we do less as British citizens, as long as Quebec forms a part of Canada?—W.S.W.

WHAT SIN REALLY AIMS TO DO

Every sin is a kind of cursing God in the heart; an aim at the destruction of the being of God; not actually, but virtually; not in the intention of every sinner, but in the nature of every sin. That affection which excites a man to break His law, would excite him to annihilate his being if it were in his power. A man in every sin aims to set up his own will as his rule, and his own glory as the end of his actions against the will and glory of God; and could a sinner attain his end, God would be destroyed.

—STEPHEN CHARNOCK

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ADDRESS

A FRENCH-CANADIAN WRITES US

THE GOSPEL WITNESS has a large circulation in the Province of Quebec, and many French-Canadians regard this paper as their genuine friend which pleads their true cause. We are particularly happy to receive such letters as the following from our French-speaking fellow-citizens who realize that we are anxious to bring the light of the Gospel to them. We give the following translation in order to remind our readers of the great need there is in this mission field on our doorsteps. This letter was addressed to THE GOSPEL WITNESS:

Dear Gospel Witness Pastor:

I am writing to tell you that my wife and I have been reading the Word of the Lord for eight years, but as we moved away from the North where we first heard the Gospel, we no longer receive copies of the Word of God. We have given away the copy which we had read and read again and should like to receive others to give away to families interested in the Voice of the Gospel. (The name of the French Gospel monthly published by Rev. J. R. Boyd of Sudbury.) I should like also to obtain a copy of the version of the Bible translated by the Abbé Crampon and authorized by the Hierarchy. This would be of great help to me as I seek to bring the Word of God to Roman Catholics. I wish it were possible to speak with you personally for we are far from the pastor of the Voice of the Gospel and we should like to spread it among our friends. I am

Yours in the Word of the Voice of the Gospel.

(Signed)

The above letter has been forwarded to Mr. Boyd who will include this name on his monthly mailing list for *The Voice of the Gospel*. We are sure there are many thousands of French-Canadians who would like to possess a copy of the Word of God for themselves, if they only knew where it could be purchased. How strange it is that a French-Canadian in Quebec should have to write to THE GOSPEL WITNESS in Toronto for a copy of the Bible and even of the approved Roman Catholic version of the Bible! But then it is not strange, for the established policy of Rome seeks to keep the docile people in ignorance of the Bible until it is morally certain that the Protestants will give the Bible to them if the priests refuse to do so. But that day has not come in Quebec, for it has not yet been sown down with the good seed which is the Word of God. Who will help us meet the appeal of this good French brother and of many many other French-Canadians who would read the Bible if they had it?—W.S.W.

WORKS OF SUPEROGATION

The sophisticated papists assert that a person is able by natural strength to love God long before grace has entered his heart, and to perform works of real merit. They believe they are able to fulfill the commandments of God. They believe they are able to do more than God expects of them, so that they are in a position to sell their superfluous merits to laymen, thereby saving themselves and others. They are saving nobody. On the contrary, they abolish the Gospel, they deride, deny, and blaspheme Christ, and call upon themselves the wrath of God. This is what they get for living in their own righteousness, and not in the faith of the Son of God.

—MARTIN LUTHER

HAVE YOU ANSWERED THE EDITOR'S ANNUAL LETTER?

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN ITALY?

In this article an Italian professor in Rome tells what is going on in Italy behind the scenes of the huge theatrical performance currently advertised as the "Holy Year". The following excerpts are translated from *Réforme* of Paris in which Prof. Giovanni Gonnét writes:

WHAT is happening in Italy? The "Holy Year" has just begun and de Gasperi is beginning his sixth government; Somaliland is going to have its fortified posts once more; reconstruction continues, and everything appears to be for the best in the best of all possible worlds. Notwithstanding, there is something wrong: workers and peasants are massacred by the police. In Emilia, in Calabria, in Apulia, in Campania, in the south as in the north of the peninsula, wherever the economy of the *latifundia* still predominates, wherever the rights of capital take precedence over those of labour, death hovers over the "fourth estate" in a sinister fashion. Of course, the pilgrims do not notice it. From one end to the other of Italy, the trains leave and arrive on schedule, the madonnas are carried in triumphal procession, restaurants, bars, theatres, cinemas, taverns, arenas, and churches are always crowded with people in their Sunday best, money flows in rivers, and incense fills the vaults of the glorious basilicas, but the people are suffering, there is hunger, there is discontent! What is happening in Italy?

Since the Catholics are in power, everything that is against them and that dares to manifest its opposition either in Parliament, or in political meetings, or in the press, is all condemned as being *ipso facto*, inspired by the Communists or under their direction, that is to say, it is anti-Catholic or still worse anti-Christian. Everything directly opposed to Catholicism, which is the religion of the majority, runs the fatal risk of sooner or later being branded as a Communist manoeuvre. This equivocation has been at work since April 18 (the date of the elections two years ago). It was necessary for the so-called Demo-Christian party to gain at any price the majority so as to remove from the opposition any possibility of taking the initiative, whether that opposition was marxist or liberal, or simply a lay party or fascist, monarchist, etc. Enemy number one for them was not the nationalist, reactionary right, but the socialist-communist left, which, as a matter of fact, had more than eight million votes against almost 12 million Catholics. The Red fear warped the judgment of many Italians by reason of their lack of training in politics, and it has been shown in all the acts of the government since the elections. The party in power has been compelled to make some compromises with the fascists, monarchists, and nationalists; it has been compelled to find support among the great capitalist trusts and among the barons who are proprietors of the immense *latifundia* in the centre and the south. As a result the social policy is necessarily conservative . . .

Holy Year is not designed to simplify matters and pacify spirits. The Pope spoke in his Christmas discourse of the "great return", but I think that Truman has been more concrete in proclaiming that he would accept the challenge of Moscow. The jubilee with its pompous ceremonies and its tourist and hotel business, plied for the almost exclusive profit of the Vatican, is in danger of increasing the tension. Even Protestants are accused of being favourable to Communism, as they are not in love with the idea of a common front such as is proposed by the Catholics. On January 15 last,

Il Quotidiano, the organ of Catholic Action in Rome, devoted its leading article to the reply of Pastor Marc Boegner to the message of Pius XII. As far as Catholics are concerned, there is no "convergence" possible such as that spoken of in *The Times*. At the most they are willing to allow a practical understanding in the fight against atheism, on condition, however, that Protestants give up all idea of proselytizing, particularly where the population is in a large majority Catholic. And, mark this carefully, in Italy to evangelize, to give the Bible to the common people, to go outside of the churches and preach on the streets, in the moving picture theatres, or in the halls, in Italy this means not only to attack the Catholic Church and to offend the creed of the majority, but worse still to be allied with Communism! That is the conclusion of the article in *Il Quotidiano*! . . .

Anti-Protestant propaganda does not stop there. The church bells on a Baptist orphanage were forbidden to ring, as the sound of the Protestant bells, and only of the Protestant bells, falls under the provisions of the penal code which deals with public noise! Protestant pastors are put under arrest, the people are stirred up against American evangelists, stones are thrown at them, they are insulted, and if a protest is made, the reply is that it is they who offend the ancestral faith and that the people defend their traditions as they can. "Religious liberty does not mean," as *Osservatore Romano* (the pope's official organ), put it on January 11, "permission to offend the Catholic sentiments of the people."

Taking everything into account, the political, social, and religious situation in Italy at the beginning of the Holy Year is not the happiest.

POPE AND PAGAN

Now I saw in my dream, that at the end of this valley lay blood, bones, ashes, and mingled bodies of men, even of pilgrims that had gone this way formerly; and while I was musing what should be the reason, I espied a little before me a cave, where two giants, Pope and Pagan, dwelt in old time; by whose power and tyranny the men, whose bones, blood, ashes, etc., lay there, were cruelly put to death. But by this place Christian went without much danger, whereat I somewhat wondered; but I have learnt since, that Pagan has been dead many a day; and as for the other, though he be yet alive, he is, by reason of age, and also of the many shrewd brushes that he met with in his younger days, grown so crazy and stiff in his joints, that he can now do little more than sit in his cave's mouth, grinning at pilgrims as they go by, and biting his nails because he cannot come at them.

So I saw that Christian went on his way; yet, at the sight of the old man that sat in the mouth of the cave, he could not tell what to think, especially because he spake to him, though he could not go after him, saying, You will never mend till more of you be burned. But he held his peace, and set a good face on't and so went by, and caught no hurt. Then sang Christian:

O world of wonders (I can say no less),
That I should be preserved in that distress
That I have met with here! O blessed be
That hand that from it hath delivered me!
Dangers in darkness, devils, hell, and sin,
Did compass me, while I this vale was in;
Yea, snares, and pits, and traps, and nets did lie
My path about, that worthless, silly I
Might have been caught, entangled, and cast down:
But since I live, let JESUS wear the crown.

—PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

UNION IS NOT UNITY

CHURCH Union is in the air these days. The major denominations all tend to build up great organizations and to close their ranks more and more, while they are also looking, with varying degrees of interest, in the direction of some sort of world-wide union with other denominations and churches. The following article, reprinted from *Faith and Fellowship*, the Official Organ of the Lutheran Brethren of America, speaks very clearly and with true spiritual insight on the spirit animating ecumenicalism. The editor of this Lutheran publication, who is now on his way to New Zealand, writes us to say that his group, which is one of the smaller Lutheran bodies, stands for simplicity in worship, the necessity of the new birth, and that only those with a clear testimony as to their spiritual life can be communicant members. We are happy to know of the existence of such a Lutheran group which stands for the great doctrines of grace that are also dear to us. We have often thanked God for radio messages such as given by the late Walter Maier, another Lutheran. We trust that the message will go on, though this faithful messenger has been called to higher service. In all the Protestant denominations there are men and women whose souls are unspeakably distressed over the spiritual coldness and the doctrinal apostasy that has blighted the testimony of their churches. We believe that there is a special need for raising a cry of alarm to rouse true believers to the imminent perils of a movement for Church Union that neglects or denies the fundamental importance of a common spiritual experience and a Biblical statement of faith. Union, as this article emphasizes, is not by any means the same thing as unity.—W.S.W.

LUTHERANS AND CHURCH UNION

By Pastor J. H. Levang of the Lutheran Brethren of America.

IT IS inescapable truth that the Church of Jesus Christ is feeling strongly the impact of globalism, internationalism.

Among our Lutheran Church bodies union is on the march. These past eighteen months have seen very definite trends toward union, with much agitation on the subject. But a year ago, November 9-11, delegates to the American Lutheran Conference meeting in Detroit, Michigan, voted to "recommend that the National Lutheran Council call an All-Lutheran Conference to be held under the auspices of the Council with a view to permanent organization of such a conference."

Though we as a synod are not members of the National Lutheran Council nor any Lutheran Conference, these decisions will, nevertheless, impel us to examine our stand and our relationship toward these trends and movements of our day. We cannot naively cruise on with stopped ears and closed eyes as these events of far-reaching importance take place, events which will eventually draw us into the stream where decisions must be made prayerfully and thoughtfully, and perhaps suddenly. As a synod we have been superb isolationists, reluctant even to comment on the movements among the churches of our land which are uniting and merging into larger and numerically stronger synodical bodies. Yet we simply cannot live in this cosmopolitan world, be a part of it,

evangelize both at home and abroad without also actively participating in joint and co-operative enterprise.

Is Union the Answer?

But the immediate question before us is: Is Church Union the answer? We must reply: Emphatically no, for it quite blindly ignores spiritual unity in the search for great numbers united in a federation to gain prestige in a world that has forgotten God. Kindred in origin as are these two words, their meanings are continents apart. A wit has aptly said that if you tie two cats together by their tails and hang them over a clothes line, you would certainly have union but as certainly not have unity. Church union without Christian unity is useless—yes, disastrous, and true unity can be realized only among those who have come to know Christ personally by a true and living faith.

The argument is also posed that Christian effort can be conserved through Lutheran Union which would merge neighbourhood Lutheran churches, thus creating a united and larger church, lending strength and prestige and avoid the wasteful overlapping of work. On the surface this seems geographically sound. But a careful analysis will often prove that the overlapping geographically may not be an overlapping spiritually. Two Lutheran churches may stand within a block of each other, yet one be a ritualistic, high churchly congregation, the other a low churchly and evangelistic congregation. One is a social club with a religious name and exterior, the other a soul saving station, evangelical and evangelistic. Their very labours are so radically different that no trace of a parallel can be found in their work. Union would join these two churches, causing the world to triumph and the saints to suffer defeat. There would be union but no unity. Union is social and organizational, unity is spiritual. Union makes for business, unity in Christ makes for power.

Bigness Not Necessarily Greatness

Nor is union to be confused with greatness. There is much of bigness to-day that knows nothing of greatness. Union would serve to bring the dominantly worldly element in the Lutheran Church into still greater power. We cannot favour such federation or union and dwell on a Scriptural foundation. We cannot tolerate that sin in synodical practice which we have so staunchly opposed in the congregation: mixed congregations, the world in the church. We cannot unite with unbelieving churches synodically, and practise synodically what we do not practise in the local church. Any federation not based on Christian fellowship is a farce, no matter how grand the program may sound or its appeal to the natural man.

Co-operation Important

Though we stand opposed to any participation in such a Lutheran Federation or Union, we must recognize that co-operation among believers in the various Lutheran synods is vital. We *must* lend our voice and influence to Christian work at every time, of need. We need look to a far more wholehearted co-operation with our fellow "born-again" Lutherans in evangelizing the lost both at home and abroad. There are many warm hearted saints of God in our fellow Lutheran church bodies who are burning themselves out for Christ. On the mission fields also we have worked together frequently, and such hand in hand work ought to be encouraged and stimulated.

Co-operation with our fellow Lutherans who know

HAVE YOU ANSWERED THE EDITOR'S ANNUAL LETTER?

the living Christ is a must. But co-operation is not union, and can be realized only when it is founded on a mutual Christian basis, that of the redeeming love of our Saviour filling our lives. Christian fellowship must be the cornerstone.

Spiritual Power Not in Numbers

Lutheran Union looks forward to a great and numerically powerful Lutheran Church united doctrinally, a power for Christ on earth. It completely forgets that spiritual power lies not in numbers of its membership, but in number of that membership which is in living fellowship with Christ, and is both evangelical and evangelistic. This number, we fear, is small in comparison with the published statistics of the Lutheran church membership in U.S.A. The Gospel of Christ has never been popular, nor is it to-day—not even in the Lutheran churches of our land.

Though we find our confession entirely Lutheran, our fellowship is in Christ. Indeed, as born-again Lutherans we find sweet fellowship with fellow-born-again Lutherans. But also as born-again Lutherans, we find far more fellowship with the born-again reformed brethren, than we can ever hope to find with our fellow Lutherans, who have no place for the living Christ in their heart and life, however "orthodox" they may be.

Christ alone is the basis for unity and union, either Lutheran or non-Lutheran. When this spiritual unity and harmony of doctrinal stand is maintained in all talk of union, then and only then can any church union, Lutheran or non-Lutheran, be realized as under leadership of the Holy Spirit or claim His smile and blessing.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

From *Evangelical Action*, Melbourne, February 1, 1950

During the campaign of the Rev. Carl McIntire and Dr. T. T. Shields many were asking, "What's the difference between the World Council of Churches and the International Council of Christian Churches?" We reprint this brief statement which sets out the distinguishing features most clearly and concisely. It is also being reprinted in leaflet form, and copies can be obtained for wider distribution from Rev. W. R. McEwen, B.A., Hon. Secretary, Bible Union of Australia, 174 Collins Street, Melbourne, C.1, Victoria.

IN AMSTERDAM, Holland, in the summer of 1948, two church councils on the world level were organized. The first met August 11 to 19 and is called the International Council of Christian Churches. Representatives of 61 Protestant bodies from 29 countries met in the English Reformed Church, where the Pilgrim Fathers worshipped before going to America. The second, the World Council of Churches, met August 22 to September 5, in the Concert Hall, where 149 denominations from 43 countries participated.

Why two councils? This is the question that Christians all over the world are asking.

1.

The World Council of Churches is modernistic in its leadership, with a wide variety of views and conflicting opinions concerning Christ, His life, His death, and His resurrection. The International Council of Christian Churches is loyal to the Scriptures and emphasises particularly the truth concerning the deity of Christ and His death as a substitute for the sins of men, as presented in the Scriptures.

2.

The World Council presented its "Message" to the world in which it offered its own words as "a word of God." The International Council presented the Bible to the world "as the Word of God, the supreme and final authority in faith and life."

3.

The World Council is inclusivist, with believers and un-

believers, orthodox and liberals, in unholy fellowship together in its fold. The International Council is separatist with only Bible believers in its fellowship who seek to maintain "the purity of the church in doctrine and life."

4.

The World Council approved one brief sentence for its creedal basis and it allows a wide range of conflicting interpretations of that one sentence. The International Council adopted a statement of faith of ten points dealing with the inerrancy of the Scriptures, the Trinity, the blood of Christ, the deity of Christ, the virgin birth of Christ, the resurrection, and other common evangelical doctrines.

5.

The World Council desires that the Roman Catholic Church join it in the ecumenical movement. The International Council, remaining true to the Reformation, believes that the Roman Catholic Church is an apostate body and has no place in a council of Christian churches.

6.

The World Council numbers in its membership the Greek Catholic Church with its Mass, mariolatry, images, and idolatry. The International Council numbers in its membership only Protestant churches remaining true to the heritage of the Reformation.

7.

The World Council has as a goal—the uniting of all Churches into one visible church, in order to answer the prayer of Christ. The International Council believes that the prayer of Christ referred to the spiritual unity of God's people in Christ, already a fact as long as the church exists; that the various Protestant denominations are entitled to their convictions concerning the Scriptures and that ONE visible organisation would be the apostate "Babylon the Great."

8.

The World Council has exalted to positions of leadership some of the most outstanding modernists in the world today, including Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam of the United States, who has called the God of the Old Testament a "dirty bully" because He condemns man for Adam's sin. The International Council numbers among its membership only men who believe the entire Bible and are known around the world as Bible-believing leaders, who have taken part in the preservation and the establishing of true, pure Christian churches.

9.

The World Council conceives of the kingdom of God as a visible social order patterned after the communistic economic principles, and as such is a foe of the capitalistic, private enterprise system. The International Council conceives of the kingdom of God as a spiritual order into which men can enter only through the new birth, and believes Christians to be "salt" in the present social order, demanding freedom of the individual before God, accountable for his property and talents in obedience to the commands of God.

10.

The World Council has an International Commission, one of whose functions is to place pressure upon national and international political bodies. The International Council does not conceive of its task as in any way political. It feels the responsibility, however, to expose, to offset, and to undo as much as possible the destructive work of the World Council.

11.

The World Council has the support throughout the world of the most blatant modernists and inclusivists and calls itself the representative of the "non-Roman" churches. The International Council has the support throughout the world of churches that are standing steadfastly by the faith once delivered unto the saints and calls for a "Twentieth century reformation."

12.

The World Council has the endorsement and co-operation in the United States of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. The International Council has the endorsement and co-operation in the United States of the American Council of Christian Churches.

The line drawn between belief and unbelief is clearly seen today. In the United States the line is seen on the

national level and on down to the local level. It can now be seen on the world level in the differences between the World Council of Churches and the International Council of Christian Churches. There is no excuse for compromise.

In the light of the apostasy, the socialism, and the drive for communism, Christian people must make their choice. Bible believers are supporting by their prayers, their gifts and their presence the International Council of Christian Churches, and are endeavouring to inform Christian people, who do not realise the issues, what is at stake in both the salvation of souls and the preservation of the freedom of the individual. The call to all Bible believers is to separation from apostasy and to fellowship in true Christian denominations.

RESOLUTION

The following resolution was presented at the final farewell meeting at Sydney of the McIntire-Shields' Campaign, and was supported by the audience standing:—

"The Rev. Carl McIntire and Dr. T. T. Shields' Campaign Committee (N.S.W.) unanimously wish to record:—

1. Their grateful thanks to Almighty God for bringing amongst us, in the persons of Rev. Carl McIntire and Dr. T. T. Shields, such stalwarts of the faith with their timely, vital and gracious messages;
2. That we commend the action of the Bible Union of Australia in seeking affiliation with the International Council of Christian Churches;
3. That we agree with and endorse the principles and activities of the International Council of Christian Churches to awaken the Christian conscience as to the menace of modernism and pro-communism as expressed in the World Council of Churches;
4. That we pledge ourselves to loyally support and further the aims of the International Council of Christian Churches to inform the Christian Church of the gathering dangers and to stand for the Faith once delivered unto the Saints."

The Bible Union Executive has been greatly encouraged by this resolution, and shall co-operate with the friends in Sydney to implement their final pledge. To this end we are sending out some extra copies of this number of "Evangelical Action," and seeking fresh supporters in our campaign.

BOOK REVIEWS

Another Book on the Cults

THESE ALSO BELIEVE, by Charles S. Braden. Macmillan Company, Toronto, \$7.00.

This is the most informative book we have read on "Modern American Cults and Minority Religious Movements", as the sub-title describes it. The author has carefully sifted a vast amount of the material that has poured from the presses of the cults within the last generation, and in addition he has in many cases talked both to the leaders of these strange movements and to the rank and file of their followers. This explains, in part at least, why the book is easy to read; we had almost said it is entertaining. It gives the history of each movement dealt with as well as its distinctive doctrines and organization. In a number of places the author's personal views of the beliefs under discussion peep through, but as he states in the preface, "this is not his primary purpose." There is no intent to "evaluate the movements, to show where they are right or wrong, strong or weak." The tone throughout the work is that of a scholarly, objective investigator of calm, scientific temperament dealing with so many "cases." We do not need to point out that this is not the spirit which animated the Apostle Paul when he addressed to Elymas the sorcerer those terrible words: "O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil." (Acts 13:10.) Nor is it the attitude which the Great Teacher took toward those on whom He looked with anger in the days of His flesh. Braden's point of view is doubtless explained by his candid admission that he is an "unrepentant liberal." We do not mean to belittle the need for careful, objective investigation of other religions, but those of us who believe in the authority of the Word of God cannot accept the liberal thesis that "It does not matter what you believe." Our author's practice is somewhat better than

his theory, however, and this reviewer could not help feeling that at many points in the book there is an implicit evaluation of these cults, even when none is openly stated. How could it be otherwise when dealing with the fantastic delusions of such minds as Joseph Smith, Mrs. Eddy, "Pastor" Russell and a host of other strange figures that have sprung up and flourished in the soil of this continent. Any book that tells the facts about these movements and informs us of their power is bound to fulfill a useful mission.—W.S.W.

Two Books of Sermons

THE BEST OF ALEXANDER MACLAREN and THE BEST OF JOHN HENRY JOWETT, Harper, N.Y., and Hodder Stoughton, Toronto, \$2.25 each.

A preacher who was asked what was meant by "homiletics," replied facetiously that it was the science of making omelettes. We suspect that there are many preachers whose acquaintance with that branch of pastoral studies is just about as vague as that. When Toronto Baptist Seminary first opened its doors, Dr. Shields laid it down as a guiding principle in homiletics that a man learns the art of preaching by studying sermons, as one learns to paint by sitting before the works of the master. Of course we do not mean to deny the usefulness of books on the theory of preaching, though the practice is more important.

We have noticed that all the great preachers were zealous students of sermons, not in order to plagiarize but "to catch the tricks of the tool's true play." To see a master craftsman at work gives one an impetus and an inspiration to go and do likewise. Ministers who have learned the importance and the value of reading sermons will welcome the announcement that in addition to the two books named at the head of this review, a series of other collections of sermons by great preachers is planned by the same publishing house. Only recently a friend remarked that it is difficult to find books of really worthwhile sermons. There is surely room for publications of this sort and they would fulfil a genuine missionary purpose in introducing the preachers of this generation to the solid preaching of the past.

Both Maclaren and Jowett were Biblical preachers in the sense that they were impregnated with the language and the thought of the Book of books. It is surely not without significance that it is this kind of preaching that endured the test of long ministries (Maclaren preached for sixty-five years!) and that is being reprinted a generation after the voices of the preachers have been stilled in death. There is a directness and urgency in Jowett's preaching as if the theme running through all his messages were the Old Testament text: "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem." He always speaks "to the heart," as that text literally means. Maclaren's chaste language, framed in balanced architecture, is a condensation and a popularization of Biblical scholarship, but he never lost sight of his purpose to bring the message of the Word of God within the reach of the ordinary man. His *Expositions of Holy Scripture*, which is happily once more available through the enterprise of the Eerdmans' Publishing House, might almost be used in place of a series of commentaries.

It is strange, as both the editors of these volumes remark in their introductions, that neither of these great preachers appeared to be concerned in the controversies that raged on the authority of the Bible in their day. Both held the even tenor of their way undisturbed by contemporary theological storms. Spurgeon, on the contrary, felt that out of loyalty to God and His Word he could not be silent, and though the bitter opposition broke his heart and brought him prematurely to the grave, one can detect a note in his preaching that is different in degree if not in kind from others. He is more direct, more urgent, more powerful, and for many years after the voice of C. H. Spurgeon was silent, his influence went marching on, still an active and powerful force working for the purity of the faith not only in Baptist circles but in all evangelical churches throughout the world. Those who take an uncompromising stand for the truth of the Gospel are called upon to pay a price, but their sacrifice bears rich fruit for those who come after them.

It is not possible to review a book of sermons, but we sincerely hope we have whetted the appetite of some preachers, and others, to obtain these volumes and read them.—W.S.W.

THE PRECIOUSNESS OF CHRIST

A Message Delivered at a Chapel Service of Toronto Baptist Seminary by Pastor Walter C. Tompkins of Fort William

"Unto you therefore which believe he is precious."
—1 Peter 2:7.

SEVENTEEN years ago I sat where you sit in this room and pursued the course then known as Preliminary Year. How much has happened since then! At home, my two small sons, aged three and five, respectively, have in various out-of-the-way corners, secluded spots which they call their "hide-outs". There they amass fearful and wonderful collections according to the fancy of the moment. They exercise persevering ingenuity in finding their treasures, and have developed amazing ability to keep them from the industrious broom of their mother and the often impatient designs of their father. How much we, too, collect and discard as the years sweep us along! But, as a pastor with some little experience, I can assure you students that through all experiences we are enabled to declare: "Unto you therefore which believe He (Christ) is precious." The text I have chosen is brief, but it includes within its boundaries a universe of meaning. The Revised Version renders these words "Unto you therefore which believe He is preciousness." Not simply precious, but preciousness in the abstract, the sum total of all that constitutes preciousness. Everything worthwhile in life and death and throughout all Eternity is wrapped up in Jesus Christ.

"To You Which Believe"

We must first declare that Christ is increasingly precious to believers. "Unto you therefore *which believe*, He is precious." It matters not how far we delve into theology, nor how extended our researches, we cannot get beyond the experience of Jack the Huckster.

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

One has well said, The believer is a silly sheep. What a precious thing is a shepherd, and how precious are green pastures and still waters. The believer is like a desolate woman. What a precious thing is a husband who shall provide for her, and shall console and cherish her. The believer is a bond-slave by nature. What a precious thing is the trump of jubilee and the ransom-price that sets him free. The believer by nature, is a sinking, drowning man. How precious to him is that plank of free-grace, the Cross of Christ, on which he puts his poor trembling hand and secures glory. It is a precious truth indeed which "shineth more and more" each day, that we know whom we have believed and He is to us "all fair."

I would further affirm that His Words become to us, the more we preach them, "the joy and rejoicing" of our ministry. We have often been compelled to notice the very minor place accorded to the Word of God in pulpit and pew today. When we first started to preach it was with a fear that we should find two sermons a week exhausting. But now, with some years of radio testimony as well as the regular ministry behind us, we tremble no longer for we have become convinced that His judgments are "a great deep." We must only too often deplore that we have so little to draw with and the well is deep. As we have sought to meet objections in all intellectual honesty so God's Word has grown upon us as, in a unique sense, precious.

A Unique Saviour

And now in closing let me ask the question: Why is Jesus precious? The first element in our idea of preciousness is rarity. Precious stones owe their value to their rarity. Let diamonds be multiplied indefinitely, and they will not be prized much more than common stones. That is why in heaven the streets are said to be made of gold. Jesus Christ is precious because He is by Himself. We cannot rank Him with Buddha or Confucius. He stands aloft in unique grandeur. "Unto you who believe He is precious," for if He fails you, whom besides have you to undertake for you? "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." Others may have the words of encouragement, the words of wisdom, valour or hope. Jesus Christ alone has the words of life. As the apostle affirmed "There is none other name, under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Another element in our idea of preciousness is usefulness. Inventions are valued in exact proportion to their usefulness. Who or what, judging by this standard, is so precious as our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Even from a material point of view, inventions and modern industry are confined to nations in so-called Christendom. But these benefits are small, compared to spiritual treasure. Through Him, believers receive forgiveness of sins and peace of conscience. He also gives peace of mind, and is a very present help in trouble. Mr. Gough, the noted temperance orator, once waved a pocket-handkerchief before a crowded audience. It was one of a number presented to him by a group of women whose husbands had, by his means, been delivered from the demon of strong drink. In gratitude they presented, out of their poverty, this memento of the many tears he had been used to wipe away. But how many tears has the blessed Jesus been the means of drying? How many broken hearts has He bound up again? How many desolate homes have by Him been filled with laughter and light? To you who believe, and to us who proclaim Him, to you who look forward to that blessed work of lifting Him up above all earthly things and people He is in work and worship unutterably precious. Though painfully conscious how far short we fall of "the heavenly vision," yet we may exclaim with the great artist Gustave Doré, "When I know Him better, then I will paint Him better."

In thinking of this I remember the story of the lecturer who used to enjoy telling his class of students in theology, of the noble thoughts that would come to him in his garden. One day two of his boys came and he took them to his garden. They were terribly disappointed when they saw it. Only a narrow strip of earth surrounded by high walls. "Surely," they said, "this is not your garden from which come all your inspiring thoughts" "Oh yes," he replied. "But it is so small," the students protested. "Yes," replied the professor, pointing to the sky, "but look how high it is." (So amid all your days and throughout all your ministry may you ever be led to acknowledge with deep humility and yet with abundant joy, "It is high; I cannot attain unto it." Yet, "Unto you therefore which believe He (Christ) is precious."

**HAVE YOU ANSWERED THE EDITOR'S
ANNUAL LETTER?**

NEW CHURCH HOME OPENED IN FRANCE

A large number of our readers have followed with special interest the progress of the new church building at Mulhouse, Alsace, where Pastor Frédéric M. Buhler, our first student-professor of French at Toronto Baptist Seminary, is now leading his people in an aggressive evangelistic effort. We are happy to print herewith his latest letter and we would call the attention of interested friends who wish to have a share in the work of this church that the French Bible Mission is on the budget of the Emergency Missionary Committee, as announced in these pages several weeks ago. Again we say that we can think of no more worthy missionary work than the churches of the French Bible Mission, and among them, as the French pastors are agreed, there is none more needy at this moment than that of the Mulhouse Church.—W.S.W.

Mulhouse, France.

Dear Friends:

We are grateful to our gracious Lord for the news we are able to give concerning our new church home.

Since our last circular letter, our aim has been reached and we were able to hold our first prayer-meeting in our hall on December 28th. It was a meeting of praise for the great deliverance the Lord had given us. It is indeed a miracle that we were ready to move three days before the last delay given us by our former landlord. On New Year's Day, we held our opening services; we had either delegates or written messages from all our French Bible Mission churches. A magnificent bunch of carnations had been sent for the occasion by our Nice church. We had a most blessed time of fellowship in the Lord's presence.

Weeks before, members and friends of the church had been working evenings and Saturday afternoons, sometimes till very late at night, some of the friends coming straight from their work in order to unite in the effort of getting the place ready for meetings. Our present hall, though not quite as large as the former, is very friendly, even more so than our previous hall. We bought forty new chairs, so that the room can seat comfortably 120 people. On special occasions, we can use the veranda with an additional 60 chairs. We have space enough for a while. We also transferred our hearing device for deaf people and placed our loud-speaker in the veranda where late comers—fortunately very few—and mothers with small children may attend the services without disturbing anyone.

It is wonderful how the Lord has helped us hitherto to pay the skilled labourers and materials of which we had an absolute need. We are determined, as a church, to continue with our system of monthly envelopes for the building fund, in order to be able, with some outside help, to meet our financial engagements. Last year, we paid some \$5,500.00 on our building ground and on the house. We are now ready to pay another \$2,800.00 within the next few days. But we still need some \$11,000.00 for the final payment of the property and the necessary repairs on the house. We are confident that the Lord will provide, as He has done in the past, according to our needs.

We are also encouraged by the spiritual progress of the church. There is a spirit of unity and of sacrifice which we should like to be permanent. Prayer-meetings and preaching services are well attended. New people are in contact with the church and we have several applications for membership. Last Wednesday, we had the inspiring visit of Dr. Dubarry. The Lord is renewing his strength

day by day. He brought us good news from the French Bible Mission work in general. He gladdened our hearts and instructed our minds by the message from God's Word on losing and saving one's life.

In the name of the whole church, I would thank again all the friends who, at our request, have remembered us in their prayers and thank also those who have helped us in a material way to have this new meeting-place.

With our heartiest greetings in the Lord Jesus,

F. BUHLER.

"A SHARP BITING SERMON"

JONAS was but one man, and he preached but one sermon, and it was but a short sermon neither, as touching the number of words; and yet he turned all the whole city great and small, rich and poor, king and all.

We be many preachers here in England, and we preach many long sermons, yet the people will not repent nor convert. This was the fruit, the effect, and the good that his sermon did, that all the whole city at his preaching converted, and amended their evil living; and did penance in sack-cloth. And yet here in this sermon of Jonas is no great curiousness, no great clerkiness, nor great affection of words, nor of painted eloquence; it was none other but, *Adhuc quadraginta dies, et Ninive subvertetur*, "Yet forty days, and Ninive shall be destroyed;" it was no more. This was no great curious sermon; but this was a nipping sermon, a pinching sermon, a biting sermon; it had a full bite, it was a nipping sermon, a rough sermon, and a sharp biting sermon. Do you not here marvel that these Ninivites cast not Jonas in prison; that they did not revile him, and rebuke him? They did not revile him, nor rebuke him; but God gave them grace to hear him, and to convert, and amend at this preaching. A strange matter, so noble a city to give place to one man's sermon! Now England cannot abide this gear; they cannot be content to hear God's minister, and his threatening for their sin, though the sermon be never so good, though it be never so true. It is, a naughty fellow, a seditious fellow; he maketh trouble and rebellion in the realm; he lacketh discretion. But the Ninivites rebuked not Jonas that he lacked discretion, or that he spake out of time; that his sermon was out of season made; but in England, if God's preacher, God's minister, be any thing quick, or do speak sharply, then he is a foolish fellow, he is rash, he lacketh discretion. Now-a-days if they cannot reprove the doctrine that is preached, then they will reprove the preacher, that he lacketh due consideration of the times; and that he is of learning sufficient, but he wanteth discretion. "What a time is this, picked out to preach such things! He should have a respect and a regard to the time, and to the state of things, and of the common-weal." It rejoiceth me sometimes; when my friend cometh and telleth me that they find fault with my discretion; for by likelihood, think I, the doctrine is true: for if they could find fault with the doctrine, they would not charge me with the lack of discretion; but they would charge me with my doctrine, and not with the lack of discretion, or with the inconvenience of the time. I will now ask you a question: I pray you, when should Jonas have preached against the covetousness of Ninive, if the covetous men should have appointed him his time?

—HUGH LATIMER, Last Sermon Preached Before King Edward the Sixth.

SEMINARY ACTIVITIES

Chapel Speaker

SEVERAL weeks ago, Rev. Walter C. Tompkins, a graduate of Toronto Baptist Seminary, spoke at our chapel service. We extracted from him a promise that he would let us have his message for these pages and are happy to print it in this week's issue. Mr. Tompkins has been at Fort William for ten years and has seen great advances in that time. His radio ministry is well-known throughout the "Lakehead district".

Mr. Oatley-Willis Accepts Call to Essex Church

Mr. B. Oatley-Willis, a member of this year's graduating class, has accepted a call to the pastorate of the Essex Church and will begin his ministry there March 19. Mr. Willis has done pioneer work in Quebec and in North Bay as a student-pastor and was also much loved at Courtland where he has laboured for the past year and a half. He was converted while in the Royal Navy and led the Christian group aboard H.M.S. *Indomitable* during the war.

A Graduate Studying in France

One of the graduates of last year's class, Miss Joan Jackson, R.N., is now studying the French language in Paris in preparation for missionary work in French Africa. She writes: "The language study is now coming along. At times I think I'm making progress and other times seem to be at a standstill. I'm sure the Lord has answered prayer and undertaken for me. . . . It has been grand for me to have the Appéré's here. I always enjoy going out to their home. I have also enjoyed reading THE GOSPEL WITNESS."

French Gospel Services

The preacher at our last French Gospel Service was Mr. Guy Appéré. The last Sunday of this month the preacher will be Mr. Etienne Huser, and then on the last Sunday of April we plan a farewell service in French for all our students who will be going out to work in French evangelization this coming summer.—W.S.W.

A MAJOR TRAGEDY: THE BLARNEY STONE IS STOLEN!

THE following note from *The Manchester Guardian* records what Irishmen everywhere must regard as a major tragedy. A piece of the Blarney stone has been stolen! We do not yet know whether it has been recovered, but tremble to think of the irreparable loss that would be inflicted on the Emerald Isle and all her sons if it were not restored. The dispatch reads as follows:

SAN FRANCISCO

The piece of the Blarney stone, weighing 15 lbs., which has been on loan from Blarney Castle, disappeared in San Francisco last night. It had been on display all the evening in the hall of St. Mary's Cathedral during a thanksgiving festival, guarded by eight policemen. They were dismissed at 11.30. Ten minutes later the stone had gone.

To-day all Irish police in the city, and a good many others, have been working overtime. So far there have been no results.

People were allowed to kiss the stone at a charge of 25 cents. The city health officer, Dr. L. C. Geiger, declared this to be insanitary.

We should like to offer a suggestion to the authorities concerned with this piece of the famous stone from Blar-

ney. If and when it is found, to employ the common circumlocution, it might be divided up into as many parts as there are cathedrals on this continent. (If the 15 pounds of stone are not sufficient, any ordinary crushed stone or concrete will do as well). Twenty-five cents a kiss, we are certain, would not be considered exorbitant by loyal sons of the "Ould Sod." While we must agree with the City Health Officer of San Francisco that the practice of kissing a stone is not strictly sanitary, yet from the point of view of religion there is less objection to kissing a mere stone than to kissing the toes of a wooden idol. The various shrines and miraculous images would experience no loss of business or of financial return, while the proved efficacy of the Blarney Stone is at least equal to, if not greater than, the potency of all the other images and idols which it would replace.

EARTH'S SACRED MEMORIES

To how many a saint the day and the place where he first heard God's voice will be earth's one sacred memory, even long after earth's life is over. Do you think Moses will not speak of the bush, and Samuel of the little temple-chamber, and Peter and John of their boats on the still lake, and Paul of the Damascus road, and Matthew of his tax-table, and the poor woman of the wayside well, when they are met above? Only the last day shall tell how much of earth is hallowed ground. This is what makes the old churches holy with an accumulated sacredness which surpasses their first consecration.—PHILLIPS BROOKS

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 15 First Quarter Lesson 13 March 26, 1950

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

SUFFERING WITH CHRIST

Lesson Text: 2 Corinthians 4:3-18.

Golden Text: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. 4:17.

I. The Triumphs of Paul's Ministry: verses 1-7.

It is ever the aim of Satan to overthrow the work of God. If possible, he will either destroy the work itself (Matt. 13:19, 38, 39), or else he will attack and weaken the worker (Lk. 22:31; 1 Pet. 5:8). One of his most successful methods is to cause discouragement, depression, fear and faint-heartedness. But, lest we be faint and weary in our minds, the Lord would have us look to Him (Heb. 12:1-4). We have been entrusted with a ministry by the Lord Himself (2 Cor. 5:18-20), and therefore we dare not withdraw from the work to which we have been called (Lk. 9:62; Rom. 11:29; 1 Cor. 4:2; 7:20, 24). Again, we have such a triumphant message to deliver, a Gospel which is spiritual and glorious, which has power to liberate and transform (2 Cor. 3:8-18). Day by day we are sustained by the mercy and grace of God. Therefore, we are not to faint (vv. 1, 16).

One might imagine that all men would heed the teaching of the Apostle Paul, but not so. There were some who could not see the truth, although plainly and forcefully declared, since their minds were blinded by Satan, the god of this world (John 12:31; Eph. 2:2), lest they should behold Christ, the Truth of God. Only the Lord can open the eyes of the unsaved so that they will receive the message of salvation (Lk. 24:31, 32, 45; Acts 16:14; Eph. 2:8). The Gospel is light unto some, but darkness unto others (Exod. 14:20; 2 Cor. 2:16), because some are not willing to receive what God longs to give them (1 Tim. 2:4; 4:10; Rev. 22:17).

The Gospel is here designated as "the gospel of the glory of Christ" (v. 4, Revised Version). The subject of the Gospel

is the glory of Christ; His essential glory (John 1:1; 17:5), the glory of His nature and person as the Son of God (John 1:14), the glory of His earthly ministry (John 2:11; 10:4) and the glory of His redemptive work (John 17:4). Those who are saved are described as "His glory" (2 Cor. 8:23; Eph. 1:6, 12), and the glory of Christ is the ultimate object of the preaching of the Gospel (Eph. 2:4-7; Col. 1:27).

Christ is the image of God, for He is identical in nature and essence with the Father (John 10:30; 17:11, 22; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3). To see the glory of God we must behold Christ, for He came to show us the Father (John 1:18; 12:45; 14:9; 1 Tim. 6:14-16).

God is Light and Life, and He is also the Creator of all life, both natural and spiritual (Gen. 1:3; Dan. 5:23; Acts 17:28). Every time a soul is born again, the miracle of creation is re-enacted, and the heart that was formerly dead is flooded with Divine life (Eph. 2:1-6; Col. 1:13). It is our task to speak to souls about the Christ Who has this power to illuminate and inspire.

The power by which the Apostle preached was of God (2 Cor. 2:1-5). We are entrusted with a great treasure, even the unsearchable riches of Christ (1 Cor. 4:1; Eph. 3:7-11), but of ourselves we cannot administer it; we are but vehicles of the Divine life and blessing (1 Cor. 3:5-7; 15:10, 11). As vessels we must be clean, empty, sanctified and kept for the Master's use (2 Tim. 2:20, 21).

II. The Trials of Paul's Ministry: verses 8-18.

As instruments of the Lord we are both weak and strong (2 Cor. 12:10; 13:4), both mortal and immortal (John 11:25, 26), since we possess both natural and supernatural life. We may be hard pressed in the battle of life, but we are not reduced to straits from which there is no escape. We may be persecuted, but the Lord will never forsake us; we may be thrown down, but we shall never be without help. We must expect these inward sorrows and outward trials.

The Apostle proudly bore the marks of His suffering for Christ (1 Cor. 4:9; 15:31; 2 Cor. 6:9; Gal. 6:17), since he gladly paid the price of being used as an instrument through whom the life of Christ might be manifested (Rom. 8:36; 1 Cor. 3:9; 2 Cor. 11:23-29; Col. 1:24). Self-denial, self-sacrifice, sorrow and suffering are involved in following Christ all the way (Matt. 16:24, 25; 1 Pet. 2:19-21). Physical death was working in the mortal body of the Apostle, but through him spiritual life was being communicated to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 3:10-13; 2 Cor. 1:5, 6; Eph. 3:13). The one who cares only for his own comfort can never bring spiritual blessing to others.

The same spirit of faith which actuated the Psalmist, inspired the Apostle (Psa. 116:10). By faith he was enabled

to look beyond the physical sorrow associated with his ministry, and think of the time when his body would be raised by the power of the Lord and death would be swallowed up of victory (1 Cor. 15:54). At that time it would be his joy to be in the presence of the Lord along with those whom he had brought to the Lord (Col. 1:22, 28; 1 Thess. 2:19).

The afflictions which Paul endured would redound to the glory of God. Many would pray for him, and in answer to prayer much grace would be bestowed upon him, for which thanksgiving would be rendered by many to God (2 Cor. 1:11). When one member of the body of Christ suffers, all the members suffer with it (1 Cor. 12:26), and we are enjoined to pray one for another (Jas. 5:16).

The Apostle had courage to remain steadfast in the midst of this persecution and affliction, not only because he realized that his sufferings would bring glory to God, but also because the Lord renewed his inward strength from day to day (Isa. 40:29-31; Eph. 3:6; 6:10; Col. 1:11). His sufferings were light, when compared with the exceeding weight of the glory which should follow, and the affliction would last but for a moment, in comparison with the ensuing glory which would endure for ever (Rom. 8:18; 1 Pet. 5:10). It is well to take a long view of life and to keep our eyes fixed upon heavenly things, rather than upon earthly things; upon that which is eternal, rather than upon that which is but temporary (Rom. 8:5, 6).

FOR JUNIOR CLASSES:

Dwell upon the way in which God uses suffering and trial for His own glory, for our good and for the blessing of others. Illustrate by reference to such incidents as Peter's sojourn in prison and his release (Acts 12), the death and resurrection of Lazarus (John 11) and the deliverance of Daniel (Dan. 6).

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

- Mar. 20—Suffering Preceded Christ's Present Glory Lk. 24:25-27; 44-48; Acts 3:13-18.
- Mar. 21—Suffering Precedes the Christian's Glory Rom. 8:15-23.
- Mar. 22—Rejoicing in Suffering Matt. 5:11, 12; 1 Pet. 4:12-19.
- Mar. 23—His Grace Sufficient 2 Cor. 12:8-10.
- Mar. 24—The Fellowship of His Sufferings Phil. 3:7-10; Col. 1:24.
- Mar. 25—God's Comfort Experienced 2 Cor. 1:3-11.
- Mar. 26—Chastening Produces Holiness Heb. 12:1-11.

SUGGESTED HYMNS

When all my labours and trials are o'er. God holds the key of all unknown. Jesus calls us o'er the tumult. When upon life's billows. Though troubles assail. Begone, unbelief!

THE GOSPEL WITNESS
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