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The Papacy Breeds Communism

WHEN the war was brought to a close with the crushing defeat of those infamous dictators Hitler and Mussolini, each of them Roman Catholics and each of them helped to power by a papal concordat, the prestige of the Roman Catholic Church suffered a severe decline both as a political power and as a moral force. But with that shrewd political *savoir-faire* the priests have acquired through centuries of political intrigue, the papal church has in large measure recouped its losses by assuming the beneficent rôle of a bulwark against the Red menace. On religious grounds it appeals to men of all sects and creeds as the defender of Christianity against the blank atheism of Russia; in the name of religious liberty it calls the world to witness the cruel martyrdom which its priests have suffered in many Slavic lands; in the face of the threat of Communist domination of the world it offers the pleasing vision of a balance of power composed of hundreds of millions of faithful Roman Catholics in Europe and the Americas. And perhaps its greatest attraction, at least in lands where the principle of private enterprise is strongly held, is its repudiation of the Communist economy of state compulsion, a repudiation that is illustrated and reinforced by its traditional reactionary policy according to which it has almost without exception favoured the rulers rather than the ruled, the wealthy rather than the poor.

Can We Fight Fire With Fire?

Of the success of the Roman Catholic propaganda there can be no doubt; even many Protestants who have no love for the religious tenets of Romanism are coming to think that on political grounds the Church of Rome is their natural ally against the increasing threat from Moscow. They have come to believe that perhaps it is possible to fight fire with fire, somewhat in the spirit of those short-sighted people back in the thirties who thought they saw in Hitler and Mussolini a bulwark against the same Red menace. We are convinced that their hopes will prove to be as fallacious and deceptive in the one case as in the other. Nazi Germany found it possible to strike hands with Red Russia for the partition of Poland, and it is not outside of the realm of possibility that Rome and Moscow may yet reach some

working agreement. Why should totalitarian dictators find it impossible to join hand to hand?

A Broken Reed

It may be unnecessary to repeat it in these pages, but, in view of the success of the specious propaganda of the Roman Hierarchy, we can scarcely say too often that the Romish deformation of the Gospel into a system of superstitious rites is a kind of practical atheism that matches the theoretical atheism of Russian Communism. Rome's assumed rôle of injured innocence as it exploits the news value of the martyrdom of priests behind the Iron Curtain is belied by its own record of intolerance in lands such as Spain and Italy. The vision it conjures up of a solid bloc of the faithful forming a great counter-balance to Russia, is as illusory as the Holy Roman Empire, which as some wag remarked, was neither holy, nor Roman, nor an Empire. The real political power of the Curia depends largely on its adroitness in intrigue, aided and abetted by the credulity of politicians who accept its pretensions at face value. By some, even by some Protestants, the Roman Church is looked upon as a welcome ally because of its traditional reactionary policy. But do the Middle Ages offer a more attractive ideal for individualists than the present state of affairs under the Soviets?

It is not necessary for THE GOSPEL WITNESS to protest its utter abhorrence of Russian Communism, or any other kind of Communism. We have nothing to say in its favour; we are in agreement with the strongest papal strictures on this atheistic system of compulsion, both on religious and on political and economic grounds. But we object to the suggestion that papal tyranny offers the only other alternative to atheistic dictatorship. There is a more excellent way and we covet earnestly the best gifts: we mean an open Bible, democracy, freedom of religion and freedom of speech, the rights of individual enterprise. These are the elements that have made possible the best things in Western Civilization, and we have no desire to see them meekly surrendered either for the deceptive illusions painted by the so-called Sovereign Pontiff or the earthly paradise ever promised but never realized under the red flag.

The Connection Between Romanism and Communism

The fact of the matter is that there is a very close connection between Roman Catholicism and Russian Communism. Bolshevism was originally a revolt against the oppression exercised by a police-state which was closely identified with a state-church whose priests used religion as a political instrument to keep the ignorant people in submission. A large part of the blame for the atheism of Red Russia lies at the door of the Eastern Catholic Church by which the name of God was blasphemed just as the anti-religious excesses of the revolutionaries in France were a reaction to the fanatical bigotry of the Roman Catholic Church under the *ancien régime*.

In the political field, the reactionary policy of the Church of Rome appears at first sight to provide a basis for peace and security. Some employers of labour have imagined, in the name of an individualism that was really short-sighted as well as wicked, that Romanism was a convenient sort of religion for their scheme of systematic exploitation because it provided a docile working force who were willing to labour long hours for less pay than their more enlightened neighbours. Roman Catholic Quebec has sometimes been so regarded in this Dominion. It is true that Rome tends to keep the masses submissive to authority, and if the employer of labour can ingratiate himself with the priests, he will have powerful allies on his side. But in the end, the scheme backfires, as it did in Russia. The people discover that the priests are not their friends but their enemies, their betrayers, and then turmoil and confusion, perhaps even revolution ensue.

A R.C. Editor Supports Our View

Is all this a figment of our imagination? We think not; it is rather a sober reading of history. But if our view of these matters be regarded as biased we commend the following discussion of Communism in South America. It is from the pen of the editor of the Roman Catholic organ *Le Devoir* of Montreal and the excerpts we translate here deal with certain statements made by a French-Canadian priest who is doing missionary work in Chile. It will be noted that the editor of this Roman Catholic paper ventures to assert that Communism will not enter America by Alaska but by South America, and he goes on to say that if Communism did not already exist the poorer classes of that continent would invent it!

The Bitter Fruits of Four Centuries of Romanism

Translated from *Le Devoir*

The wretched state of the miners in the saltpetre fields is not peculiar to Chile. In all Latin American countries, with the possible exception of Argentina, there are only two social classes: a small minority of the rich, very rich, who display a scandalous luxury, and an immense herd of poverty-stricken people, in direst want. A middle class does not exist. Officially there are no castes as there are in India, but practically it is the same thing.

Ignorance

Ignorance is general. In states where the proportion of Indians is high, illiteracy reaches the almost unbelievable proportion of 90 per cent. The same is true of religious practices. Father Sanschagrín recalled in his interview that only ten per cent. of the 130 million Catholics in Latin America attend church and the sacraments. The rest are Catholics, of course; they are baptized, they have a special veneration for the Virgin; but their convictions go no further than a few external rites, which are more in the nature of superstition than of religion.

Illegitimacy

Illegitimate births attain the fearful proportion of 70

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

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per cent in some countries. People who say and believe that they are good Catholics live together for ten or twenty years, have five or six children but have not yet found time to go to Church in order to have their marriage celebrated. This simple formality they have neglected to perform.

We add that the Church generally takes up its position at the extreme right, that it recruits its followers there and collects its gifts there.

Communism Spreads From R.C. Countries

The saltpetre miners, says Father Sanschagrín, are Catholics, but Catholics with a Communist tendency. That is equally true of all the working populations in Latin America. Communism can take root only in favourable soil; it was the selfishness of the great lords in Russia which provoked the Communist Revolution in Russia. The same phenomena will be produced in Latin America unless radical remedies are applied there. It is not by way of Alaska that Communism will take root in America but by the south: by Mexico, Colombia, Chile, or Brazil. If Communism did not exist, the poverty-stricken classes of these countries would invent it. Their sufferings are too great, the injustices of which they are the victims, are too revolting for it to be otherwise. It is as sure as the course of the stars. . . . In twenty-five years it may be too late. People are saying now that they are Catholics though with a Marxian spirit. The next generation will probably take the last step and deny its Catholicism.

We remind our readers of the statement attributed to the French-Canadian missionary priest that only ten per cent of the 130 millions of Roman Catholics in South America are practising Catholics. He added that the 130 millions of Roman Catholics of South America made up one third of all the members that church claims throughout the world. We venture to say that the same could be said for the other two thirds in the rest of the world, with the possible exception of Quebec.

Romish Superstition

The same priest gives a concrete proof of the horrible depths of superstition to which Romanism debases its people. After four centuries of undisputed supremacy in South America, this is the picture the priest draws of the paganism that his church tolerates and encourages among the descendants of the Spanish conquerors and the aboriginal tribes:

Their ancestors danced to the Sun-god; after they were baptized the Spanish missionaries could not root out the idolatrous practices from their hearts and so replaced the sun by the Holy Virgin. And to-day in our parish—as formerly in the ancient Empire of the Incas—they dance to the Virgin the same dances that they used to dance to the Sun-god, with the same rhythm and the same melodies.

How much better, will someone tell us, is this sort of baptized paganism than the blatant atheism of Red Russia? Yet this willingness to compromise with heathenism has characterized Rome wherever it has gone. Indeed, Romanism is but the paganism of the ancient world with a thin veneer of Christianity.

How Communistic Is Spain?

A publication from a French Protestant missionary society labouring among Spaniards in France tells of the same bitter fruits of anti-clericalism and anti-religion that is evident among the hundreds of thousands of Spaniards now in France. A missionary who has worked among these people describes their attitude thus:

In Spain, the priest is not a minister or servant of God and of men, his brothers, he is a policeman whose duty it is to see that everything goes just as the church orders it, and who, if it does not, is ready to institute legal action against the offender and to send him to hell or at least to purgatory.

The identification of Church and State and their mutual enslavement causes a large part of the Spanish people to identify the priest and the police officer, since the priest is always at the service of the reactionary State and the policeman is at the service of the Church. The confessional becomes an instrument of propaganda in favour of the all-powerful State; while in religious celebrations, the police, the gendarmes, and even the army form the guard of honour for the images that are paraded about. For a Spaniard, the Church is a power that is to be feared for the least disobedience is punished without mercy.

During the civil war, the Spanish refugees saw the churches pillaged and the priests who had taken up fire-arms to shoot down the crowds, wept like women as they begged mercy from the people who shouted their hatred. The fanatical bigotry of the official church has always prevented the Spanish people from knowing that there is another form of religion than that which was taught them, so that the great majority of them are not aware that God may be worshipped in any other way than that practised in the Roman Church. And for them to be religious means to be a Catholic, and to be a Catholic means to drag humanity down to an obscurantism by every possible means, including persecution and violence in all its forms. A decent man must therefore combat religion and its representatives with all his strength. And since a Protestant pastor or an evangelist is to them merely a disguised priest they do not trust them.—*L'Etoile du Matin*

Rome Prepares the Soil for Communism

Cardinal Spellman is reported to have said that the priests in Spain were safe only because of the bayonets of Franco's soldiers. In Italy, the home of the popes, there is to be found the largest Communist party organization outside of Russia. A French-Canadian priest, backed by an important French-Canadian Roman Catholic paper, says that if Communism enters North America it will come by way of Roman Catholic Latin America. Again, we say that the propaganda line by which the Roman Hierarchy assumes the rôle of a bulwark against Communism is a very clever and specious argument, but it is given the lie by the increasing strength of Communism in the most strongly Romanist lands. Romanism provides the breeding grounds for the pestiferous carriers of Communism, it offers little real protection against it.

Enlightened Roman Catholics, of course, will tell us that the papacy is in the act of reforming itself, and that it is now determined to plead the cause of the masses and turn its back on the forces of oppression. We would note in passing that the editorial from *Le Devoir* of Montreal which we have quoted above was written last November, before the Archbishop of that diocese was summarily dismissed by Rome, as some thought, for being too forward in certain policies which appeared to look in the direction of a more liberal policy. We do not doubt that there are currents within the bosom of Rome that tend in this direction, and doubtless the popes of this age are quite as willing to make use of them as their predecessors were to exploit the services of would-be reformers in other ages, such as Francis or Dominic, only in order to bend their movements to their own reactionary ends. Any church that reforms itself for the sake of policy and not because of heart sorrow for past failures, is already doomed to the state that Rome has always boasted for herself, namely that she is irreformable because infallible. The church of the popes is always the same, it is past hope, as all its history has shown and as its present policies demonstrate only too fully.—W.S.W.

MR. W. J. HUTCHINSON

For twenty-six years Mr. W. J. Hutchinson has served as Superintendent of the Jarvis Street Bible School. In that period of time literally thousands of boys and girls and men and women have heard the Word of God taught in this great Sunday morning school, and hundreds of them have been brought to a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ as their Saviour. To all of them "Uncle Hutch" is well-known, and to the younger ones especially, he is a kind of living legend that wears flesh and blood. We have never known a man who possessed in such large measure that magic power over boys and girls which Browning attributed to the Pied Piper of Hamelin, save that our "Uncle Hutch" bends all his magnetism to attract children to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Last Sunday morning the Bible School acting through the pastor sprang a surprise on Mr. Hutchinson and in the course of the Easter service presented him with a beautifully engraved pen and pencil set, together with a substantial cheque in the attempt to express in this outward fashion something of the Christian love and esteem evoked by more than a quarter of a century of faithful service cheerfully rendered in the Master's name.—W.S.W.

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The Emergency Missionary and Educational
Committee
of The Union of Regular Baptist Churches

PROGRAMME TO BE ANNOUNCED NEXT WEEK.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

The Resurrection a Revelation of Life Beyond the Grave

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, April 9th, 1950
(Stenographically Reported)

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."—II Tim. 1:7-10.

THERE are those who seem to believe that God may be worshipped with men's hands, as though He were in need of our ministrations; who seem to think that God dwelleth in temples made with hands, and that He is pleased by being occasionally visited. I have known not a few who make it their boast that they attend church at least once a year, on Easter Sunday. I wonder if a husband and wife could be very happy if they lived apart for three hundred and sixty-four days, and visited each other on some anniversary occasion!

What a strange conception of the religion of Christ!—as though He were pleased with our observance of times and seasons. The ordinance you witnessed this evening teaches us that the fact and power of the resurrection of Christ ought to be to all of us a perpetual experience, not at Easter time, but all the days of all the years. It is important that we should not be content with the observance of forms and ceremonies, but that in spirit and in truth, we should, with our whole heart, worship God.

Let us see, then if we can learn something more this evening of the significance of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus from the dead.

I.

It is said here that by His appearance—that is His birth, His ministry during the days of His flesh; His death, and resurrection, until He returned to the Father—by His appearance among men, the purpose of grace that was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, was manifested, and it was manifested in this way: HE HATH "ABOLISHED DEATH, AND HATH BROUGHT LIFE AND IMMORTALITY TO LIGHT THROUGH THE GOSPEL".

What is the significance of this great saying that our Lord "abolished" death? Surely death is with us still! We see it every day in some form or another. We grow almost accustomed to reading the record of fatalities in the daily press. Death is still here. The cemeteries are rapidly filling up. What is meant by the saying that He "abolished" death?

The word rendered "abolished" here is a very interesting one, and has many translations in the New Testament. It means, really, to reduce to inactivity, to render of none effect, to rob some thing, or some one, of its power. We are not to understand that physical

death was terminated by our Lord's life and death and resurrection. Obviously that is not what it means. It means that when He came, by what He did, He robbed death of its power, the power that sin had given it, for "the wages of sin is death"; death is the offspring of sin. Had there been no sin, there would have been no death. But death, as to the body, still remains. Yet, by the coming of Christ, it has been deprived of its malignant power. It has been reduced to inactivity. It has been made, really, to the believer of none effect. The same word is used in the passage which says that the law cannot make the promise of none effect. It does not deprive the promise of its value.

But here a sinister, evil thing, has been deprived of its power, rendered harmless. The same word in some places translated "was passing away," "make of none effect," that is, death has no formidable significance for the believer any more. The word is used also in Romans 6:6, "Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." The meaning is clear: The believer by walking in the Spirit and not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, gains the ascendancy over "the body of sin." That is, the body of sin is "kept under," and not allowed to dominate, it is robbed of its powers. Thus we are able to understand the scripture in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Now death is described as a power, having some mysterious sting; and it is said "the strength of sin is the law." "The sting of death is sin."

Concerning these two things, with which, by His incarnation our Lord dealt effectively, let us see if we can understand it.

There is a description of the condition of life beyond the grave, in the sixteenth chapter of Luke. I would remind you that the scripture does not say that this is a parable. I do not think it is, I think our Lord withdraws the veil, and gives us a glimpse of life beyond the grave, for such as believe, and for such as die in their sins. Lazarus, the beggar, who had sat at the rich man's gate, died and was carried by the angels

into Abraham's bosom, a figure signifying Paradise, the state of felicity beyond the grave. "The rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torment, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame."

Death had had for this wicked man, a terrible sting. He was tormented. His whole nature was set on fire, as when the children of Israel were bitten by the burning, fiery, serpents; only in a far more intense degree, he felt something of the sting of death.

Death has a sting for all who are unsaved. It is really a terrible thing for any man to die in his sins. One would hardly suppose so if he were to attend funeral services to-day, because almost invariably it is said that the deceased has passed into heaven. He may have lived like a denizen of hell on earth; but at death he is supposed to be transported into a state of eternal felicity. But that is not true: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God"; "Our God is a consuming fire." He will not tolerate sin. It is the abominable thing which He hates, and they who labour in the vineyard of Satan will receive his wages: "The wages of sin is death" with its awful sting, which issues in perpetual torment.

Now that man asked for the alleviation of his pain. But Abraham replied: "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed."

The reign of law is universal. It obtains here and hereafter, and the great gulf fixed is in principle an exemplification of the law, something that is fixed and irrevocable. It is too late now to extract the sting of death: "The strength of sin is the law," and the law, having been violated, the gulf is fixed, and the penalty must be paid.

But the man who had begged at the gate knew nothing about this. He was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. He died even as the rich man died; but he did not suffer. He passed into a state of peace, and everlasting felicity. Why? Because grace had dealt with the strength of sin, which is the law; because grace had extracted the sting of death, so that now it had no terrors for the believer.

How was death rendered impotent to injure the believing soul? What kind of operation, if I may so say, was performed by the divine Surgeon upon this malignant monster? What did he do?

First of all, he dealt with the strength of sin, which is the law. What a terrible thing it is to be under the law! I have never had the experience of a friend of mine, who had been called upon to minister to a man convicted of a capital offence. A petition was circulated, and taken to Ottawa. My friend, and some others, went to Ottawa, to present it to the Department of Justice. The Minister of Justice at that time was a Deacon of my friend's church. They were most intimate, often spent an evening together. They were the closest of Christian friends. They sat together at the Lord's Table; and the Minister of Justice assisted in the distribution of the elements.

My friend said to me, "When we went into that man's office he bowed coldly. He said, 'Be seated, gentlemen.'" Then they made known their errand. He listened without comment until they had completed their plea, then he said, "Gentlemen, the Government has considered this case in all its bearings, and has carefully reviewed

the evidence, and can find no ground for a recommendation of Executive clemency. I am sorry; the law will have to take its course."

My friend said to me, "There was no look of recognition on my friend's face. He was not my Deacon; he was not my friend: he was the embodiment of inexorable British justice."

My friend and I were walking in the woods as he told me that story. Then, slipping his arm through mine, he stopped, and very solemnly said, "Brother, is it not a terrible thing to be under the law, and to know there is no escape? How much more terrible would it be to find ourselves under the condemnation of the law of God!"

Here was a man who was sentenced to death for his sin. There were some who were moved with compassion. The Minister of Justice was a kindly man, but "the strength of sin was the law." There was no escape from its operation. The law must take its course.

How did our Lord deal with that? By being made under the law "to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." He took upon Him our sin. He bowed before the law, and as our Substitute, He paid our penalty, and robbed the law of its strength, by fulfilling its requirements in our behalf. And now that the penalty was paid, there was no reason why we should not go out of prison. Notwithstanding death remains.

"Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought (The same word translated in our text "abolish") him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." He deprived the devil of the power of death, and thus, he rendered death inoperative; a thing no longer to be feared. He destroyed him that had the power of death, abolished him, robbed him of his authority and power—that is the devil. And at His resurrection He put His conquering heel upon the neck of death, and, with His wounded hand, He extracted its sting, and rendered it powerless to injure anyone who believed.

A mongoose is a small animal, something like a ferret, an ugly little thing. But it has special ability in destroying venomous snakes. That thing, relatively small, can even kill a mighty cobra, when possessed of all its powers.

A friend of mine told me of seeing an exhibition in a naturalistic museum, in a moving picture of a battle between a mongoose and a cobra. The cobra came out, a

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The Gospel Witness

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slimy, monstrous, thing, into an open space in the jungle, and lay there in the sun. A little mongoose also came out of the jungle, and took its position upon a log at a respectful distance, and carefully eyed the cobra.

Presently the big snake wakened to a recognition of the presence of the mongoose. It came up, opened its jaws, and put out its fangs, and then threw itself toward the mongoose. But the little animal jumped back. In a little while the cobra tried it again. The mongoose teased it, approached almost within reach, but at the serpent's spring, retired to safety.

The mongoose kept that up for an extended period, until the great snake was just about tired out. Then he made another spring, and this time the mongoose leaped, and caught him by the back of the neck, and fastened his teeth in it. Then the battle began. The snake lashed its tail, and its head, and the mongoose just swirled around. It paused for a minute, but the mongoose was still there.

That monster fought that little thing for ever so long, until at last it subsided, and lay still. But the mongoose still held on tightly.

At last it released its grip, and retired to its watching-post again, and still watched to see whether its enemy was dead. Then being assured of its death, it advanced. It seemed to be almost unbelievable, but my friend assured me it was true—it got hold of that huge thing, and, little by little, dragged it slowly back into the jungle, to serve as a meal or perhaps for many meals.

When I was in India a few months ago I saw a mongoose. I saw an Indian snake charmer in Bombay. He came up with his little trumpet, blowing to the snakes. He opened a basket and a snake gradually uncurled itself, and came out to the sidewalk. I stood on the other side of the road! Then he opened another basket, and a mongoose came out, and advanced, and laid hold of the snake, and they had a tussle for a while. After a while the mongoose let go, and the snake curled itself up again in the basket, and the mongoose went back to its nest. It did not kill the snake. Why? Because its teeth had been extracted. It was perfectly helpless. It just made a show of it: that was all. The snake-killer had been deprived of its sting.

Our Lord extracted the sting from death, and, sovereignly, pressed it into His service; and so, for the believer, He abolished death, rendered it inoperative, of none effect.

There is no reason why any Christian should be afraid to die. I heard a story once of some little girls in a boarding school, about Christmas time, who assembled in an upper room, a waiting room, waiting for their friends to come and take them home for Christmas. Some were going by train, some were to be driven home; but they were all looking out of the window. It had snowed over night, and the earth was mantled with an immaculate ermine garment. It was still snowing gently.

The little girls were busy talking about going home. While they were talking a carriage drove up to the door of the school, a carriage drawn by two jet black horses, handsome creatures, harnessed to a carriage that was just as black as the horses. On the box there sat a coachman, a negro, whose face was like ebony. He had a long sable coat over his shoulders, and a sable hat, and sable gauntlets. As he drove up to the school door, he reined up the horses. One little girl said, "Oh, goody, goody! Good-bye, girls!" They said, "What do you mean?" She said, "I am going home now." They said,

"Are you not afraid to ride in that black carriage drawn by those black horses, and driven by that black man?" "Oh, no; he is my father's coachman. He drives my father's horses; and he has come to take me home."

That is what death becomes to the Christian. There is a hymn which begins:

"O lovely appearance of death!"

I have never sung it: I have never announced it. It is a foolish hymn. There is nothing lovely about death. Death is the offspring of sin, and sin never brought anything lovely into the world, and never will. Yet God makes use of death, and harnesses him to his chariot, and makes him drag his ransomed children up the shining pathway of the sky.

Did you ever read Pope's ode: "The dying Christian to his Soul"? I have seen it exemplified on more than one occasion:

"Vital spark of heav'nly flame!
Quit, oh, quit, this mortal frame:
Trembling, hoping, ling'ring, flying,
Oh, the pain, the bliss, of dying!
Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life.

"Hark! they whisper; angels say,
'Sister spirit, come away!'
What is this absorbs me quite?
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
Drowns my spirit, draws my breath?
Tell me, my soul, can this be death?"

"The world recedes; it disappears!
Heav'n opens on mine eyes! Mine ears
With sounds seraphic ring:
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O Grave! where is thy victory?
O Death! where is thy sting?"

He hath abolished death, hallelujah!

II.

Further, HE HAS BROUGHT "LIFE AND IMMORTALITY TO LIGHT THROUGH THE GOSPEL"—life and deathlessness to light; showing us what it means to live here, and hereafter.

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is not distinctively a Christian doctrine: it is instinctive to the human race. Men have always believed in a future life, in survival after death. All pagan religions attest that fact, in that they are predicated upon that assumption.

I spoke to you recently about going to King Tut's tomb, with its elaborate furnishings. There are many mummies in Egypt. What care was taken of the dead! But you don't need to go to India or Egypt. Even in our own country the Indians used to bury the bows and arrows of their chiefs with them, so that they might be equipped for the happy hunting grounds to which they believed they had gone.

When I was away I went to see the pyramids at Gizeh in Egypt, near Cairo. There may be forty or more of them altogether; but there were three more prominent than all the others, and one particularly, the pyramid of Cheops, built by an Egyptian king three thousand years before Christ, perhaps about fifteen hundred years before the time of Moses. It was believed that that great building was originally veneered with marble. But it is not now. It consists of massive stones, each stone weighing some tons. It is about four hundred and eighty feet to the peak of the pyramid.

Then there is an entrance to the pyramid about thirty

feet up. I went in, and climbed the steps to the burial chamber of the kings, two hundred and seventy-five feet up, immediately under the apex of the pyramid. It was not a comfortable climb, and was rather a narrow passageway—steps part of the way, some spots merely a ramp. Sometimes one had to stoop down, and almost crawl. My guide said to me, "Do not be afraid. You are as my eyes." I said, "I don't need your eyes. Go on. I will get there."

I got up to the burial chamber of the kings, and there was a great sarcophagus, hewn out of a piece of solid granite, two hundred and twenty-five feet up in the heart of that three thousand year old pyramid. And it was built for a burial place. Why? They believed in a future life. I said to Mr. McIntire and others around me, "I will give you a text." It was very dark there, dark as the minds of those who built this thing. They said, "What is your text?" "He hath brought life and immortality to light." It has been believed in always, but survival after death nobody actually knew.

We have not to wait until we come to the New Testament to find the doctrine of the immortality of the soul set forth: "Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." But he sent us no message, and left no word whatever of the conditions upon which he entered. Moses went up to Nebo's mountain, and laid down and died, and the Lord buried him there. But Moses did not die. Elijah went home to heaven in a chariot of fire. He was seen to go; but he was not seen to arrive. No one knew what was beyond the clouds. Many have speculated, but none have ever come back to tell what they found: "Have ye not read"—said the Lord Jesus—"that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had been "gathered to their fathers;" but their soul had survived, though the body perished. God is the God of the living; but nobody knew anything about life beyond the grave until Jesus came from another world: He came down from heaven, and he said: "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you of earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven."

In other words, our Lord said, "I have a monopoly of knowledge of life beyond the grave." On another occasion He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."—He hath brought life and deathlessness, immortality, to light through the gospel. Now we have a guide book; and if you would go travelling, you may know what conditions obtain in the life beyond.

Let me make it very simple. The Lord Jesus was, in every respect, a representative Man, made under the law, made of a woman, representative in His life as in His death. Never forget that He wrought vicariously in life, as well as in death. The righteousness which He brings to us is a vicarious righteousness, which He wrought out for us, by His obedience to the law. His vicarious death could have had no value had it not been preceded by a vicarious life. He lived instead of us, even as He died instead of us; and He was raised again, and showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days. He

lingered forty days after His resurrection, that He might teach us, among other things what it is to live after we have passed through the grave.

His body was different. After the resurrection there was something different about Him. I know it is said that the disciples' eyes were holden, first of all, so that they did not immediately recognize Him. I shall not be dogmatic about it, but I am inclined to the opinion that our Lord's body was different, not necessarily in appearance: but in another respect. "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." Nowhere does the scripture speak of His resurrection body as a body of flesh and blood. I doubt, whether he had any blood. He had poured out His blood for us. But it was a real, literal, body, the same body in which He had suffered; but it was a spiritual body, and I am inclined to believe that it was animated by Spirit: "Declared to be the Son of God, with power, according to the spirit of holiness (or the Holy Spirit) by the resurrection from the dead."

I do not suppose we shall have flesh and blood in the resurrection: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body," but it will be a real body.

Most of our trouble is in the blood. You know that, don't you: "The life of the flesh is in the blood." Our blood is not pure. It gives us a lot of trouble. I rather look forward to a time when I shall have a body without any blood in it, when we shall have bodies, perhaps, animated by the Spirit, which will be better still. This mortal shall put on immortality: "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

Whether that be so or not, I am not sure. I merely offer you a suggestion. Do as you like with it. But this I know, Jesus had a real Body. He appeared to His disciples, and He showed them His hands, and His side.

Did you ever sign an application for a passport? Do you remember the clause: "Have you any marks on your body by which your body could be identified?" What a time they had trying to identify the bodies of those burned in that terrible disaster on the *Noronic*!

What I call your attention to is that there were marks on the Body of Jesus by which He was identified on the other side of the grave. He showed them His hands and His side: "Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord."

When Thomas was told of that, he said, "I won't believe." "But, Thomas, we saw Him!" "I don't care: I don't believe it; Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."

On the eighth day Jesus gave him his opportunity. He said, "Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." I am the same Jesus, Thomas, that you used to know on the other side of the grave. We gather up now the threads of fellowship, and go on together."

I have said it again and again: I have always been thankful that Thomas did not allow himself to become guilty of that vulgar touch. No; he saw, and then he fell on his face, and said, "My Lord, and my God." Seeing was believing.

Christ had the same body, the body of His glory. He came through the shut doors. They were shut for

fear of the Jews. I do not know how He did it. That was a mystery; but He had all power. It was a simple matter for Him.

I rather think our bodies will be more comfortable to live with in the resurrection. It is an awkward thing for a man six foot two inches to go travelling. I saw a man the other day, and I think he was about seven feet. I rather pitied him. You cannot get into a berth. You cannot get into a chair. Nowhere to put your long legs! Just as uncomfortable as can be! When I was crossing from Australia to New Zealand in a flying boat, a three decker, the seats were very uncomfortable for me. The purser sized up the situation, and came to see me, and said, "I think I can find you a more comfortable seat." And he did.

I suppose we shall not be tired as we are here. I have little doubt we shall be able to do with our resurrection bodies many things that we cannot do now. In this tabernacle we do groan, being burdened. So I remind you that Jesus was the same in identity, the same body. No question about it. And He is the firstfruits of them that sleep.

I hope we shall all be better-looking in the resurrection than we are now. But that might all be, and still there might be some resemblance to what we are now, just enough that we shall be recognizable. I should like to have just enough to be identified. I don't want any more. Some of you, who are better looking, can stand a larger portion of the old frame in appearance.

But be that as it may, I am sure that the New Testament teaches that there is every reason to expect that we shall know each other on the other side of the grave, just as the disciples of Jesus knew Him. He was seen of the twelve; He was seen of Cephas, of James, and of above five hundred brethren at once. So there will be no mistake about it. And they all recognized Him, and knew that it was He. "Last of all," said Paul, "he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." I merely suggest to you what you can think through for yourself.

I say our Lord was the same in identity, not only as to His Body, but as to His Personality. There is nothing more expressive of personality than the voice. When Mary saw Him first, she supposed He was the Gardener, and she did not recognize His voice the first time when He said, "Woman, whom seek ye?" She said, "Sir, if thou have taken him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." The Stranger said, "Mary!" That was all. Instantly a flood of memories returned to her mind, and she knew He was her beloved Lord, and she said, "Rabboni! which is to say, Master!"

He calleth His own sheep by name. I have an idea that when He calls us by name in the other world that will be Heaven for us all. Then we shall know the reality and the blissful significance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. As the disciples knew Him, and He knew the disciples, I think there is every reason for us to conclude we shall know Him by the marks of the nail prints in His hands. In heaven the only marks of sin will be a Lamb as it had been slain. Yes; we shall recognize Him; and He will know us. We shall not be lost in the crowd. Personality will survive. The qualities developed here by the grace of God will be enlarged and enhanced and perfected; and we shall go on to know the Lord.

We shall go on a long vacation one of these days. It will not be one of idleness, for we shall serve Him day and night in His temple. We shall serve Him in-

wardly, happy in the fellowship of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, happy in the fellowship of the innumerable multitude of the redeemed.

Are you not glad that Jesus came, and that He lived, and died, and rose again, and left us this sure word of promise, upon which we can rest our hope for this life, and for the life which is to come? And all that is possible to those who believe.

Should there be one here this evening who has never yet seen Christ, I remind you that the reality of the resurrection has a terrible significance to all who die in their sins. A terrible significance! I am glad the whole matter is settled, so far as I am concerned. Is it settled with you? Are you not glad that it is? May it be so of every one of us here to-night!

Let us bow in thankfulness before Him:

O Lord, we thank Thee that Thou hast brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Thou hast made us to know something of what it really means to live.

Now fulfil to us the prophetic word we read this evening, that Thou wouldst show us the path of life, and that in Thy presence in fulness of joy, and at Thy right hand pleasures for evermore.

Bless our meditation to our souls' abiding good, and to Thy glory, for Thy name's sake, Amen.

In Australia and in New Zealand, they sang a particular hymn quite frequently. If no hymn was announced, someone would ask that they sing this one. It is a glorious hymn of Charles Wesley, to a glorious tune. Let us now sing it.

And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Saviour's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain?
For me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me!

'Tis mystery all! The Immortal dies:
Who can explore His strange design?
In vain the first-born seraph tries
To sound the depths of love divine.
'Tis mercy all! let earth adore,
Let angel minds enquire no more.

He left His Father's throne above—
So free, so infinite His grace—
Emptied Himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race
'Tis mercy all, immense and free;
For, O my God, it found out me!

Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray—
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth and followed Thee.

No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in Him is mine!
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness divine.
Bold I approach the eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ, my own.

A SERMON BY REV. JOHN WESLEY

We publish in this issue a sermon by John Wesley, one of the greatest evangelists of all times. It is good for us to read the messages of men who in other ages have been signally blessed by God to the reviving of His church and the salvation of multitudes. And as we read, it is also good to remind ourselves that what God has done He can do again through the preaching of the blessed Gospel of His Son. Oh, that He would rend the heavens and come down!

THE CURE OF EVIL-SPEAKING

A Sermon by Rev. John Wesley, A.M.

Sometime Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford.

"If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

"But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

"And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

—Matt. 18:15-17.

"SPEAK evil of no man," says the great Apostle: as plain a command as, "Thou shalt do no murder." But who, even among Christians, regards this command? Yea, how few are there that so much as understand it! What is evil-speaking? It is not, as some suppose, the same with lying or slandering. All a man says may be as true as the Bible; and yet the saying of it is evil-speaking. For evil-speaking is neither more nor less than speaking evil of an absent person; relating something evil, which was really done or said by one that is not present when it is related. Suppose, having seen a man drunk, or heard him curse or swear, I tell this when he is absent; it is evil-speaking. In our language this is also, by an extremely proper name, termed "backbiting." Nor is there any material difference between this and what we usually style "tale-bearing." If the tale be delivered in a soft and quiet manner, (perhaps with expressions of good-will to the person, and of hope that things might not be quite so bad) then we call it "whispering." But in whatever manner it be done, the thing is the same;—the same in substance, if not in circumstance. Still it is evil-speaking; still this command, "Speak evil of no man," is trampled under foot; if we relate to another the fault of a third person, when he is not present to answer for himself.

2. And how extremely common is this sin, among all orders and degrees of men! How do high and low, rich and poor, wise and foolish, learned and unlearned, run into it continually! Persons who differ from each other in all things else, nevertheless agree in this. How few are there that can testify before God, "I am clear in this matter; I have always set a watch before my mouth, and kept the door of my lips!" What conversation do you hear, of any considerable length, whereof evil-speaking is not one ingredient? and that even among persons who, in the general, have the fear of God before their eyes, and do really desire to have a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man.

3. And the very commonness of this sin makes it difficult to be avoided. As we are encompassed with it on every side, so, if we are not deeply sensible of the danger, and continually guarding against it, we are liable to be carried away by the torrent. In this instance, almost the whole of mankind is, as it were, in a conspiracy against us. And their example steals upon us, we know not how; so that we insensibly slide into the imitation of it. Besides, it is recommended from within, as well as from without. There is scarce any wrong temper in the mind of man, which may not be occasionally gratified by it, and consequently incline us to it. It gratifies our pride, to relate those faults of others whereof we think ourselves not to be guilty. Anger, resentment, and all unkind tempers, are indulged by speaking against those

with whom we are displeased; and, in many cases, by reciting the sins of their neighbours, men indulge their own foolish and hurtful desires.

4. Evil-speaking is the more difficult to be avoided, because it frequently attacks us in disguise. We speak thus, out of a noble, generous, (it is well if we do not say,) holy indignation against these vile creatures! We commit sin from mere hatred of sin! We serve the devil out of pure zeal for God! It is merely in order to punish the wicked that we run into this wickedness. "So do the passions" (as one speaks) "all justify themselves," and palm sin upon us under the veil of holiness!

5. But is there no way to avoid the snare? Unquestionably there is. Our blessed Lord has marked out a plain way for his followers, in the words above recited. None, who warily and steadily walk in this path, will ever fall into evil-speaking. This rule is either an infallible preventive, or a certain cure of it. In the preceding verses, our Lord had said, "Woe to the world, because of offences";—unspeakable misery will arise in the world from this baleful fountain: (Offences are all things whereby anyone is turned out of, or hindered in, the ways of God:) "For it must be that offences come":—such is the nature of things; such the wickedness, folly, and weakness of mankind: "but woe to that man,"—miserable is that man, "by whom the offence cometh." "Wherefore if thy hand, thy foot, thine eye, cause thee to offend";—if the most dear enjoyment, the most beloved and useful person, turn thee out of or hinder thee in the way, "pluck it out,"—cut them off and cast them from thee. But how can we avoid giving offence to some, and being offended at others? especially suppose they are quite in the wrong, and we see it with our own eyes? Our Lord here teaches us how: he lays down a sure method of avoiding offences and evil-speaking together. "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him of his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

I. 1. First, "If thy brother shall sin against thee, go and tell him of his fault between thee and him alone." The most literal way of following this first rule, where it is practicable, is the best: therefore if thou seest with thine own eyes a brother, a fellow-Christian, commit undeniable sin, or hearest it with thine own ears, so that it is impossible for thee to doubt the fact, then thy part is plain: take the very first opportunity of going to him; and if thou canst have access, "tell him of his fault between thee and him alone." Indeed, great care is to be taken that this is done in a right spirit, and in a right manner. The success of a reproof greatly depends on the spirit wherein it is given. Be not, therefore, wanting in earnest prayer to God, that it may be given in a lowly spirit; with a deep, piercing conviction, that it is God alone who maketh thee to differ, and that if any good be done by what is now spoken, God doeth it himself. Pray that he would guard thy heart, enlighten

thy mind, and direct thy tongue to such words as he may please to bless. See that thou speak in a meek as well as a lowly spirit; for the "wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." If he be "overtaken in a fault," he can no otherwise be restored, than "in the spirit of meekness." If he opposes the truth, yet he cannot be brought to the knowledge thereof; but by gentleness. Still speak in a spirit of tender love, "which many waters cannot quench." If love is not conquered, it conquers all things. Who can tell the force of love?

"Love can bow down the stubborn neck,
The stone to flesh convert;
Softens, and melt, and pierce, and break
An adamant heart."

Confirm, then, your love toward him, and you will thereby "heap coals of fire upon his head."

2. But see that the manner also wherein you speak be according to the Gospel of Christ. Avoid everything in look, gesture, word, and tone of voice, that savours of pride or self-sufficiency. Studiously avoid everything magisterial or dogmatical, everything that looks like arrogance or assuming. Beware of the most distant approach to disdain, overbearing or contempt. With equal care avoid all appearance of anger; and though you use great plainness of speech, yet let there be no reproach, no railing accusation, no token of any warmth, but that of love. Above all, let there be no shadow of hate or ill-will, no bitterness or sourness of expression; but use the air and language of sweetness as well as gentleness, that all may appear to flow from love in the heart. And yet this sweetness need not hinder your speaking in the most serious and solemn manner; as far as may be, in the very words of the oracles of God, (for there are none like them,) and as under the eye of Him who is coming to judge the quick and the dead.

3. If you have not an opportunity of speaking to him in person, or cannot have access, you may do it by a messenger; by a common friend, in whose prudence, as well as uprightness, you can thoroughly confide. Such a person, speaking in your name, and in the spirit and manner above described, may answer the same end, and in a good degree, supply your lack of service. Only beware that you do not feign the want of opportunity, in order to shun the cross; neither take it for granted that you cannot have access, without ever making the trial. Whenever you can speak in your own person, it is far better. But you should rather do it by another, than not at all: this way is better than none.

4. But what, if you can neither speak yourself, nor find such a messenger as you can confide in? If this be really the case, it then only remains to write. And there may be some circumstances which make this the most advisable way of speaking. One of these circumstances is, when the person with whom we have to do is of so warm and impetuous a temper as does not easily bear reproof, especially from an equal or an inferior. But it may be so introduced and softened in writing as to make it far more tolerable. Besides, many will read the very same words, which they could not bear to hear. It does not give so violent a shock to their pride, nor so sensibly touch their honour. And suppose it makes little impression at first, they will, perhaps, give it a second reading, and, upon further consideration, lay to heart what they before disregarded. If you add your name, this is nearly the same thing as going to him, and speaking in person. And this should always be done, unless it be rendered improper by some very particular reason.

5. It should be well observed, not only that this is a step which our Lord absolutely commands us to take, but that he commands us to take this step first, before we attempt any other. No alternative is allowed, no choice of anything else: this is the way, walk thou in it. It is true, he enjoins us, if need require, to take two other steps; but they are to be taken successively after this step, and neither of them before it: much less are we to take any other step, either before or beside this. To do anything else, or not to do this, is, therefore, equally inexcusable.

6. Do not think to excuse yourself for taking an entirely different step, by saying, "Why, I did not speak to anyone, till I was so burdened that I could not refrain." You were burdened! It was no wonder you should, unless your conscience was seared; for you were under the guilt of sin, of disobeying a plain commandment of God! You ought immediately to have gone, and told "your brother of his fault between you and him alone." If you did not, how should you be other than burdened, (unless your heart was utterly hardened,) while you were trampling the command of God under foot, and "hating your brother in your heart"? And what a way you have found to unburden yourself! God reproves you for a sin of omission, for not telling your brother of his fault; and you comfort yourself under his reproof by a sin of commission, by telling your brother's fault to another person! Ease bought by sin is a dear purchase! I trust in God, you will have no ease, but will be burdened so much the more, till you "go to your brother and tell him," and no one else.

7. I know of but one exception to this rule: there may be a peculiar case, wherein it is necessary to accuse the guilty, though absent, in order to preserve the innocent. For instance: you are acquainted with the design which a man has against the property or life of his neighbour. Now, the case may be so circumstanced, that there is no other way of hindering that design from taking effect, but the making it known, without delay, to him against whom it is laid. In this case, therefore, this rule is set aside, as is that of the Apostle, "Speak evil of no man": and it is lawful, yea, it is our bounden duty, to speak evil of an absent person, in order to prevent his doing evil to others and himself at the same time. But remember, meanwhile, that all evil-speaking is, in its own nature, deadly poison. Therefore, if you are sometimes constrained to use it as a medicine, yet use it with fear and trembling; seeing it is so dangerous a medicine, that nothing but absolute necessity can excuse your using it at all. Accordingly, use it as seldom as possible; never but when there is such a necessity: and even then use as little of it as is possible; only so much as is necessary for the end proposed. At all other times, "go and tell him of his fault between thee and him alone."

II. 1. But what, "if he will not hear?" if he repay evil for good? If he be enraged rather than convinced? What, if he hear to no purpose, and go on still in the evil of his way? We must expect this will frequently be the case; the mildest and tenderest reproof will have no effect; but the blessing we wished for another will return into our own bosom. And what are we to do then? Our Lord has given us a clear and full direction. Then "take with thee one or two more": this is the second step. Take one or two whom you know to be of a loving spirit, lovers of God and of their neighbour. See, likewise, that they be of a lowly spirit, and "clothed with humility." Let them also be such as are meek and

gentle, patient and long-suffering; not apt to "return evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing." Let them be men of understanding, such as are endued with wisdom from above; and men unbiased, free from partiality, free from prejudice of any kind. Care should likewise be taken, that both the persons and their characters be well known to him: and let those that are acceptable to him be chosen preferable to any others.

2. Love will dictate the manner wherein they should proceed, according to the nature of the case. Nor can any one particular manner be prescribed for all cases. But perhaps, in general, one might advise, before they enter upon the thing itself, let them mildly and affectionately declare that they have no anger or prejudice toward him, and that it is merely from a principle of good-will that they now come, or at all concern themselves with his affairs. To make this the more apparent, they might then calmly attend to your repetition of your former conversation with him, and to what he said in his own defence, before they attempted to determine anything. After this they would be better able to judge in what manner to proceed, "that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word might be established"; that whatever you have said may have its full force by the additional weight of their authority.

3. In order to this, may they not, (1) Briefly repeat what you spoke, and what he answered? (2) Enlarge upon, open, and confirm the reasons which you had given? (3) Give weight to your reproof, showing how just, how kind, and how reasonable it was? And, lastly, enforce the advices and persuasions which you had annexed to it? And these may likewise hereafter, if need should require, bear witness of what was spoken.

4. With regard to this, as well as the preceding rule, we may observe, that our Lord gives us no choice, leaves us no alternative, but expressly commands us to do this, and nothing else in the place of it. He likewise directs us when to do this; neither sooner nor later; namely, *after* we have taken the first, and *before* we have taken the third step. It is then only that we are authorized to relate the evil another has done, to those whom we desire to bear a part with us in this great instance of brotherly love. But let us have a care how we relate it to any other person, till both these steps have been taken. If we neglect to take these, or if we take any others, what wonder if we are burdened still? For we are sinners against God, and against our neighbour; and how fairly soever we may colour it, yet, if we have any conscience, our sin will find us out, and bring a burden upon our soul.

III. 1. That we may be thoroughly instructed in this weighty affair, our Lord has given us a still farther direction: "If he will not hear them," then, and not till then, "tell it to the church." This is the third step. All the question is, how this word, "the church," is here to be understood. But the very nature of the thing will determine this beyond all reasonable doubt. You cannot tell it to the national Church, the whole body of men termed "the Church of England." Neither would it answer any Christian end if you could: this, therefore, is not the meaning of the word. Neither can you tell it to that whole body of people in England with whom you have a more immediate connection. Nor, indeed, would this answer any good end; the word, therefore, is not to be understood thus. It would not answer any valuable end to tell the faults of any particular member to the church (if, you would so term it), the congregation

or society, united together in London. It remains that you tell it to the elder or elders of the church, to those who are overseers of that flock of Christ to which you both belong, who watch over yours and his soul, "as they that must give account." And this should be done, if it conveniently can, in the presence of the person concerned, and though plainly, yet with all the tenderness and love which the nature of the thing will admit. It properly belongs to their office, to determine concerning the behaviour of those under their care, and to rebuke, according to the demerit of the offence, "with all authority." When, therefore, you have done this, you will have done all which the Word of God, or the law of love, requireth of you; you are not now partaker of his sin; but if he perish, his blood is on his own head.

2. Here, also, let it be observed, that this, and no other, is the third step which we are to take; and that we are to take it in its order after the other two; not before the second, much less the first, unless in some very particular circumstance. Indeed, in one case, the second step may coincide with this: they may be, in a manner, one and the same. The elder or elders of the church may be so connected with the offending brother, that they may set aside the necessity, and supply the place, of the one or two witnesses; so that it may suffice to tell it to them, after you have told it to your brother, "between you and him alone."

3. When you have done this, you have delivered your own soul. "If he will not hear the church," if he persist in his sin, "let him be to thee as an heathen man and a publican." You are under no obligation to think of him any more; only when you commend him to God in prayer. You need not speak of him any more, but leave him to his own Master. Indeed, you still owe to him, as to all other Heathens, earnest, tender, good-will. You owe him courtesy, and as occasion offers, all the offices of humanity. But have no friendship, no familiarity with him; no other intercourse than with an open Heathen.

4. But if this be the rule by which Christians walk, which is the land where the Christians live? A few you may possibly find scattered up and down, who make a conscience of observing it. But how every few! How thinly scattered upon the face of the earth! And where is there any body of men that universally walk thereby? Can we find them in Europe? or, to go no farther, in Great Britain or Ireland? I fear not: I fear we may search these kingdoms throughout, and yet search in vain. Alas for the Christian world! Alas for Protestants, for Reformed Christians! O, "who will rise up with me against the wicked?" "Who will take God's part" against the evil-speakers? Art thou the man? By the grace of God, wilt thou be one who art not carried away by the torrent? Art thou fully determined, God being thy helper, from this very hour to set a watch, a continual "watch, before thy mouth, and keep the door of thy lips"? From this hour wilt thou walk by this rule, "Speaking evil of no man"? If thou seest thy brother do evil, wilt thou "tell him of his fault between him and thee alone"? afterwards, "take one or two" witnesses, and then only "tell it to the church"? If this be the full purpose of thy heart, then learn one lesson well. "Hear evil of no man." If there were no hearers, there would be no speakers of evil. And is not (according to the vulgar proverb) the receiver as bad as the thief? If, then, any begin to speak evil in thy hearing, check him immediately. Refuse to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so sweetly;

let him use ever so soft a manner, so mild an accent, ever so many professions of good-will for him whom he is stabbing in the dark, whom he smiteth under the fifth rib! Resolutely refuse to hear, though the whisperer complain of being "burdened till he speak." *Burdened!* thou fool! dost thou travail with thy cursed secret, as a woman travaileth with child? Go, then, and be delivered of thy burden in the way the Lord hath ordained! First, "go and tell thy brother of his fault between thee and him alone": next, "take with thee one or two" common friends, and tell him in their presence: if neither of these steps take effect, then "tell it to the church." But, at the peril of thy soul, tell it to no one else, either before or after, unless in that one exempt case, when it is absolutely needful to preserve the innocent! Why shouldst thou burden another as well as thyself, by making him partaker of thy sin?

5. O that all you who bear the reproach of Christ, who are in derision called Methodists, would set an example to the Christian world, so called, at least in this one instance! Put ye away evil-speaking, tale-bearing, whispering: let none of them proceed out of your mouth! See that you "speak evil of no man"; of the absent, nothing but good. If ye must be distinguished, whether ye will or no, let this be the distinguishing mark of the Methodist: "He censures no man behind his back: by this fruit ye may know him." What a blessed effect of this self-denial should we quickly feel in our hearts! How would our "peace flow as a river", when we thus "followed peace with all men!" How would the love of God abound in our own souls, while we thus confirmed our love to our brethren! And what an effect it would have on all that were united together in the name of the Lord Jesus! How would brotherly love continually increase, when this grand hindrance of it was removed! All the members of Christ's mystical body would then naturally care for each other. "If one member suffered, all would suffer with it"; "if one was honoured, all would rejoice with it"; and every one would love his brother "with a pure heart fervently." Nor is this all: but what an effect might this have, even on the wild unthinking world! How soon would they descry in us, what they could not find among all the thousands of their brethren, and cry, (as Julian the apostate to his heathen courtiers,) "See how these Christians love one another!" By this chiefly would God convince the world, and prepare them also for his kingdom; as we may easily learn from those remarkable words in our Lord's last, solemn prayer: "I pray for them who shall believe in me, that they may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee,—that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." The Lord hasten the time! The Lord enable us thus to love one another, not only "in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth," even as Christ hath loved us!

In fact, if a man have any purpose reaching beyond the hour and day, meant to be found extant *next* day, what good can it ever be to promulgate lies? The lies are found-out; ruinous penalty is exacted for them. No man will believe the liar next time even when he speaks truth, when it is of the last importance that he be believed. The old cry of wolf!—A Lie is *no*-thing; you cannot of nothing make something; you make nothing at last, and lose your labour into the bargain.

—THOMAS CARLYLE.

PRAYER

By Joseph Parker

Almighty God, we cry unto Thee, each for himself, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." The leprosy is in the heart; the flesh is good and sound and right, but our hearts are full of sin and evil and bitterness. "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." But thou dost ask us to be willing in this case: Lord, we are willing; we would be clean; we would know the mystery of holiness, the rest of purity, the music of unity with God. We do not know what cleanness is; we cannot wash our own hearts. Thou alone canst cleanse the spirit and sanctify the whole will, making every passion a pure flame, and the outgoing of the soul a sacred yearning after larger knowledge. We cannot do the miracles of God. Work in-us mightily, and show Thy great power in the cleansing of hearts that are deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. This is the purpose of Thy Cross, O Christ, this is the meaning of the blood that was shed,—to take away all sin, to cleanse the sinner and to make the evil-doer a right-doer, so that not only shall the works be changed but the worker shall be transformed. We bless Thee for this revelation of Thy purpose; it enables us to seize the Book in which it is written, and to lay hold upon it with our judgment and affection, and to expect from it further light, more ardent warmth, and larger hospitality. Thou wouldst have all hearts clean; from the great heaven Thou hast written this word, addressed to all the sons of men: "Be ye holy, as your Father in heaven is holy." Thou dost call us to no minor character; Thou hast not set before us that which is uncertain, incomplete, fickle, and changeable; Thou art Thyself the standard of holiness, the character to whose grandeur we must aspire. To God all things are possible. In that consolation we rest, and from that point we begin our poor endeavour, knowing that our weakness shall be perfected by the divine power, and what we cannot do, God will abundantly accomplish. We have been a long time at school; we are poor scholars; we misspell the simplest words, and misapply the deepest and in the midst of our reading we burn with unholy passion. When we are at Church, we bring with us forbidden guests. When we read Thy Book, we think of other music and fascination. Life is difficult, the discipline is hard; every day smites with its own fist, and we spend our time in vainly trying to get up again. But it is Thy life, not ours; Thy way of doing things, and therefore it is right: we accept it; even when the burden is heaviest, we do not pray that it may be destroyed, but that our strength may be equal to it. Thou hast Thy servants through many a mile of the life-journey; some of them are willing to turn right back again, and begin all the road once more, thinking they would avoid the mistakes, and never repeat the errors which have filled the life-way with difficulty and judgment. Some are in a strait betwixt two: wanting to stay, willing to go; wanting to go, willing to stay; having no will in the matter, but waiting Thy revelation. Others are impatient to go, for they have seen the end of things; they have heard all the roaring wind, and have tasted its emptiness, and now they long to be in the better land, where every day is harvest, and where there is no black night. We pray for one another: for the little child and the old man, for the sick heart, for the wounded spirit, for those whose hopes are dead, and whose best trusts are blighted. We remember those whose sin cannot be spoken, whose suffering lies beyond the reach of words, who die in secret, and waste away whilst they are deceiving their friends with smiles. Thou knowest us altogether: in our robustness and force and great strength, in our weakness and delicateness, in our pining and fear, in our richness, in our wealth and poverty,—in all our relations Thou knowest us wholly; there is not a word upon our tongue, there is not a thought in our heart, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether. Thy knowledge is mercy; to know is to pity, to know is to look with inward kindness on the objects of suffering and despair. The Lord send messages to us, every one: make the reading of His Word like the dawning of a birthday; and may there be festival in the house, eating and drinking abundantly at God's great table, and may all the guests rise from the feast saying,—Blessed be the Master, and to the King be the loyalty of every heart.

Amen.

The jewel of assurance is best kept in the cabinet of a humble heart.—THOS. WATSON.

THE TESTIMONY OF A FRENCH-CANADIAN BELIEVER

The following testimony is translated from *La Voix de l'Évangile*, where it was printed for the encouragement of French-Canadian Roman Catholics who have asked for and received a copy of the New Testament in their mother tongue. The monthly publication from which this is taken is edited by Rev. John Boyd of Sudbury and made possible by the help of the Emergency Missionary Committee. The pastor of the church at Malartic, Quebec, referred to in this story is Mr. Yvon Hurtubise, who with his wife was sentenced to a month in jail last summer for preaching on the street.

MY PARENTS were ardent Roman Catholics, and I always followed faithfully the religion in which I was born and brought up. I made my first communion and observed all the other duties of the Church. I attended mass at the Roman Catholic Church as often as possible, but in spite of all that, my heart was still empty. I had the burning desire in my soul to know God personally, because He was said to be so good and just.

When I was eighteen years of age this desire led me to go to the priest's house and ask him for a copy of the Bible. This request, coming from the depths of my heart, brought no other answer than this: "I cannot give you a Bible, for it is not good for you." Murmuring, "Thank you," I went away with a sad heart, telling myself that perhaps some day I would have one.

The years brought many trials which led me to give up my search for the true God and the peace that I once longed for so ardently. I married a good man who was a kind husband to me, and I had everything to make me happy. But in spite of it all, I felt that something was missing in my life and that troubled me greatly. My attendance at the Roman Catholic Church led me to see much unrighteousness on the part of those who dared to say that they took the place of God, and my mind was filled with doubts and questions. "How can a man who is a sinner take God's place?" "Is it possible that bread is changed into flesh and blood by the words of consecration?" "Why do they not allow us to read the Bible, if it is the Word of God?"

Then we came to live in the town of Malartic, Quebec, not knowing that in this place God would lead us to find what I had longed for. One day when I was visiting a neighbour, I noticed that she often spoke of the Bible, and I found out that she had one in her possession. My heart beating with hope, I asked her if she would lend me her Bible. She did so, and I began to read it with joy. Some passages of the Holy Scripture struck me and confirmed my thoughts on the way of salvation: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8.) "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time." (1 Tim. 2:5.)

I said to myself, "That is the way to be saved." The Roman Catholic Church teaches us that we can never be certain of salvation, no matter how many sacrifices and good works we do. In reading the Bible, I found that I was already condemned to death by sin, but that by the grace of God I could have everlasting life. I had the experience of an inexpressible joy in my heart, and I wanted to tell everybody about it. First of all I talked to my husband about it, but in the beginning it did not interest him. He had been influenced by some friends

and did not wish to touch the Bible. However, I left it on the table praying that God would bring him to read it, and a short time afterwards that is what happened. From that moment the Word of God laid hold upon him and nothing could hold him back from reading it. Now I have a copy of the New Testament which was given me by the pastor of the Baptist Church at Malartic. My husband and I read it together and we go to the meetings of that church where the Word of God is preached.

In the course of these last months we have had the true joy of God in our hearts and in our family. All is changed — we no longer feel the same — we are new creatures in Jesus Christ.

McMASTER VIOLATES BAPTIST PRINCIPLES

ONE of the historic principles of Baptists is the doctrine of the separation of Church and State. A generation ago McMaster University was wont to boast that it did not receive a cent of government aid. But when the Word of God is rejected, with it goes loyalty to Baptist principles. The daily press informs us that the "Baptist" university (we use quotation marks advisedly) has joined the procession of institutions who go knocking on governmental doors, hat in hand. *The Toronto Star* tells the story in these words:

\$250,000, McMaster Asks of Hamilton

Hamilton, Feb. 15—A grant of \$250,000, and an annual operating grant of \$75,000 for McMaster university from the city of Hamilton was requested by a delegation of Hamilton citizens in a brief presented to city council last night. Dr. G. P. Gilmour pointed out the university had been established 20 years in Hamilton, was celebrating its diamond jubilee in 1950.

The grant requested last night comes as the share of \$2,500,000 McMaster is endeavouring to raise, during the next three years, for the Hamilton college building fund.

Of course the amount is small, and as yet the reports tell us that McMaster has strayed no farther afield than the local City Council of Hamilton. But like *Oliver Twist*, it may present its little bowl again and again, and again!

(Alas and alack, since writing this note, our attention has been called to a report in *The Hamilton Spectator* which informs us that the Province of Ontario has already given to McMaster \$250,000 on capital account, and \$100,000 on annual operating account for the college's departments. Among the reasons given by the chancellor for soliciting state aid, not one so much as mentioned anything even remotely connected with things Christian, Biblical or Baptist!)

In selling out to Modernism, McMaster surrendered its birthright for a mess of pottage and is now reduced to asking the State for financial aid and must in the long run accept what inevitably goes with it, namely, State direction. McMaster is no longer either the Baptist or the "distinctively Christian" school that it used to boast it was. We wonder how many within the membership of the churches of the "Old Convention" remember our protest of twenty-five years ago against the inroads of unbelief, and whose conscience pricks them for the part they had in opening the floodgates that have since overwhelmed them?—W.S.W.

Septicism writing about Belief may have great gifts; but it is really *ultra vires* there. It is Blindness laying down the Laws of Optics—THOMAS CARLYLE.

BOOK REVIEWS

A Former Priest Reveals His Mind

OUT OF THE LABYRINTH, by L. H. Lehmann. The Agora Publishing Co., New York, U.S.A., \$3.00.

Protestants will find this book a treasury indeed from which to draw many things both old and new. Only one who could write from painful experience could challenge and refute from both Scripture and logic the specious claims of the Roman Catholic Church. To refer to some of the chapter headings is to show the aim of his thesis which is that Christianity, as John Wesley put it, is "full salvation now," or on the other hand, no salvation at all. The author discusses in the various chapters these topics: "What Salvation Really Means", "How Sins Are Really Forgiveness", "Counterfeit Christianity", "The Impossibility of Purgatory", "The True Priesthood", "Basic Postulates of Protestantism". Both Roman Catholics and Protestants will find this book inexorable in its searching scrutiny of the papacy but it is full of a tender compassion for those who are in bondage to the traditions of men. Withal, the style of the work is within the reach of all who will read it and abundantly fulfills the desire of the author "to uphold Christ against everything that is not of Christ."

—WALTER C. TOMPKINS.

Calvin's Sermons

THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS, Selected Sermons by John Calvin. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids. Price in U.S.A. \$3.00.

Calvin is generally thought of to-day, after almost four centuries, as a reformer and theologian, and undoubtedly his chief titles to lasting fame are his monumental *Institutes of the Christian Religion* and his moral and spiritual leadership in Geneva and thence in the churches in France, "under the cross", and indirectly through his disciples and his writings in the reformed churches in Holland, Scotland, England, and later in the New World. This great genius was surely one of the gifts of God to men. From the first, while he was still a young man, new in the faith, his friends pressed around him and urged him to teach them the things of God. He was still in his twenties when he wrote the first draft of the great theological work mentioned above. Throughout his entire life he taught and preached incessantly. The Eerdmans Company, a modern publishing house that is proud to number itself among the sons of Calvin, has done great service not only to historians but to simple evangelical believers by re-issuing his works: *The Institutes*, the entire series of his *Commentaries*, and now a selection of his sermons.

This volume will serve to remind us that Calvin made it his practice to preach on Sundays and several times through the week, this in addition to the multiplicity of other crushing labours that fell to his lot. The need for a book of Calvin's sermons was brought home to us when we discovered in connection with our Church History class that our students could find only one sermon by the great reformer.

Perhaps his sermons form the best introduction to the man himself that could be found outside of the few autobiographical references he makes in the introductions to *The Institutes* and to his work on the Psalms. He is simple, direct and concrete in his style and withal intensely Biblical, and therefore both doctrinal and practical. Perhaps the best commendation of his preaching that could be given is this quotation from the sermon on "The Proper Use of Scripture", which is characteristic of both the manner and the matter of his sermons:

"Let him that speaketh, speak according to the Word of God: that is, let him show that he doth not thrust himself in rashly, nor patch up with any of his own works, but that he holdeth forth the truth of God in its purity; he must make his doctrine edifying to the people that God may be honoured thereby. Seeing the doctrine of men is here cast down, let us banish it from the church of Christ, that it may never be admitted again. Therefore, let us beware and keep ourselves steadfast in the simplicity of the gospel: for our Lord hath been so gracious, as to reveal His will to us by the law and the prophets: then

let us hold fast that which we have received, and not suffer men to bind our consciences, and frame articles of faith for us according to their own notions.

"St. Paul saith all the Scripture is profitable. Therefore, if the Holy Scripture be profitable, we are very unthankful in not applying ourselves to the study of it."

We wish that this book of Calvin's sermons could be read and his ideal of preaching the Word of God could be meditated by Presbyterian ministers everywhere, for they owe so much directly to this great thinker and preacher. And little less is owed him by Anglicans who confess with heart and not mouth only their adherence to the Thirty-nine Articles, while Baptists are not the least in their debt to this great leader.—W.S.W.

SEMINARY ACTIVITIES

French Gospel Service

OUR next French preaching service will take place on Sunday, April 30, at three o'clock in the afternoon in Greenway Hall. The meeting will take the form of a farewell for our French student workers, all of whom will speak briefly. We expect that two of them will be going to France: Messrs. Appéré and Bauman, while the others will be labouring in Ontario and Quebec. This will be a service of unusual interest and we heartily invite all friends of the French work and all who are interested in the language.

Courtland Calls Student-Pastor

The Courtland Church extended a call to Mr. John Eseppi, first year student, to become its pastor. Under the leadership of Mr. Oatley-Willis, now of Essex, a mission has been commenced in Delhi which gives much promise of future blessing. We rejoice in the consecrated devotion of the friends of this church and pray both for them and their new pastor.

Student Body Elections

A sure sign of Spring and of the approaching end of the school year is the student elections which were held recently. President of the Student Body for next year is Mr. Clifford Schenk; Vice-president, Miss June Armstrong; with representatives from the years as follows: Huser, McDonald, and Eseppi. Symbolic of the good year we have enjoyed together is the success of *The Seminarian* and of the Students' Dining Room. This latter enterprise is conducted solely by the students and they are now able to report a balance on the year's operations, in addition to a fine culinary record which has supplied them with good meals at a reasonable rate. A hearty thanks to all friends who have helped make this possible!

About Library Books

A number of graduates and friends who have borrowed books from our library are requested to return them at their earliest convenience in view of the spring inventory. Those who wish to retain them longer are requested to acknowledge their possession of them to the librarian.

WAIT!

When your way is completely blocked up, and you see no way to turn, just stop, "stand still, and see the Salvation of the Lord." Be content to hold your ground, until your Captain shall give you orders to move forward. There are many precious promises to him who waits for the Lord. "Blessed are they that wait for Him." Waiting seasons are often exceedingly valuable for the perfecting of faith and patience.

MORALITY AND RELIGION

To the moralist the supreme object of human life is to be temperate, truthful, just, fearless, industrious, kindly. If reverence for God and the hope of immortality can give fresh sanctions to moral duties and fresh strength to discharge them, the aid of religious faith is gratefully accepted; but faith discharges a secondary and ministerial function. To the man who has seen the glory of God and heard His august voice, life has larger and loftier aims. God fills earth and heaven, time and eternity. His first duty is to God, and that duty includes all others. Life derives its chief interest from God, and finds in Him its true and complete meaning. The intrinsic and natural obligations of temperance, truthfulness, justice, courage, industry, kindness, remain and are indefinitely strengthened; the ideal of all these virtues is heightened and ennobled; but instead of occupying the whole territory of duty, they are only a single province of a wider realm over which the will of God is absolute and supreme.

With this immense enlargement of the area of duty, with a Divine ideal of righteousness to be fulfilled, with immortal perfection and blessedness to be lost or won, man becomes conscious of his need of a spiritual force beyond his own. He invokes Divine inspiration and receives it. Henceforth he measures, not his own strength, but God's, against all the tasks to which he is called. What he himself does seems nothing; what God does in him, through him, and for him seems everything.—R. W. DALE.

FIRE CANNOT BE HID

If there be the gift of fire in the soul we shall most surely know it. Fire is one of the things which cannot be hid. You can hide a painted sun in your parlour and no one will know it is there, but you cannot hide glowing fire. A man can hide a denominational label, he cannot possibly hide the holy fire of God.

—J. H. JOWETT

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VICTORIA AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH, HAMILTON

About a year and a half ago a deacon, while calling at a home on business, invited the mother to come to church. She had wandered away from the Lord, but she was convicted by the Spirit through the message of the first service, and was graciously restored. In quick succession a daughter and a son were saved, then somewhat later, the father and the other members of the family. That was the beginning of a real movement of the Spirit of God in our midst. The Lord's power has been made manifest, especially among the young people, and even the children of the church and Bible School. Their voices are heard in testimony and prayer. During the recent evangelistic campaign under the leadership of Jock Troup, they took an active part in the services, and spent much time and energy inviting others. At present, mature Christians and the babes in Christ meet as one family to pray, praise and study the Word in our church meetings. The young girls are finding joy in serving in the Junior Dorcas.

The presence of these bright young Christians is a source of thanksgiving, and at the same time increases our responsibility to train them in the Word and in the ways of the Lord. Their response to the faithful Scriptural teaching in the church, Bible School and Young People's Meeting is an indication of the possibilities for their future usefulness in the service of the Lord.

For several weeks a number have been awaiting baptism, but difficulties in regard to equipment made it impossible for the ordinance to be administered until Easter Sunday, when 15 followed the Lord in His appointed way. In the morning a whole family of four, and a young married woman were baptized. In the evening Mr. Byers had the joy of baptizing his elder daughter, also the son and daughter of one of the deacons, and seven other fine young people.

The work at Victoria Avenue Church is promising, and we covet the prayers of the Lord's people.—O.L.C.

THE OFFENSE OF THE CROSS

So do not be surprised or offended when hell breaks loose. Look upon it as a happy indication that all is well with the Gospel of the Cross. God forbid that the offense of the Cross should ever be removed. This would be the case if we were to preach what the prince of this world and his followers would be only too glad to hear, the righteousness of works. You would never know the devil could be so gentle, the world so sweet, the Pope so gracious, and the princes so charming. But because we seek the advantage and honour of Christ, they persecute us all around. —MARTIN LUTHER

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 15 Second Quarter Lesson 4 April 23, 1950

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

CHRISTIAN GIVING

Lesson Text: 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; 9:6-15

Golden Text: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."—2 Cor. 9:7.

I. Christian Giving Exemplified: 8:1-5.
The early Christians gladly shared one another's burdens

(Acts 2:44, 45; Rom. 15:1; Gal. 6:2). At this time the saints in Jerusalem were experiencing persecution and difficulty (Gal. 2:9, 10; 1 Thess. 2:14, 15), and the Apostle Paul had undertaken to administer the funds to be given for their relief by the Gentile Christians (Acts 24:17; Rom. 15:25-28; 1 Cor. 16:1-4, 15). Titus and two others were sent to Corinth to collect money donated by the Christians in that wealthy city, that it might be ready when Paul arrived.

We may do much to encourage one another to perform good works (Heb. 10:24). Paul commended the liberality of the Macedonian churches, the chief of which was at Philippi, to the Greeks (Phil. 4:10, 15, 16), and he also praised the generosity of the Greeks when speaking in Macedonia (2 Cor. 8:24; 9:2-4).

The Christian life is full of paradoxes. In the midst of a great trial of affliction the Macedonians exhibited abundance of joy (2 Cor. 7:4; 1 Thess. 1:6), and in spite of their deep poverty they displayed the riches of their liberality (2 Cor. 6:10; Jas. 2:5).

The willingness of the Macedonians to give far exceeded their ability. Such cases are comparatively rare, but God measures gifts according to the desires of the heart (v. 12), and He will abundantly reward sacrificial giving (Lk. 21:1-4). So great was the generosity of the Macedonian Christians that the Apostle hesitated to accept their gift. The servants of the Lord are sometimes embarrassed by amounts offered to them.

The offering of the churches in Macedonia went beyond the Apostle's expectations. Three reasons for their liberality are suggested: (1) The people had first given themselves to the Lord; they recognized that they were His (Rom. 12:1, 2). They had given Him the great gift—their selves, and they had no hesitation in giving Him the lesser gift—their means. Money represents the time, strength, ability and talents which God has first given to us. When the spiritual life of the church is at high tide, financial difficulties will be trivial.

(2) The Macedonians had given themselves to the Apostle by the will of God. They had confidence in their leader and gladly responded when he told them of the need of their Jewish brethren. Devotion to the Lord and loyalty to the local work are both essential to the successful prosecution of the church's task. Some Christians are generous in response to appeals for work in the far regions, yet fail to see their responsibility to support the local cause.

(3) Their liberality was a gift of God's sovereign grace (v. 7): "We make known to you the grace of God which hath been given to the churches of Macedonia" (v. 1, Revised Version). Selfishness, not generosity, is the natural

quality (Phil. 2:20; 2 Tim. 3:2). The gift of liberality is a desired gift, and it is also a gift which can be cultivated (v. 6; 1 Cor. 12:31). The Scripture teaching on Christian giving is of the utmost importance, but it is largely neglected.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is set before us as the greatest example of giving (v. 9). He gave Himself for us (Matt. 8:20; Phil. 2:6, 7; 1 Tim. 2:6). What have we given for Him? The realization of His condescending love is the one great incentive to Christian giving.

II. Christian Giving Encouraged: 9:6-15.

The Apostle Paul encouraged the Christians to give liberally on the following grounds: (1) The law of cause and effect operates in the spiritual, as in the natural world. Abundant seed-sowing would mean an abundant harvest (Gal. 6:7-9), and the bountiful soul would receive much blessing (Prov. 10:22; 11:24, 25; Ezek. 34:26).

(2) God loves the willing, joyful, cheerful (Greek "hilarious") giver (Prov. 22:9; Isa. 32:8).

(3) God is able to reward the liberal ones (Deut. 15:7-11; Psa. 112:9; Mal. 3:10). The giving of alms is one form of righteousness (Deut. 24:13; Matt. 6:1).

(4) God would receive the glory (2 Cor. 8:19), and thanksgiving to Him would arise from the hearts of the recipients (2 Cor. 1:11; 4:15), not merely because their wants had been supplied, but because the gifts would be a token of the obedience of the givers to Christ, and of their love to their fellow-men.

(5) The donors would be assured of the prayers and love of those to whom they had contributed.

(6) God would not be a debtor to any man, nor could any man surpass Him in giving. The great gift of His Son to us includes all other gifts (Rom. 8:32).

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

- April 17—Give as Stewards, Not Owners ... 1 Chron. 29:10-16.
- April 18—Give Because Commanded 1 Tim. 6:11-21.
- April 19—Give According to Christ's Example ... 2 Cor. 8:8-15.
- April 20—Giving Rewarded Prov. 11:24-31.
- April 21—Give as the Lord Prospers You 1 Cor. 16:1-6.
- April 22—Give as Unto the Lord Matt. 6:1-4.
- April 23—Give Motivated by Love 1 John 3:11-18.

SUGGESTED HYMNS

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