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THE ABSENT TITUS

PERHAPS there is no calling among men concerning which the average person feels more competent to form a judgment than that of the preacher. To be a preacher of the gospel is to bear a very heavy responsibility. We would not write a syllable that might lead any such preacher to think lightly of his vocation. We are disposed to believe that when a minister is unsuccessful in his pastorate, in many cases, perhaps in the majority, the minister must accept the major responsibility for failure. But when that has been admitted, it must be said that credit for success, or responsibility for failure, is not always exclusively the minister's. In the work of any church, the cooperation of officers and members with the minister is indispensable to success. Of course, we recognize that under no circumstances can real success attend a pastor's ministry unless pastor and people are directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Let that be taken for granted.

We are writing now of the human element in the success, or failure, of a church's ministry. There is much for which to be thankful when the officers of the church are wholly consecrated to the Lord, and when, in addition, they are endowed with capacities which fit them for the exercise of their office. It is well, also, when the members of the church bring their tithes and offerings into the Lord's storehouse. When a generous congregation supplies the treasury of the church with the funds necessary to its effective ministry, the pastor and deacons are relieved of much anxiety, and the minister, at least, has a much freer mind by which to exercise a faithful ministry of the Word.

But in the work of the church it is often seemingly little things, unnoticed by many, which make for success or failure. Church members too often modestly assume that if they are absent from church they will not be missed; or, if their absence is noted, no one will very seriously be affected by it.

It will be admitted, we think, that no name representative of devotion to Christ, consecration to His service, courageousness, and steadfastness in the exercise of the ministry, stands out more conspicuously in the history of the Christian Church than that of the Apostle Paul. He was surely, approximately at least, all that any faithful minister might hope to become. And though the Apostle Paul often stood alone in the midst of foes,

no man was ever more dependent upon the sympathetic help of his associates. How he laments the departure of Demas!—"having loved this present world"! And, longing for the coming of Timotheus, he pathetically writes to the Philippians: "For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." On the other hand, how frequently he expresses his appreciation of the cooperative service rendered him by the most inconspicuous people!

It should be remembered, therefore, that any minister, however strong, however seemingly independent, is really unable to do much without the cooperation of his people. When we had less experience in the pastorate, and in the callow days of youth, we fear we were accustomed to think with but little appreciation of people who appeared to do nothing but come and sit in a pew. Long since we reached the conclusion that the church member who feels it an obligation to be found in his pew as binding as the minister's obligation to be found in his pulpit, is among the most useful of all Christians to the preacher.

Writing to the Corinthians, the great Apostle Paul says this: "When I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia."

The Apostle Paul went definitely to Troas to preach. A door of opportunity was opened to him of the Lord. He was not, circumstantially, prevented from preaching, as he had been in some places. But he had evidently expected to meet Titus in Troas, and when Titus did not come, even this spiritual giant was so depressed in spirit that he could not preach; and he took leave of them, and departed into Macedonia.

Preachers who read this article will well understand the sense of disappointment, and, perhaps, forsakenness. He had gone to Troas eagerly anticipating a happy experience in preaching the gospel. But when Titus was not there he could not, by any means, summon his powers to go on without him.

The preacher who writes this note has had that experience many a time. The congregation may be gratifyingly large. The general attendance may be highly

complimentary to the preacher; but he looks out over the crowd for Titus. Titus may have been a Deacon upon whom he depended. He may have been in no official position in the church, but one who usually displayed a good appetite for the things of God. But the absence of Titus made the preacher feel as though the church were empty. He dare not remark on it; he dare not let others know that he is depressed by the absence of one man; but he is; and by that absence the service is practically ruined. The preacher feels like running away to some Macedonia.

Of course, we know the theorists will say that no preacher should be so weak as that. He ought to be able to rise above all human considerations, and live always on the mountain top, no matter what comes or goes. Perhaps! But we have yet to meet the preacher who has not at some time or another, been practically stunned by the absence from the evening or the morning service, as the case may be, of one of his most trusted associates.

Little does the average church member think how much his or her presence means to the pastor. If only they knew, they would not only be present, but *they would be in the front seat, or as near the front as possible, lest, by any means, they should be unobserved; and unnecessarily cause depression in the pulpit.*

We suggest that every church member should feel the necessity of being present at every service of the church whenever the doors are open.

We venture to relate this story of the late Deacon J. J. Burton:

Mr. Burton had a real gift of public speech. But the spiritual quality of the man made his speaking ability subservient to his sense of duty. He had been international Chaplain of the Gideons, and was often in demand for public services. When Jarvis St. Church laid its hand upon him and elected him as a Deacon, he accepted the office, and felt it a solemn obligation fully to discharge the duties attending it.

After his election he came to us, and said, "You know, Pastor, that I am frequently invited to go elsewhere to conduct services on Sunday, both morning and evening. But I have accepted the responsibility of becoming a Deacon of this church. Now I have come to ask you, as my Pastor, do you need my presence at all services?"

Mr. Burton knew very well that he was not needed to fill a seat, for crowds of others were always present. But he rightly judged that his Pastor would count much upon the inspiring presence of every one of his Deacons. So when he asked the question as to whether he was necessary, we said, "Deacon Burton, I need you every time the church door is open. This is a large church, and there is much to do, and we need many people to do it. You are now a Deacon, and I should like to be able to depend upon your being in your place at all services, first, for the inspiration and help your presence will give to me as your Pastor, and secondly, for the example you will set to other people".

He extended his hand, and I grasped it, as he said, "Pastor, you may always depend upon it. God willing, I shall be always on hand." From that day until the day that Mr. Burton was stricken with the illness that proved fatal, he never failed his Pastor so much as once. To this writer his memory remains a perpetual benediction.

Therefore, no matter how large the congregation, always remember **YOUR PASTOR NEEDS YOU.**

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

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HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR WILL?

SOME of the readers of THE GOSPEL WITNESS may have made Toronto Baptist Seminary, and the Union of Regular Baptist Churches, beneficiaries in their wills. We hope they will let the amount they left to the Seminary, stand; and make it clear: "Toronto Baptist Seminary, associated with Jarvis Street Baptist Church."

But as to the Union, we remind our readers that by the most despicable, political, manipulation we have ever known in religious circles, the pastors of all the little churches, most of them with one member to support them, outvoted the more substantial churches, and put Union affairs in the hands of a few office-seekers.

Readers of THE GOSPEL WITNESS know what it has stood for these nearly thirty years, what Jarvis Street Church stands for, and Toronto Baptist Seminary, and what, hitherto, the Union of Regular Baptist Churches has stood for, at home and abroad. We stand exactly where we have always stood.

The Emergency Missionary and Educational Committee of the Union has taken over the major part of the Home Mission Interests of the Union, and is still continuing to support the great work of the French Bible Mission, as the present administrators of the Union are not doing.

We therefore suggest that if you have left money to the Union of Regular Baptist Churches in your will, you make a change in your will to the effect that this missionary money is to go to The Emergency Missionary and Educational Committee of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec, and you might add, to make assurance doubly sure, "and not to the Union Executive Committee with headquarters in Montreal." It is our hope that The Emergency Committee is only a temporary affair, notwithstanding, before there is a change in the Union administration, someone may be called hence, thus their beneficence might pass into the wrong hands if they do not immediately make a change in the wording of their will.

For ourselves, had we millions of dollars, we would not entrust so much as one dollar to the present administrators of the Union.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

When the "Old Man" is in the Ascendancy

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, on a Sunday Morning
(Stenographically Reported)

"Gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not."—Hosea 7:9.

GRAY hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not."

Although the Bible is one of the profoundest of books—no, let me say the profoundest of all books, it is at the same time the most easily understood. It speaks a language with which we are all familiar. The people of God, the kingdom of Israel, the people called Ephraim, have mixed themselves among the people instead of maintaining a separate walk, and shutting themselves up to God. They have mixed themselves with others, with the result that strangers have devoured Ephraim's strength. He is likened here to a man who, while boasting of his youth, is really growing old. The signs of age and decay are apparent to everyone but to the man himself: "Gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not."

The Christian has a dual nature. He is of the seed of Adam after the flesh. The motions of the flesh, the mind of the flesh, are in him. The "old man" of whom Paul speaks, is ever present. But "being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever", he has also a new nature, so that there is in him not only an "old man", but a "new man", and "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." There is a perpetual warfare going on in the soul of every spiritually healthy, growing Christian.

You recall it is written, "There was long war between the house of Saul, and the house of David; but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker." And there is a perpetual conflict going on in every believer's life. But the David that is in us ought to be becoming stronger and stronger; while the house of Saul ought to be waxing weaker and weaker. We are admonished to "put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the Spirit of your mind; and that we put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." We should always be saying, "No!" to the old man. The doctrine of the right of self-expression is very popular nowadays. Any kind of repression or discipline, in some quarters, is held to be disadvantageous to the growing and developing boy or girl, or man or woman. But the Bible teaches us that we should deny ourselves; we should mortify the flesh; that the old man should be crucified with its affections and lusts; that we should bring under our body, and bring it into subjection. The old man should be made and kept sub-

ject to the new, and although the tendency and disposition of the old nature is ever with us, and will be with us, until we put off this tabernacle, yet it is our privilege to keep the old man under, and to be always victorious through our Lord Jesus Christ.

But there are periods sometimes in the believer's life, or in the life of some believers, which are too common, when the new man seems to cease to grow, and the old nature gains the ascendancy; and when instead of the old man being under, the new man is under. Then the old man, and the characteristics of the old man, become apparent in the life of one who has professed faith in Christ. When that condition of life obtains it is ever true "gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not."

I suppose just now when there seems to be somewhat of an epidemic of colds or "Flu," or whatever it may be called, mothers of families are particularly watchful of the health of their children. And if they discern any symptom that looks as though the boy or girl were taking cold, care is immediately taken to ward off a severer attack, if possible.

I think a pastor ought, in relation to his people, to be very much like a mother in relation to her children,—always careful of their spiritual health, always concerned lest they should be led astray, and become incapacitated for the service of the Lord.

And so I take this text this morning in order that we may look into the mirror, and see whether we can find any gray hairs.

I do not suppose there are any people here who have so completely subdued the old nature as to profess that they have no old man left! I have known a few such, who boast of the eradication of the old nature. My observation leads me to believe that their boast is really based upon a case of mistaken identity: it is not the old nature that is eradicated. And I am bound to confess that among the meanest and crookedest people I think I have ever met in my life have been people who professed perfection. Perhaps they needed to profess something in order to make themselves tolerable in decent society. But ordinary people admit that we have not reached perfection here, although it is our privilege by grace to be victorious over the old nature.

I heard of a company of ministers discussing their experiences on one occasion, and the question of the use of tobacco came up. One man boasted that from the day he was converted his desire to smoke had been completely eradicated; but an old minister present said, "I have been a disciple of the Lord now for many years"—I forget the length of time, forty years or more.

"Before I was converted I was a great smoker. As soon as I received the Lord I gave up the use of the weed; but I have to confess that I need even now to be on my guard, that I am not even yet immune to the attraction of the smell of a good cigar." In some cases particular habits are overcome, and the desire may be removed. In other cases they remain, but grace is given to overcome.

I.

Now let us look at this picture. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE OLD MAN? We have in Ecclesiastes an inspired picture of declining strength, the coming on of old age; and I shall have that in mind this morning as I try to expound the principle of this text.

One of the evidences of increasing age, not infrequently, is *dullness of hearing*.

I think it was on the occasion of his last visit here, my late friend, Dr. A. C. Dixon, now in the glory, said to me, "I should like you to take me to the best aurist you have in the city. I find that I am becoming somewhat dull of hearing, and I should like to see what can be done for it." I took him to a specialist; and sat in the car awaiting his return. After a little while he came out, bright and happy as usual. I said, "Well, what did the doctor say?" "Oh, he said it is just *Anno Domini*—nothing the matter with me except that I have had too many birthdays."

You are growing a little older, and your hearing is not as acute as it used to be. When the old man is in the ascendancy in the believer's life his spiritual hearing becomes somewhat dull. He is not as responsive as once he was to the whisper of the still, small voice. The Spirit has been grieved; he has become used to the sound of the alarm clock, and it does not wake him up as once it did. Conscience is less acute in making its accusations. The word of God does not stir him as once it did. There was a time when it was almost impossible for him to open his Bible without feeling some rebuke from its holy pages which led him to desire a closer walk with God; and he saw some particulars in which he ought to put off the old man with his deeds. But now, if indeed he turns to the Book at all, it does not speak to him with the same accusing voice. It speaks, but he does not hear it; he pays little attention to it. There was a time when if he went to church any faithful exposition of the word of God would be sure to smite him, and make him feel that God was speaking, and he would become conscious of something in his life that needed some measure of correction, and he would then and there, by God's grace, resolve that the principle of that admonition should be applied. But now when he listens to a sermon, no matter how faithfully the gospel is preached, it does not get beneath the surface with him; he does not hear its voice of admonition, expostulation, or exhortation.

You remember the sweet story of the child Samuel in the temple. When Eli was fast asleep the child heard a voice, and he went to the seer and judge, and said, "Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down. And the Lord called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again." "And the Lord called Samuel again the third time." And it was not until the third time that Eli

perceived that the Lord was calling him. The old man did not hear the call, but the child did.

Is your hearing dull? Is it a fact that the Bible does not speak to you as once it did? Perhaps the example of some saintly Christian does not admonish you as it did formerly. The sermon and the song do not stir you as they used to do. Is it a fact that you are becoming dull of hearing, spiritually? I cannot say. We must each determine that for ourselves. But if it be so you had better be on your guard.

Do not blame the preacher for your inability to hear. Dr. Thomas, my predecessor, once told me an interesting story. He said there was a man who was a member of Jarvis Street, who lived somewhere in the western part of the City. He attended a Bible class in another church Sunday afternoon because it was nearer his home. The teacher of the Bible Class one Sunday said, "I should like the members of the class to offer some suggestion as to how we may make this class more interesting." To which this Jarvis Street's member, now growing old, replied, "Well, you might speak a little louder. It would make it more interesting for me. My own Pastor does not speak as distinctly as once he did." It was the preacher's fault? No! It was *Anno Domini* with the hearer!

It may be, dear friends, that there are some evidences of increasing age with you, and that gray hairs are here and there upon you, and you know it not. Ask that question of yourself.

Another invariable accompaniment of the passage of time is a *dimness of sight*. As people become older their power of vision wanes somewhat, and after a certain age they need glasses to assist them. Some people, of course, with weaker vision need them earlier than others. But as we grow older we find that our sight changes. We cannot see afar off as once we could, nor can we see things that are near as closely as we could.

As the man grows older he says, "I think I shall have to get a Bible with a little larger print, because I can not read as easily as once I did." You all know about that. Many of us are quite old enough to be able to understand that experience.

So, too, when the old man gains the upper hand in the believer's life, invariably he loses the keenness of vision which once characterized him. "He that lacketh these things"—that is, the man who has failed to "add to his faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge" and so on, "for if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ"—"but he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off."

When Christ really reigns through righteousness and the new man is in the ascendancy, a man views life with a spiritual perspective, he sees the things of time in relation to the things of eternity; and thus accurately appraises the vanity of all earthly things. He discovers that they have not the value he once supposed they had, because he has learned to look for a city which hath foundations whose Builder and Maker is God. And so, while he looks not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen, while he recognizes that the things that are seen are temporal, and that the things that are unseen are eternal, the light afflictions of life work out for him "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory". That verse to which I have just referred is very often quoted apart from its context.

People glibly say, "Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." As a fact, however, such weight of glory is worked out for us only "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen."

I have known people who have been sorely afflicted and bereaved, or who have suffered some pecuniary loss, who have become bitter. Their light affliction did not work out for them an exceeding weight of glory. They were rebellious. Many professing Christians do not face the contrary winds willingly. Afflictions have the reverse effect upon them: they do not sweeten them in the least. There is, perhaps, no surer test of the genuineness of our spirituality than the effect which reverses and sorrows have upon us. If we are really the Lord's, they mellow, soften, sweeten, and brighten us. The afflicted soul is a diamond upon the lapidary's wheel, being polished so that it will reflect the glories of the sun. The verse I have quoted is conditional: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; *while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.*"

It depends upon the relation of the diamond to the wheel of the lapidary. It depends upon how we meet our sorrows and afflictions as to whether they have a sanctifying effect upon us or not. And our view of these things will largely depend upon the keenness of our vision. But when the old man is uppermost, the man loses the true perspective of life, and being shut up to his present distress, he can see no good in it at all. Hence he becomes bitter and unlovely in character.

I love to see a sweet old age, do you not?—an old man or an old woman who has become sweet and amiable in old age. An ugly, crotchety, bad-tempered, person is not attractive even in youth, but of all the ugly things in the world, is there anything to equal old age out of tune with God? Oh, how ugly it can be!

Have you not stood sometimes in utter amazement as you have seen what professing Christians can do? I have been a minister now for some years, and I give this as my testimony: I have never observed such conduct in publicans and sinners—people who make no profession of religion—as I have seen characterize professing Christians in whom "the old man" was so prominent that no one could see any new man there. Is that not true? And that comes about from dimness of vision; or rather it is itself a symptom of spiritual decline. All life is out of joint because the man cannot see clearly.

Another sign of old age is *failure of appetite*. You know what Barzillai said when David invited him to go to Jerusalem: "I am this day fourscore years old: and can I discern between good and evil? can thy servant taste what I eat or what I drink. I am so old that everything tastes alike to me. I have no appetite left."

Do you not love to see healthy children eat? I do. I suppose they need some regulation, and sometimes need to be told what they ought not to eat. But I have a picture of a Christmas supper we had for one of the departments of the school—I do not know whether the Juniors or the Intermediates—but that night I remember they served sandwiches with other things. I can see the teachers and others going about like a company of ants — or uncles, whichever you like — bearing those plates. And I remember one man's coming back with two

empty plates, and he put them down, and said, "I give up. I cannot fill them up!" It seemed as though there was no limit to their capacity.

Oh, what a blessing it is to see people hungering and thirsting after righteousness, growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ!

I have sat at the table sometimes with a family, with the father at the head of the table, a big man. One would think it would take a good deal to sustain so large a frame. But around the table there were boys and girls, just in their teens. And how the plates came back again and again!

I recall being in a home years ago where there were two children, a boy and a girl. The girl was older than the boy, and she had a wonderfully good appetite, far better than the boy. The little girl was called Dorothy, and the little boy called her "Dorse". Full of mischief, he would watch his sister's plate, and when it was empty he would say, "Back up your wagon, Dorse". And Dorothy would find in that an invitation for sending her plate back for another helping. How delightful it is to see growing children satisfying a hearty appetite! You know how growing children need to be fed, don't you? More food is required for a growing child sometimes than for a man who has really attained his full stature.

Is it not a delightful thing to see Christian people growing? children of God, about the Father's table, ravenously hungry?—hungering and thirsting after righteousness, with the certainty of being filled. I remember reading in one of Spurgeon's sermons a remark to this effect: When a man has a very dainty appetite, and is not very hungry, when he sits down at the table he is likely to be very picky. If there is a little bit of gristle in the meat he cuts it out and puts it on one side. Or if there is anything that is not just to his taste that is put on one side also. But the healthy man draws his knife through it, puts the meat on his fork, and away it goes, gristle and all!

Sometimes people who come to church are so nice that nothing can satisfy them. They do not like "long" sermons; nor do they like long chapters in the Bible either. They are very delicate, and they seem to think that that is an evidence of superiority. I have sometimes felt like the late Dr. Fulton, one of the great preachers of America. When he was delivering an address, a great address it was too, one night before a large audience, there were some people who were soon satisfied. And after a while they got up with a superior air to go out. The preacher noticed them and said, "That is right. If you are only a pint measure, go home as soon as you are full."

I wonder are any of you losing your appetite? If so, why? Just hold up the mirror of God's Word before your soul, and enquire, "Are the gray hairs here and there upon me? Are there discernible some signs of the old man in me?"

A friend of mine told me he once heard Archibald Brown preach. I do not know the connection in which he used this illustration, but Mr. Brown said, "We have in our garden a certain weed that we call 'the old man'." Do you English people know what that is? It was never suggested that anyone should make a bottle of perfume of that, was it? And did you ever work in your garden and lay hold of a bit of that weed? Oh, the odor of it! And you can scarcely wash it off. How it clings about you! Mr. Brown described that disagreeable weed, the

"old man". Then he imagined the children coming in when mother was not in a very good humour. And one of them said, "A bit of 'the old man' about mother!" At another time father was short-tempered, and upsetting the household generally. And mother remarked, "A bit of 'the old man' about father to-day." Oh yes, there is too much of "the old man" about all of us.

The loss of memory is another sign of increasing age. You have heard someone say, "I used to have a good memory." Why have you not now? "I suppose," he replies, "it is because I am getting older." Yes; that is one of the signs of increasing age—failing memory.

I was in a place one day when an old man of ninety came in to visit the man whom I was visiting. This man's name was Mr. Jack. (I think perhaps Dr. Montgomery would remember the family). My friend said, "How many children have you, Mr. Jack?" "Well," he said, "let me see." And he counted twelve or thirteen. I forgot just how many. "Oh," he said, "a big family!" "Ah yes, a big family." After a while he went out. I remained. But in a short while he came back and said, "I forgot; there is another one!" He had forgotten one of his own children—he was so old!

Is your memory failing? You remember how the Psalmist exhorted his soul: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." Do not forget how good God is to you. When you find your spiritual memory failing you may be sure there is too much of the old man about you.

Are you in a grumbling and complaining mood this morning? Are you out of sorts with life generally? Did you get out of the wrong side of the bed this morning? What is the matter with you? Has not God been good to you? Can you complain against God? Oh, no—no—no! Then what are you grumbling about? or, as the soldiers used to say "grousing" about? I will tell you. You have forgotten some of His benefits.

"Count your blessings, name them one by one
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done."

Cultivate the memory.

There is a little girl who comes to prayer meeting who gave us last night the third instalment of the eleventh chapter of John. She recites many verses at a time. I recommend you boys and girls to commit the word of God to memory while you are young, for you will find it easier to remember while you are children than when you grow older, far easier.

Oh that God would help us to "put on the new man"! Then we should be able to remember His benefits,—and His Word too.

How many things I might say!

What do you do after dinner? I have a friend who said to me one day, "I always take a nap." "Did you always do it?" "No; no! When I was younger I did not need it." I know a certain minister with whom I have been associated for a number of years. I have been with him on committees many times. Often the committee have met in my room in a hotel. Sometimes we would meet immediately after lunch, between a morning and afternoon session of a convention. And this man would say, "Now, brethren, go on with your committee; it will not disturb me. I am going to appropriate this bed." And he would throw himself down and be fast asleep for about ten minutes, then wake up as fresh as in the morning.

I suppose it is a good thing. I have never formed the habit yet—I want to keep young! But there are some people who do that after a meal on the word of God: they read it and after they have had some spiritual food, instead of going out to work, they promptly go to sleep, and do nothing at all. They take an after-dinner nap, and as a rule it is more than ten minutes; they sleep on.

The old man also is "afraid of that which is high". There are some boys who live not very far from where I live, and I have seen them, nearly a dozen at a time, walking along the fence at the back. Now can you tell me why boys want to walk on the top of a fence when there is a good sidewalk to walk on? Why should a crowd of boys want to get up on a fence and walk along a scantling four inches wide, when there is plenty of room on the ground? Did you ever see a boy who did not want to get to the top of a very high tree, if there was a way of getting there? It is characteristic of youth. It is always aspiring. It wants not only to climb, but, if possible, to fly, like an eagle into the clouds. But when a man grows old he says, "Oh yes, my boy, I used to do that myself; but now I keep on the ground." And oh, how he does keep to the ground! He is afraid of that which is high.

How many Christian people there are who are afraid of that which is high. There was a time when they were like a certain old man—who was young—of whom I spoke to you a little while ago, who on his eighty-fifth birthday said, "I am as strong this day as I was on the day that Moses sent me; as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day. I am not afraid of the high things. I will climb the mountain yet. I will show you that I am still young even if I am eighty-five years of age."

Ah yes, when the new man is regnant within us, there is no mountain that we do not desire to climb; and not content with that; we must mount up with wings as eagles, and run and not be weary, and walk and not faint.

Are you afraid of the high places? Do you not reflect that all spiritual blessings await our appropriation in high or heavenly places? It is extraordinary how prudent some people become in the Lord's work! Oh yes, the man says, "Of course, I did that myself, when I was young, but now—now—now—be careful!" He calls it "prudence" or "caution". Really "the old man" is becoming "afraid of that which is high". And "the old man" sometimes prevails in the counsels of the church instead of the new man. Do not be afraid of that which is high.

Once more, in life's eventide, "fears are in the way". Have you seen a boy face the darkness? He just runs out. He cannot see where he is going, but apparently it does not much matter. If he falls he will get up again. He gallops along heedlessly.

How many of you drive motor cars? Nearly every one! What fills you with more fear than anything else when you are driving a car? I will tell you what bothers me more than anything else. A boy on a bicycle. He does not know what fear is. He dodges in and out. There are no fears in the way for him. I sometimes wish there were. He would be a little more careful. But it is characteristic of youth that it is not afraid of pitfalls. It goes on its way fearlessly. But when a man

grows older how careful he becomes of his footing! Perhaps he carries a stick, and partly feels his way like a blind man.

Are you old? Is it about time for somebody to "cane" you? Do you want somebody to present you with a stick? I carry a stick myself, when I am not driving. But I have carried one since I was in my 'teens—I find it company. I do not really need one, and I hope you will not either. But religiously, the man of faith will not be a man of fear: he will be fearless, and go on in the Lord's work.

And then did you notice that other word, as it was read? "And the grasshopper shall be a burden." A young man likes to carry a load. Have you not seen a little boy take hold of something: "See what I can lift!" How proud he is! And the young fellow likes to have a big load on his back. "Now be careful!" one of his elders says, but he replies, "Oh, pile it on. I can carry more than that: more than that!" He is not afraid. But when the man grows old, he does not want to carry any load. And the time comes when even a grasshopper is a burden to him.

Did you ever see a young man grow old quickly? Perhaps he taught a Sunday School class. It was easy for him to get up in the morning; easy for him to go visiting; easy for him to do a hundred things in the Lord's service. But after a while he said, "I find it is too much for me." Suddenly he becomes very anxious about his health, and he gives up this task and the other duty, and after a while he is put on the shelf in the church as everybody says, "Sh! do not touch him; do not put anything on him, it will hurt him." And if one hears a grasshopper leaping about he is almost afraid it will crush the poor fellow if it should light on him. Physically he is strong enough. What is the matter? The old man is in the ascendancy, that is all.

And you cannot wake him up because *desire shall fail*. He sleeps half his time now; he does not want to do anything. He gets his breakfast, and sleeps again till noon; has a bit of something to eat at noon, and then another nap; and maybe he will wake up in time for dinner, and then go to bed. Desire has failed, ambition is dead.

Many professing Christian people are like that. One would really think that eating and sleeping, the things of this life, were all there are to engage the attention of a redeemed soul. Why is it? Because the old man is uppermost. "Gray hairs are here and there upon him, and he knoweth not."

II.

Well, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH AN OLD MAN? If somebody could only find the fountain of youth! If only someone could discover the long-desired elixir of perpetual youth! If an expert scientist should discover that by the grafting of a particular gland somewhere a man's youth could be renewed, and the man of forty or fifty could become again like a man of twenty-one! Do you suppose that man would have to advertise his discovery? I do not think so. There are multitudes of men who would like to be young again. There may be a few women too! I am inclined to think that if science could discover some means of renewing our youth by putting off the old man and putting on the new, there would be no difficulty in getting people to turn their steps toward the place where such rejuvenating power could be obtained. But, blessed be God, we may

renew our youth. Some of the youngest men I have known have been the oldest. I have known some men who were octogenarians, who would put boys in their 'teens to shame by their spiritual activity. There is no reason why we should grow old, dear friends. The new man ought never to grow old. We ought to grow up into Christ and go on—and on—and on with Him forever.

Let us have done with the old man.

Will it help to pull out the gray hairs? You have done it already, some of you, have you not? Now "fess up"! But now there are too many of them. Or, if you have not done that, you have done something to colour or to cover them up, but no one is really deceived by such practices. What we need is something within us to prevent the hair becoming gray, we need to be linked to a fountain of perpetual youth.

We read in the Song of Solomons where the spouse sings of her beloved, that "his locks are bushy and black as a raven"—not a gray hair there. Forever young, though the Ancient of days. And we can draw upon Him, and live in perpetual youth.

May the Lord help us who are Christians to keep close to Him. And as for the rest of you, receive Jesus Christ, and be made a new creature in Christ, and old things, and old age, will pass away forever, and we shall be everlastingly young in Him.

May He bless our meditation for His name's sake.

Let us pray:

We thank Thee, Lord, that Thou dost never admonish us, nor rebuke us in any way for our sin without encouraging us to repent and return to Thee. Thou dost promise us a renewal of strength, and of spiritual vitality. Oh make us all as young men and women before Thee, vigorous in our spiritual life, exuberant in our spiritual health, because we abide in Him Who is the Fountain of life, and the Fountain of health. We ask it in Jesus' name, Amen.

FILL THE SPACES

Select a large box, and place in it as many cannon balls as it will hold, and it is, after a fashion, full: but it will hold more if smaller matters be found. Bring a quantity of marbles; very many of these may be packed into the spaces between the larger globes; the box is now full, but still only in a sense; it will contain more yet. There are interstices in abundance, into which you may shake a considerable quantity of small shot, and now the chest is full beyond all question; but yet there is room. You cannot put in another shot or marble, much less another ball; but you will find that several pounds of sand will slide down between the larger materials, and even then between the granules of sand, if you empty a jug, there will be space for all the water, and for the same quantity several times repeated. Where there is no space for the great, there may be room for the little; where the little cannot enter, the less can make its way; and where the less is shut out, the least of all may find ample room. So, where time is, as we may say, fully occupied, there must be stray moments, occasional intervals and snatches, which might hold a vast amount of little usefulness in the course of months and years. What a wealth of minor good, as we think it to be, might be shaken down into the interstices of ten years' work, which might prove to be as precious in result by the grace of God, as the greater words of the same period.

—C. H. SPURGEON.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

SPIRITUAL WRESTLERS

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, on a Sunday morning.
(Stenographically Reported)

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.
"Put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the
wiles of the devil.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against
powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness
in heavenly places."—Ephesians 6:10-12.

THE Christian life is a pilgrimage; it ought to be a life of continuous progress. God did not bring His people out of Egypt to die in the wilderness: He brought them out that He might bring them in; He brought them out of the land of bondage that He might fulfil the promise He had made to their fathers, and make them the inheritors of a land "flowing with milk and honey". The Christian life is not one of deprivation. The Lord Jesus did not come into the world to make us poor, but to make us rich: "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." He did not come to make our faces long, but to make them broad. He did not come to empty life of every element of sweetness; but so to order our lives that, being His guests, we should confess that the better things come to us as we go on with Him.

But you will recall that when the children of Israel came to Kadesh-Barnea, and the land of promise was immediately in prospect, they were filled with fear because of the strength of the people of the land, and instead of going into their inheritance turned back again to their wilderness experience. For forty years they journeyed, making no real progress; and of the older generation who came out of Egypt only Joshua and Caleb really entered into the land of promise. I know it is a commonplace to remind you of it,—but I am afraid that that is a picture of the Church of Christ in all ages. While many are delivered from Egypt, pass under the blood, are "baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea," drink of the Rock, and are fed with the spiritual manna, and have some few victories over Sihon and Og, they never cross the Jordan into the full possession of their inheritance in Christ. A great number of believers live always below their privileges—in some measure we all do. You will recall the distinction the Apostle Paul makes in his first Epistle when he describes the Corinthians as being not spiritual but carnal. By which he did not mean that they were subject to any gross or sensual form of sin; but that they viewed life from the carnal plane, that the natural mind was dominant, that the standards of the natural world were the standards by which their life and conduct were regulated; and that they had not come to appreciate their higher privileges in Christ, as He designed they should. In this Epistle to the Ephesians the Apostle Paul leads us to very high ground. He said to the Corinthians that he had spoken to them as unto carnal people, "as unto babes in Christ", as to those who had not grown up into Christ in all

things. But the Epistle to the Ephesians is evidently written to those who have learned much of divine grace, and who know something of the experiences of those who sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. He addresses them in this text as wrestlers, as those who have found life a conflict; and it is of that aspect of Christian experience I want to speak to you for a little while this morning.

I.

To begin with, OUR TEXT IDENTIFIES THE FOES AGAINST WHICH THE TRUE CHRISTIAN MUST CONTEND. Every one of us has had experience of wrestling, if indeed, we are the Lord's. We have discovered that we cannot be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease; we have discovered that though we should like a life of tranquility, it is not easily possessed; and that if we are to make any progress at all we shall have to contend for every foot of the way. If I were to ask for a show of hands this morning I have no doubt that every one of you would say, "Well, you need not spend further time in discussing that principle. We know what you are talking about. Go on." We are all wrestlers; but some of us are disposed to think that we do wrestle against flesh and blood. Is there an awkward man in the office where you work? Is there somebody in your home who sometimes makes it difficult for you to shout, Hallelujah? Is it not true that one of the problems of life is that of getting on with people? Sometimes we do appear to have real adversaries clothed with flesh and blood. Paul is not disputing that; he had his full share of it. Read the story of his experience with men, and you will find that he is not one whit behind any one of us. What he means is this: not that we have not to wrestle against flesh and blood—we have: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other!" We have to wrestle against our own flesh and blood, and sometimes we have to contend with men. But what he means is that behind these incarnations of evil there are spiritual powers who are our real enemies, and that it is with these we have to contend if we are to make progress in the Christian life.

You will observe that *he is speaking of "the heavenly places"*: "He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus." That is where we ought to be living. If we are content with living upon the carnal plane, content to remain babes in

the Father's household, then perhaps we may escape some of these more strenuous experiences; but if we cross the Jordan and get into the land of promise, the real fighting will begin. On the wilderness side, I suggested just now, the people of God did have some few victories: but the real warfare began when they entered into the land of promise. And the real battle begins for the Christian in the hour when he resolves that he will accept God's plan for him; that he will enter into the land of promise; that he will possess every foot of that land in the name of the Lord. The moment he begins that he will discover that the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, and all the other enemies of that land will dispute his passage, and he will have to begin his real wrestling there. Is that an explanation for some of you young Christians? You expected smooth sailing; you anticipated a paved street, patrolled by heavenly policemen, where no one would be permitted to disturb your peace, to upset your plans, to dispute your progress; and you say to me this morning, "Pastor, the more I pray the worse it gets. I address myself to the Word of God, and I say I will now seek this day to allow my life to be fashioned by the principles of that Book; and I have scarcely crossed the threshold of my own house when I discover that everything is against me." That is the reason: "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places." And as sure as any of us seek to realize in our own experiences the divine purpose of grace, we shall come to an experience such as Paul here describes of wrestling and conflict all the way along.

Now that is rather a superstitious view of things, is it not? People do not believe there is a real devil, now, do they? The Apostle Paul believed in the existence of spiritual adversaries who were organized in the heavenly places, and who were set in opposition to the progress of the soul. I do not think I should be doing violence to the text to suggest that there is a real organization of spiritual powers. When Israel went into Canaan you remember they found that certain cities were possessed, commanded, officered by certain men; great fortresses were under the control of certain great giants; and they had definitely to make war upon the principalities. There were princes in those lands who were prepared to hold fast their possession. This is the truth which our Lord Jesus warned us of when He said: "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace." You have set yourself to accomplish a certain thing in the name of the Lord, perhaps to win a particular man for Christ; and it has seemed as though the principalities and powers in the heavenly places had taken particular possession of that man, as though there were an evil intelligence that was planning to defeat you at every turn in the road. And that is true in this spiritual warfare. We have to do battle against the wisest of all commanders—One only excepted; and it is folly for us to suppose that we can, by the exercise of our own wisdom and of our own power, defeat these principalities in the heavenly places.

They are described here as being of a *particular character*. They are "the world rulers of this darkness." Darkness is the devil's chosen weapon: "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the

image of God, should shine unto them." The devil will consent to your doing anything as long as you do not turn on the light. But there are "world rulers of this darkness," and when you seek to let the light of the gospel shine, at that moment war is declared against you from the heavenly places. In a few years' experience in the Christian ministry I have observed that many men who began with the simple proclamation of God's Word, who conceived their whole duty to be to let God's light shine, have turned aside to secondary matters that were good enough in themselves, but were short of God's best. I believe there is a reason for that as a rule. *The most difficult thing in all the world is to be a spiritual light-bearer.* You may engage in all kinds of service to your fellows as long as you make no effort to let God's light shine in upon the heart and conscience, and to light up the whole plane of human life, and to show men their relationship to God. There is nothing in the world the devil is so much afraid of as that; and as you set about it in the individual life, or in any public ministry, you will discover that the world rulers of this darkness will summon their legions and turn them loose against you. There is nothing, I say, the prince of the power of the air, the god of this world fears so much as the light which shines in the face of Jesus Christ; and just in proportion as we "walk in the light as he is in the light," shall we discover that we wrestle not merely against flesh and blood, but against these greater intelligences in the heavenly places, who are equipped with powers inestimably, incalculably superior to our own.

Now that is a simple word, but let us take a moment to think about it, to ask ourselves if that is true,—if, after all, the things we see are not the real things, if there is an invisible realm, a realm of spiritual reality; on the one hand, a realm of light and of grace and glory; and on the other, a realm of darkness, of evil power; and that it is in that spiritual realm we are to live as Christians; it is with these spiritual realities we have to do, with something that is beyond the ken of the natural man; that if apart from God we seek to obtain the mastery of evil, then we are striving against all the rulers of the darkness without help. O what folly! If the Church of Christ everywhere could realize this simple truth, it would appear to every man that the one and only way of victory is to prostrate ourselves before God, and to invoke His aid; for we are face to face with powers against whom we have no might whatever.

II.

Hence, having so glowingly expounded the possibilities of the Christian life, telling them of God's plan and purpose here and hereafter; when he had written about these simple things,—of children obeying their parents, and parents being careful not to provoke their children; of servants carrying the principles of the gospel into their everyday life, "not with eyeservice, as men pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart," thus living before Him; and for masters to remember they have a Master in heaven—after dealing with these simple and practical matters, ere he closes his Epistle. Paul seems to have considered, "Now what shall I say to give effect to all my teaching?" It is this: "FINALLY MY BRETHREN, BE STRONG IN THE LORD, AND IN THE POWER OF HIS MIGHT;" and he reverts to what has been implied in all his teaching when he touches

upon the text I have been discussing,—he reminds them of their wrestling in the heavenly places; but he says, "I throw wide the door into another realm, and I show you the possibilities of victory: 'Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God.'"

I have not time this morning to speak of the armour, of the elements of this divine panoply. "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." There is the Christian's armour—having your loins girt about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and taking the sword of the Spirit.

But *with what are we to use the armour!* "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." The fight, I have said, is in the heavenly places; but you remember how Paul begins this glorious Epistle: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ." As though the Lord had said, "It is into the heavenlies I am going to lead you; it is into the promised land I shall conduct you; and there in that sphere of My appointment I have laid up for you inestimable treasures of spiritual grace. I have already in My plan and purpose blessed you with all that is requisite to a victorious life, according as I have chosen you before the foundation of the world, that you should be holy and without blame before Me in love."

All the spiritual blessings we require are awaiting us in the heavenlies in Christ; and as it is true that the principalities and the powers and the rulers of this world's darkness will dispute our passage, and our progress into that heavenly life, it is equally true that all heaven is ready to equip, to energize, to give victory to the man who will go on to possess the land. Our Lord calls us to no impossibilities; He challenges us to no futile campaign, to no life of defeat. It is not true what the people of Israel said: "And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?" That was not God's plan: He had promised victory in the land of promise.

And *there is a land of promise for every one of us.* Peter tells us that by His divine power, God hath provided, or given to us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness." Remember, it does not say that He has given us all things that pertain to promotion, and ease, and comfort in this world; but He has given us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness." It may not be possible for every man to come to the top of the tree in his profession, or in his business; it may not be possible for a man to live in the kind of house he desires always; but God has given us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness." And there is no excuse for failure or bankruptcy in the heavenly places: there is victory for every one of us there. If we are defeated it is not because God has not provided the possibilities of victory: "Whereby are given unto us—mark this—exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." By

means of these exceeding great and precious promises we may become partakers of the divine nature; we may have strength to overcome; we may make glorious progress in the heavenly places; but it is only in the heavenly places that these spiritual blessings are to be experienced. How many people I have met who have said, "Pastor, in the experience I most dreaded I have found the greatest joy. I went down into the valley; I went into the battle-field; I got to the place where I had to carry unusual burdens; I tried to emulate Caleb, and I said, Give me this mountain; and I discovered that in that very effort God came to me as He never had come to me before. I had a new realization of the promises of God, and a new experience of His abounding grace such as I never had anywhere else." Of course you had. It is in the heavenly places these experiences await you: "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." "The principles we have espoused and which we are endeavouring to practise as Christians," some man will say, "have so exposed me to my competitors in business that I am killed all the day long, I am accounted as a sheep for the slaughter; I am as a sheep among wolves; I am perfectly helpless." Or another says, "Practise the golden rule down town? actually endeavour to translate into human character and conduct the principles of the Gospel of Jesus? why I am killed all the day long; when I do that I am only as a sheep for the slaughter."

That is the carnal view of things. Listen! "Nay, in all these things—in my defeats, in my humiliations, in my losses; in all these experiences which come to me as a Christian, which make me as a lamb for the slaughter, killed all the day long—in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." It is in these very experiences our characters are developed; they bring us new accessions of spiritual strength, and we find ourselves growing up into Christ in all things. But we can never have such experiences apart from the heavenly places; we can never have it unless we attack the enemy on his own ground. Paul believed in the principle of offensive warfare. He was always aggressive in his attitude toward evil: "Abhor that which is evil;" take up a positive attitude toward it; unsheathe your sword against it; go out into the battle and fight, having on "the whole armour of God." Then you will find in the heavenly places there is victory for you.

I come back to the beginning of the Epistle. You will find that Paul always shows us a way to victory. You remember the story of how Joshua, when he was about to lead the people into the promised land had that vision of the great warrior. How wonderfully thrilling! He is going to go forward now in the name of the Lord, and as he waits before God he sees somebody; and I think there came to him a conviction that on whatever side this great Captain fought, there would be victory. And Joshua tremblingly asks the question, "Art thou for us or for our adversaries?" He receives the answer, "As captain of the host of the Lord am I now come;" and I think there was a great Hallelujah in Joshua's heart at that moment. He knew then that victory was certain. And as he walked round about the walls of Jericho he knew he was not wrestling against flesh and blood, and he knew, too, that the weapons of his warfare were not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; for he knew that at the head of the column there rode the Captain of the Lord's host, Who had never

lost a battle. How does Paul begin? "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." And later in the first chapter he prays for these Ephesian Christians, and what is his prayer? I wish we could learn to pray like this: "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened—that you may get a view of the promised land across the Jordan, that floweth with milk and honey—the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,—according to the energy of the grasp of His might—which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:—far above it all is He, and He says, I am praying that you may enter into an experience of that power which caused Him to triumph over the rulers of this world's darkness, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places—and hath put all things under his feet,—what did He make you for? He said, "Have dominion." "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands." "But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus," Who is the Pledge, the Promise, the divine Guarantee that all things shall be put under our feet; even as they are put under His, and that we shall have the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ: "Thanks be unto God—can you say it this morning?—Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," Who always causeth us to triumph in Him.

May He help us to carry this simple word with us into the office, and the shop; that boys and girls may know and remember that it is in connection with obeying father and mother, face to face with that duty and all the difficulties involved in it that we are exhorted to take unto us "the whole armour of God." I say it again, let parents remember when their children try their patience, that there is victory promised in the Word of the Lord. Servants also with their masters and masters with their servants—just in the dull, drab, workaday world, there spiritual mastery of evil powers is possible. It is promised everybody, in every relationship of life; if only we live in the heavenly places we may invoke the ministry of heavenly powers; and, triumphing through Christ, we may live on milk and honey still. May the Lord help us so to do.

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The Gospel Witness

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2 - Canada.

MARTYRDOM OF WILLIAM HUNTER

WILLIAM HUNTER, had been trained to the doctrines of the Reformation from his earliest youth, being descended from religious parents, who carefully instructed him in the principles of true religion.

Hunter, then nineteen years of age, refusing to receive the Communion at Mass, was threatened to be brought before the bishop; to whom this valiant young martyr was conducted by a constable.

Bonner caused William to be brought into a chamber, where he began to reason with him, promising him security and pardon if he would recant. Nay, he would have been content if he would have gone only to receive and to confession, but William would not do so for all the world.

Upon this the bishop commanded his men to put William in the stocks in his gate house, where he sat two days and nights, with a crust of brown bread and a cup of cold water only, which he did not touch.

At the two days' end, the bishop came to him, and finding him steadfast in the faith, sent him to the convic prison, and commanded the keeper to lay irons upon him as many as he could bear. He continued in prison three quarters of a year, during which time he had been before the bishop five times, besides the time when he was condemned in the consistory in St. Paul's, February 9th, at which time his brother, Robert Hunter, was present.

Then the bishop, calling William, asked him if he would recant, and finding he was unchangable, pronounced sentence upon him, that he should go from that place to Newgate for a time, and thence to Brentwood, there to be burned.

About a month afterward, William was sent down to Brentwood, where he was to be executed. On coming to the stake he knelt down and read the Fifty-first Psalm, until he came to these words, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." Steadfast in refusing the Queen's pardon, if he would become an apostate, at length one Richard Ponde, a bailiff, came, and made the chain fast about him.

William now cast his psalter into his brother's hand, who said, "William, think on the holy passion of Christ, and be not afraid of death." "Behold," answered William, "I am not afraid." Then he lifted up his hands to heaven, and said, "Lord, Lord, Lord, receive my spirit;" and casting down his head again into the smothering smoke he yielded up his life for the truth, sealing it with his blood to the praise of God.

—Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*.

A RESURRECTION OF CHARACTERS

A Christian minister must expect to lose his repute among men; he must be willing to suffer every reproach for Christ's sake; but, then, he may rest assured that he will never lose his real honour if it be risked for the truth's sake, and placed in the Redeemer's hand. The day shall declare the excellence of the upright, for it will reveal all that was hidden, and bring to light that which was concealed. There will be a resurrection of characters as well as of persons. Every reputation that has been obscured by clouds of reproach, for Christ's sake, shall be rendered glorious when the righteous shall "shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father."

—C. H. SPURGEON.

AMONG THE CHURCHES

NOW that summer has come, at least insofar as the Seminary calendar is concerned, it has been the writer's privilege to visit several of our more distant churches, among them two which he had not hitherto seen. At Lanark, approximately fifty miles from Ottawa, the capital of this Dominion, we were happy to have fellowship with a fine group of believers, among whom were numbered friends new and old. Deacon Kear, formerly a fellow-deacon at Jarvis Street, has now put his shoulder to the wheel of the Gospel chariot in Lanark. Pastor and Mrs. Duckworth, both graduates of Toronto Baptist Seminary, are putting into practice some of the things they learned in class, and learning many more in building this pioneer cause. It was of special interest to the writer as one who has been closely associated with THE GOSPEL WITNESS, to learn that this publication played a part in the founding of this work. For many years a faithful reader of these pages who stood in the old ways and protested against the influx of Modernism in the Ontario and Quebec Convention, distributed this paper in the neighbourhood and led a number of relatives and friends to subscribe to it. Though he passed to his reward several years before the church was founded, his unwavering testimony to the truth of the Gospel prepared the soil for the establishment of an uncompromising evangelical testimony in Lanark. And so the quiet work of the printed page is carried on year after year, without a fanfare of trumpets, but here and there throughout this land, it sows the seed of Gospel truth and encourages lonely souls who are set for the defense of the Gospel.

It was a special joy to pay a return visit to the church at Essex. The last time we visited this group of believers they were passing through the furnace of affliction, but now they feel that they are on the verge of seasons of refreshing. Pastor Bert Oatley-Willis, recently called to lead this church, already occupies a large place in the hearts of the people and there is a spirit of prayer and of unity manifest. The New Canaan work, a mission of the church some eight miles from town, is prospering. There were 56 present at Sunday-School. A number from this work have been converted and baptized. A Sunday at Essex is a strenuous one with two preaching services, two Bible Classes, and two brief addresses to Sunday-Schools!

The following day Rev. Clifford Rogers called for us and took us to the busy and beautiful town of Tilbury, half English and half French. We admired his skill and foresight as chief architect and builder of the lovely little church-home. A man who can perform such marvels on the proverbial shoe-string is already fully qualified as both architect and minister of finance. It was our joy to speak in French to a group of interested friends to whom the Word of God has been given in their mother tongue. Several of them have already made profession of faith in Christ and others are searching the Scriptures whether those things are so. A group of young people from Essex reenforced the Tilbury friends at the English service and the offering was devoted to the work of the Seminary. What a joy to look into the faces of men and women and boys and girls who have found Christ through the ministry of our Seminary students. A new realization of the real extent of our school work is brought home to a teacher when he sees the indirect fruits of his classes. Both Mr. and

Mrs. Rogers are graduates and both come from Berean Church, Sudbury, of which Rev. John Boyd is pastor.

Once again we gave thanks to God for these fine young men and their wives who are not afraid to face the hardships and trials of pioneer work on a pittance instead of a salary, seeking as their reward the winning of souls. May their harvest be a rich one.—W.S.W.

CAN REVIVAL COME THIS WAY?

From a subscriber in New Brunswick comes a letter containing the following query:

I am enclosing a clipping from last week's issue of *The Maritime Baptist*, which is, as you know, the official organ of the United Baptist Convention of the Maritimes. It announces the forthcoming congress at Cleveland in the following words:

"This is the 8th Baptist World Alliance meeting. It will be the greatest of them all. It may very well mark the beginning of a rebirth of Protestantism. An earth shaking revival of real religion is on the way. It may have its beginning in Cleveland Public Stadium where on other occasions commercialized sports rival a Roman Holiday."

Can a revival begin among a mixed group of Modernists and Fundamentalists such as will gather in Ohio? Will not repentance and contrition have to be in evidence among any or all groups that may want a revival? Has a revival ever been born in any other kind of atmosphere?

THE GOSPEL WITNESS is doing a valiant work and no doubt has other important matters in hand, but I would like to see these things discussed in its pages.

In common with believers everywhere of various denominations, we earnestly long for a great heaven-born revival, but we are compelled to agree with our Maritime correspondent that it will not come through a gigantic denominational rally of which the leaders are almost all committed to a position which denies the inspiration and authority of the Bible, makes light of the Atoning Blood of Christ and explains away the New Birth. Doubtless simple, humble believers in the New Testament doctrines of Baptists will be numbered among the delegates to The World Baptist Alliance, but they will have little or nothing to do with shaping its policies or directing its public utterances. Do the words of the Apostle not apply here? "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" (II Cor. 6:14.f.)

We earnestly wish that it were possible for an "earth-quaking revival of real religion" to take place at the World Baptist Alliance. If it did come there, it would bring back that organization to the authority of the Word of God, to the old-fashioned doctrines of the Atonement and the New Birth, as well as to the democracy and autonomy of the local church under the ministry of the Holy Spirit instead of a dependence upon machine-like human organizations. This would heal the divisions among Baptists, by bringing them together on the only basis of unity, the Word of God. But how can revival of this sort visit men and organizations which have again and again officially declared their opposition to the revealed will of God?

The revival that we now know as the Reformation did not begin with the upper ranks of the hierarchy but in the cell of an Augustinian monk as he searched

his heart and sought for the way of life. When Martin Luther found the Bible and the Saviour presented there, the fire spread across Europe to other hungry, seeking souls. The Evangelical Revival did not begin with the satisfied clergy of the established church but with a group of young students at Oxford, called in derision the "Holy Club," who prayed and read the Word together seeking the face of God. At Pentecost the multitudes were the result of the outpouring of the Spirit, but the beginning is to be traced to the upper room where a small company of the disciples were of one accord in one place. And when the Spirit came to give them utterance their preaching was little more than a catena of Scripture texts used to proclaim the great verities of revelation. And it resulted in men and women being pricked in their hearts. If we wish the Apostolic blessing, we shall have to resort to the Apostolic doctrine and to Apostolic praying and preaching. Any other attempt at revival will be little else than a pale copy of that gigantesque revival of paganism now being displayed in Rome under the name of "Holy Year." It is but another version of the money-changers in the temple, making the house of prayer into a den of thieves. Let us all earnestly pray and work for revival, but always with a recognition of the Scriptural conditions which are laid down for divine blessing.—W.S.W.

SECRET OF FREEDOM

Make me a captive, Lord,
 And then I shall be free;
 Force me to render up my sword,
 And I shall conqueror be.
 I sink in life's alarms
 While by myself I stand;
 Imprison me within Thine arms,
 And strong shall be my hand.
 —GEORGE MATHESON.

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WINNING SOULS

By Dr. Theodore Cuyler

SOMEONE asked Dr. Lyman Beecher in his old age, "What is the greatest of all things?" The sturdy veteran replied, "It is not theology; it is not controversy; it is saving souls." He had been the king of the American pulpit; but, as he looked back over his noble career, he felt that the greatest good that he had accomplished was in leading guilty and polluted souls to their only Saviour. David Brainerd, one of the most celebrated of our missionaries, while he was labouring among the poor, benighted Indians on the banks of the Delaware, once said, "I care not where I live, or what hardships I go through, so that I can but gain souls to Christ. While I am asleep, I dream of these things; as soon as I awake, the first thing I think of is this great work. All my desire is the conversion of sinners, and all my hope is in God." Our blessed Master came into our sin-cursed world to seek and to save the lost. To convert men to Jesus Christ by the aid of the Holy Spirit was the master-purpose of Paul and his fellow-apostles. The great Reformation, under the lead of Luther and Calvin and Knox, was far more than a protestation against Popish errors; it was a direct bringing of benighted souls to the cross for salvation. Whitefield and the Wesleys made this their chief business. The most successful preacher of modern times was Spurgeon; and he once asked me the question, "How far do your ablest American ministers aim mainly at the conversion of souls?"

The question that my beloved British brother asked me I would propound to every young preacher that reads these lines. No minister is likely to succeed in anything that he undertakes with only half a heart; he can never do what he does not even attempt to do. If your whole heart is not bent on the glorious work of converting sinners, by the help of God, you will never accomplish it. You may produce much valuable and elevating thought; you may argue ingeniously against current skepticism; you may unfold sound principles of morality; you may say many eloquent things about "developing humanity," and in behalf of benevolent reform; but if you stop short of leading immortal souls to Jesus Christ, then your ministry will be at the most vital point, a failure. Nor is it a vague idea about "reaching the masses," or saving people in general, that must inspire you. Men are saved or lost individually. The Bible declares that "he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins." A single soul was a sufficient audience for the Son of God at the well of Sychar and in the inquiry-room of Nicodemus.

Aim then, my brother, to make your preaching direct, pointed, individualizing. Let every unconverted person in the house be made to feel, "That means me." Not every sermon is to be addressed to the impenitent by any means; but when you are presenting Christ, present him as each man's Saviour; and when you discuss the guilt and danger of sin, bring it home to each individual sinner. "Thou art the man," sent Nathan's parable into David's heart like an arrow. Do not be afraid of any sinner in the house; and pray God to help you love every sinner before you so fervently that you will tell him plainly that if he does not repent and accept Christ, he will be lost forever. Do not be afraid of the word "hell" any more than of the word "heaven."

Oh! it is sheer cruelty to conceal from your hearers that the wages of sin is death. If you are faithless and cowardly, the blood of souls will be found in your skirts. Preach, therefore, plainly, lovingly, and pungently the guilt of sin and the doom of sin, and pray that every impenitent soul before you may be convicted by the Holy Spirit. Aim to reveal to every sinner his or her own personal guilt before God, for nobody is likely to flee to the Lord Jesus Christ until he or she feels the need of Him. Deep convictions of sin generally produce deep conversions; shallow convictions produce shallow Christians. Put in the plowshare of divine truth, and then bear down on the beam; if it reaches the roots of sin, and tears them up, all the better. When you have made a sinner see himself, then try to make him see his Saviour. Then point him to the all-sufficient Redeemer, whose atoning blood cleanseth from all sin. That is the way in which Peter preached at the time of Pentecost, when three thousand souls were convicted and converted in a single day. When you are preaching repentance to the sinner, you cannot deal too faithfully and pungently; when you are offering salvation to the sinner through Jesus, you cannot be too winsome and loving in your beseechings.

Only a part of your work in soul-winning is likely to be done in your pulpit. The most important part will be done when you are brought face to face with an awakened person. Be on the lookout for such persons constantly. During your pastoral visits you will encounter those that are inquirers, and you should rejoice to converse with them immediately. By the way; when I discovered several such cases during my calls in one afternoon (in 1856) I hailed this fact as a token of the Holy Spirit's presence; and I summoned my church-officers, and appointed special services every evening, which services resulted in a large number of conversions. Always be on the watch for the presence of the Holy Spirit. Listen for the first drops of heavenly blessings; then gird yourself for the happy work. In dealing with an awakened soul, your prime duty is to co-operate with the Holy Spirit, and therefore you must pray fervently for his guidance. Endeavor to ascertain just what it is that is in the way of the inquirer, and what it is that keeps him from surrendering to Christ. If it be some bad habit or evil practice, then that evil practice must be abandoned. If it be some sin, cherished in the heart, then he must yield, even if it be like plucking out a right eye or cutting off a right hand. In most cases the chief hindrance lies in a wicked, stubborn heart. It has always been my aim to convince awakened persons that, unless they were willing to give their hearts to Jesus and to "do the will" of Jesus, there was no hope for them. We must shut the inquiring soul up to Christ. The experiences of inquirers may differ as much as their countenances; but in two vital particulars all cases are to be treated alike. Every sinner must cut loose from his sins, and must cleave to the Lord Jesus. Saving faith is vastly more than an opinion or a feeling; it is an act of the soul. It is the act of joining our weakness to Christ's strength, our ignorance to his knowledge, our guiltiness to his atoning love, our wills to his will, ourselves to him. No one is soundly converted, and no one should join the church, until he has joined himself to Jesus Christ. This is the one infallible test. It is not enough to "feel happy"; it is not enough to say, "I am trying

to be a Christian"; no soul is safe until it has surrendered unconditionally to Christ, and has been "born anew" by the Holy Spirit. Do not "count noses" too hastily, and do not be so ambitious to swell the numbers of your church that you will rush the unconverted or the half-converted into it. It will be your folly, and may be their ruin.

In addition to your conversations with such awakened persons as you may encounter in their homes, or such as may call on you for conversation, it will often be wise to appoint inquiry-meetings. Do this when you discover a need for such meetings, and not as a mere empty form. Some zealous ministers insist that such a meeting should be appointed after every preaching-service; but suppose there are no inquirers to meet; then the very word becomes a solemn farce or failure. When there are inquiring souls, and they are gathered for instruction and guidance, then be exceedingly careful as to whom you allow to go in with you. Surely you would not call in the first person that happened to go by your door to treat one of your family that was dangerously sick. Be equally careful not to allow rash and inexperienced persons, or pious "cranks", to meddle with immortal souls that are settling the stupendous question of their own salvation. If you require help, invite only the men and women possessing both grace and good common sense. Converse with each inquirer as closely as possible, and as concisely. Bring each to the point at once. Have God's Word in your hand as well as in your memory, and be ready to use the right passages for the right case. With the infallible Word to give you light, call upon the Holy Spirit to apply his almighty power and loving work to the souls before you. Encourage the inquirers to pray themselves. Try to keep every eye fixed on Christ; urge immediate surrender to Christ. Do not begrudge the time or labor required to help a halting or perplexed soul. Hand-picked apples keep the longest. Individual labor with each inquirer is indispensable. The happiest hours you will spend in this world, my young brother, will be those that you spend in leading sinners to the Saviour. "He that is wise winneth souls." To you, if you are thus wise, will belong the crown that shineth as the stars.

LIES TRAVEL FAST

If you want truth to go around the world, you must hire an express train to pull it; but if you want a lie to go round the world, it will fly: it is as light as a feather, and a breath will carry it. It is well said in the old Proverb, "A lie will go round the world while truth is pulling its boots on." Nevertheless, it does not injure us; for if as light as a feather, it travels as fast, its effect is just about as tremendous as the effect of down, when it is blown against the walls of a castle; it produces no damage whatever, on account of its lightness and littleness. Fear not, Christian. Let slander fly, let envy send forth its forked tongue, let it hiss at you, your bow shall abide in strength. Oh! shielded warrior, remain quiet, fear no ill; but like the eagle in its lofty eyrie, look thou down upon the fowlers in the plain, turn thy bold eye upon them and say, "Shoot, you may, but your shots will not reach half-way to the pinnacle on which I stand. Waste your powder upon me if ye will; I am beyond your reach." Then clap your wings, mount to heaven, and there laugh them to scorn, for you have made your refuge God, and shall find a most secure abode.

—SPURGEON.

SOME OF THE 400,000,000

ROMAN CATHOLIC statistics are intended to deceive the public. The Pope is continually paraded as the spiritual head of 400,000,000 people. This figure is arrived at by including whole populations of certain countries. Italy, for example, is claimed to be 99 per cent Roman Catholic despite the fact that a third of the electorate defied the Pope's threat of excommunication and voted Communist at the last election. The purpose of the deception is to frighten politicians into making concessions to the Vatican as a price for obtaining the Pope's support for domestic or international policies.

The Atheist Mussolini is a recent example. He restored the Pope's temporal power, made him a present of \$19,000,000, and agreed to restrict Protestant expansion by limiting the number of recognized Protestant bodies in Italy, and making it more difficult for the existing denominations to build new Churches. The Pope obligingly agreed to help Mussolini to obtain an African and Balkan Empire. He was not unduly shocked when the Italian Dictator marched into Albania on Good Friday.

Hitler also reached agreement with the Vatican and signed a Concordat which ensured Roman Catholic moral support for his regime and policy. Consequently, the Pope did not condemn Nazism until he was sure that the Allies would win the war.

A major disappointment for the papacy was the failure of the Pope's efforts to reach a compromise with Communism in 1927. Stalin had much less reason to worry about the Pope's 400,000,000 than the dictators of the West and was not obliged to modify his policy accordingly.

The extent of the papal deception is most evident in her statistics for South America, and is clearly exposed, albeit unintentionally, by no less a person than the Priest-President of the Catholic Workers Youth Movement of Belgium. Monsignor Jose Cardijn, writing in the *Témoignage Chrétien*, Paris, describes the condition of Catholic America as follows:

In maps and mission reports South America appears as a Catholic block of 130 million, that is, one-third of the Catholics of the entire globe.

In reality the religious ignorance there is something frightful. *Christianity has no influence at all in the economic and social life.* In South America they only recognize three sacraments: baptism, communion and processions. Christianity is presented in an exaggerated exclusivist cultural form. *About 80% of the population is illegitimate.*

Industrialization is increasing at a tremendous pace; people who leave the mountain regions live in a hopeless state. The result—a new group, the industrial proletariat (which has not reduced in any way the rural proletariat). You have to see it to understand the extreme misery of the proletariat. They live in horrible huts, covered with kerosene cans, cardboard or boards, piled up one against the other on the hill-sides, where 300,000 workers and their families are herded together like animals.

Land of contrasts, misery and extreme wealth!

There are no schools for the masses without money. Religious orders have schools and universities in such cities as Lima and Santiago, but they are for the rich only. These vital problems demand an urgent solution. A small elite has realized this. But it is not from a negative anti-communism of the governing classes that a remedy will come. If Pope Pius XII should go to South America and teach his social doctrine he would certainly be arrested as a communist, and be sent to a concentration camp in the interior of the country.—*Protestant Revelle* of South Africa.

GRACE

"But what is grace? Grace is more than a mere negation. Grace is much more than the ending of God's enmity against sinful man. Grace is, infinitely more than the cessation of punishment. Grace is infinitely more than a friendly attitude on the part of God. Grace is infinitely more than a fine sentiment, even though that sentiment should be a superlative favour and good will. *Grace is divine energy.* Grace is the divine energy of holiness. Grace is the divine energy of holiness issuing in the ministry of love in quest of the unlovely. And lastly, grace is the divine energy of holiness issuing in the ministry of love in quest of the unlovely and by the communication of itself converting the unlovely into its own loveliness. Grace is the holy love of God in quest of unlovely man, seeking to woo and to win and to transfigure him into the loveliness of the Lord Jesus Christ."

—DR. J. H. JOWETT.

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 15 Second Quarter Lesson 11 June 11, 1950

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

THE PRE-EMINENCE OF CHRIST

Lesson Text: Colossians 1:9-20.

Golden Text: "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."—Col. 1:18.

Introduction:

The Epistle to the Colossians was written about 64 A.D. from Rome and was probably taken by Tychicus along with Ephesians and Philemon, when Onesimus was returning to Philemon in Colosse (Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7-9; Philemon). It is one of the Prison Epistles of Paul.

The city of Colosse was situated in the district of Phrygia, Asia Minor. We have no record of the founding of the church, but Epaphras may have been responsible (Col. 4:12). Certain forms of false teaching were endangering the purity of the young church; the worship of angels; gnosticism, a mixture of Persian and Greek philosophy which taught that knowledge, not faith, was the key to salvation; legalism and asceticism. The Apostle wrote the letter to caution the believers against these errors and to confirm them in the doctrines of grace.

Since all the errors arose from a failure to give the Lord Jesus Christ due honour as the Son of God, the Apostle rightly judged that he could best combat the false cults by describing His proper nature, position and office. The pre-eminent glory of Christ is the theme of the whole Epistle. The Epistle may be analyzed as follows:—

- I. Christ the Pre-Eminent Lord (chap. 1).
- II. Christ the Incarnate Lord (chap. 2).
- III. The Believer's Union with Christ (chap. 3).
- IV. The Believer's Fellowship with Saints (chap. 4).

I. Prayer Through the Pre-Eminent Christ: verses 9-14.

True prayer is addressed to God through Christ and is inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is permeated with thanksgiving: indeed, petition and praise blend into one another, both being aspects of our fellowship with the Lord (Phil. 4:6). In this model prayer of the Apostle Paul note the three subjects of petition; the believer in relation to the will of God, the work of God and the power of God (vv. 9-11); and the three causes of praise; the believer's inheritance, deliverance and redemption (vv. 12-14).

In contemplating a journey, the traveller first seeks a map to chart his course and to determine his directions. The believer who would travel to the Celestial Land must have the assurance that he is travelling along the right road and in the right direction. It is a great thing to know the plan and will of God (John 7:17), but still greater to be filled with

the knowledge of His will (Eph. 1:17; 3:19). To know the will of God, no mere intellectual prowess will suffice; only by spiritual wisdom and heart understanding can one understand spiritual truths (1 Cor. 2:12-14; 2 Cor. 10:4, 5).

Knowledge must be accompanied by obedience: the one who knows the will of God, yet fails to perform it, commits sin (Matt. 7:21; John 9:41; 15:22; Jas. 4:17). The enlightened believer will be anxious to walk before the Lord in a manner well-pleasing to Him (1 Thess. 4:1), loving the work of God (Col. 3:17, 23). As he walks and works in fellowship with the Lord, the faithful disciple will come to know the Master in an intimate way (Phil. 3:10; 2 Pet. 3:18).

They who do the Lord's bidding will find that all needed power is supplied; we are never sent to warfare at our own charges (1 Cor. 9:7; 2 Cor. 3:5, 6). The Apostle prays that the Colossian Christians may be strengthened with all the glorious power of the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:17-23; 3:16). We need Divine strength to conquer all our foes, to withstand temptation, to walk worthy of the Lord, to serve Him faithfully, to witness for Him effectively and to bring the unsaved to Him. Our text (v. 11) speaks, however, of strength not to conquer, but to endure (2 Tim. 2:3; 4:5); not to do all things, but perhaps just to do nothing; in the time of affliction and trial to wait upon the Lord patiently, quietly and hopefully.

Our prayer is to be addressed to God, Who is our heavenly Father (Matt. 6:9; Eph. 3:14, 15; Col. 3:17). We are not worthy to be called His children, but in the person of Christ we are made worthy to be His sons and His heirs (Rom. 8:14-17; Eph. 1:6). Through faith in Christ we become heirs of the inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled and which passeth not away (1 Pet. 1:3, 4).

The Apostle Paul would have the Colossians give thanks that they belong to the kingdom of light, the kingdom of Christ, having been delivered from the power of darkness, even the power of Satan. They had been redeemed and ransomed from sin, Satan and death through the atoning work of Christ Jesus the Lord (Acts 20:28; Rom. 3:24; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19). Through Him they had received the forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:7; 1 John 1:9).

II. Praise of the Pre-Eminent Christ: verses 15-20.

Christ, the Pre-Eminent One, is described in relation to His Father (v. 15), the world (vv. 16, 17) and believers (vv. 18-20).

In the first place, our Lord Jesus Christ is the express image, likeness and exact representation of God (2 Cor. 4:4; 1 Tim. 1:17; 3:16; Heb. 1:3), since He is Himself God (John 1:18; 14:9). Even before the Incarnation He was God,

the unique Son of God, "begotten before every creature" (John 1:1; Rev. 3:14).

Christ is the Creator of all things (John 1:3; Heb. 1:2); and as being above and before all things, existing from all eternity, He is also the sustainer of the universe, upholding all things by His word of power (John 1:1; Heb. 1:3). In Him all things are held together. "Order is heaven's first law."

In regard to the believer, Christ is the Pre-Eminent One. He is the Head of the church, which is described as His body, being composed of all who are united to Him by faith and to one another (1 Cor. 12:12, 13, 27). As in the physical realm the head controls the movements of the body, so in the spiritual realm is Christ supreme over the activities of His church (Eph. 1:22, 23; 4:15; 5:23; Col. 2:10, 19). He is the beginning of the new creation, as Adam was of the old creation, and all who are born again have part in that new creation, of which He is the Head (1 Cor. 15:20-23, 45-47). He was the first-begotten from the dead, hence the Pre-Eminent One in His resurrection (Acts 13:3; Rom. 1:4; Heb. 1:5; Rev. 1:5).

Christ dwelt upon earth as a man, and also as God. He possessed in their fulness all the attributes of God (John 1:14; Col. 2:19).

Christ was the Pre-Eminent One in His ministry, as in His nature, for on the cross He died for all men, that He might reconcile the world to Himself (2 Cor. 5:18, 19).

For Younger Classes:

Talk about the Lord Jesus Christ, mentioning some of His gracious words (John 6:48; 9:5; 10:11; 11:25; 14:6) and some of His wonderful works (Lk. 7:1-10; 8:41, 42, 49-56), all of which point to the fact that He is truly God. Lead the children to love and trust Him (John 6:37; Rev. 3:20).

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

- June 5—Pre-eminent in Creation Eph. 3:1-9.
- June 6—Pre-eminent in the Universe John 1:1-13.
- June 7—Pre-eminent in the Church Eph. 1:15-22.
- June 8—Pre-eminent in His Power 1 Tim. 6:11-16.
- June 9—Pre-eminent in Affection of His Friends
Matt. 10:32-39.
- June 10—Pre-eminent over Angels Heb. 1:1-14.
- June 11—Pre-eminent in His Death 1 Cor. 15:12-25.

SUGGESTED HYMNS

Jesus, wondrous Saviour. Jesus, the very thought of Thee. Join all the glorious names. There is no name. Fairest Lord Jesus. Oh, could I sing the matchless worth!

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