

# The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

Authorized as Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa

Vol. 29, No. 18

130 Gerrard St. E., TORONTO, AUGUST 24, 1950

Whole Number 1474

## The Jarvis Street Pulpit The Burglar-Proof Safety Vault

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, August 13th, 1950

(Electrically recorded)

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."—Eph. 1:7.

ONCE more I remind you that the Bible in its completeness, not the New Testament only, but the Old and New Testaments, constitute "the record which God hath given to us of His Son". Jesus Christ is the Theme of the whole Book from beginning to end. He is the Alpha and Omega, the Alphabet, the Vocabulary, the Dictionary, the whole Literature of Truth. He is, indeed, the complete Musical Scale, the Table of numbers, the Spectrum of light, with all the varied elements which make light, the Sum of all the elements of reality, the Source, the Medium, the End, the Dynamic of all inexorably operative laws in all realms. In a word, He is All and in all, "and by Him all things consist!" "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

This Bible is the inspired record of Him Who is the express image of the Divine Person. To mutilate this Book, to delete from it, or add to it anything whatsoever, is to rob the alphabet of its vowels, the numerical table of some determinative number, the scale of some indispensable note, and thus to make accuracy and harmony in history, or science, or morals, or religion, an utter impossibility.

Everything then, is in Christ; He is our all. Salvation, in the only true and comprehensive sense, is not in an institution, nor primarily or ultimately in doctrines or credal statements, important and indispensable as they are, certainly not in the church, nor in its ordinances—important also as they are—salvation is in the Person, the living Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I heard some years ago of a rich man—I did not know that he was so rich—but I asked somebody what his business was. He said, "Just clipping coupons. Periodically," he said, "he may be found at the Bank, and if

you could gain access to the inner sanctum you would find him with his securities spread out before him, clipping the interest coupons." I said, "Does it take him very long?" He said, "Yes, a good while." It struck me that that would be a very interesting occupation! The kind of business, I think, in which we should all like to have a part.

Now the Lord Jesus Christ is our Safety Deposit Vault. All our securities for time and eternity are stored in Him, and not even the devil himself can get at them, experienced and skilful robber that he is, he is excluded completely from that place of security where our fortunes lie.

This evening I invite you to come once again to this Safety Deposit Vault, to examine some of your securities and to clip your coupons, even the "exceeding great and precious promises" by which we are made partakers of the divine nature. Thus we may learn something of how rich we are. I do not know how you feel about it, but I think if I had a Bank account with a considerable amount of money to my credit, sometimes on the cloudy and dark days I should be disposed to get out my Bank book, just to see how much I was worth. Of course if we haven't a Bank account, and no Bank book, we are in a very sad situation, I suppose a situation common to most of us.

But now here are your securities. They are all listed in the text. I do not mean to say that we might not elaborate and name a great many others, but after all this is a very comprehensive list, and four of them principally are named—*redemption, His blood, forgiveness, the riches of His grace*. Can you remember that? Most of the texts of Scripture are just like an orange, you do not need to be an expert homilist to divide it. Just take

the skin off and it will fall apart, just like this — "redemption", "His blood", "forgiveness", "the riches of His grace".

One evening I was coming down the elevator in the General Hospital, and a gentleman got on and, seeing me, addressed me by name. I bade him good evening, and said, "Perhaps I ought to know you." "No," he said, "I do not suppose you do, but I know you." He said, "Some years ago I got on the night train going to Chicago, and you were on the club car at the end of the train. You ordered a cup of tea and an orange. The porter, or somebody, told me who you were. We didn't speak; but that is how I came to know you." Then he said, "I watched you peel that orange, and it fascinated me; and from that day till this I have never gone to bed without eating an orange; and I always peel it just exactly as you peeled it." That is a lesson on the unconscious influence of example. You may be even teaching people how to peel oranges when you do not know it, or potatoes either! However, let us peel the orange and see what we can find in it.

### I.

To begin, OUR FIRST SECURITY IS REDEMPTION. Now what is that? Is it a hundred dollar bond, or a thousand dollar bond, or is it a bond that is worth a million? It is certainly worth examining, because we find it in Him, and were it of no worth it would not be in Him; but seeing it is secured to us in Him it must be a possession of great value. You will not find tinsel, nor "costume jewellery", some base metal washed with brass, in a safety vault.

Now redemption is a very big word. You remember the ascending scale in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, where the Spirit of God says of Jesus Christ, "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." The Spirit of God doesn't lead us down stairs, but up stairs. Here the principle of lesser value, although they are all of incomparable worth, is wisdom, wisdom to choose; then righteousness imputed to us; sanctification, a long process of spiritual education and development; and then the big comprehensive word, that includes everything, is redemption. It is well to weigh these words of Scripture, and to weigh them carefully, because the Spirit of God wisely selects the words He employs.

What do we mean by redemption? It implies that something has been lost and recovered. What have we lost by nature? As a matter of relation we have lost our sonship; as a matter of inner nature we have lost our holiness; as a matter of possession we have lost everything, and are reduced to poverty; and, relatively again, we have been brought into subjection to a strange master, and from free men we have become slaves, in bondage to sin. When we would do good, evil is present with us, like the slave under the taskmaster's whip, who in manacles and anklets is held fast in the bondage of a ruthless, merciless tyrant.

How may the slave be "redeemed"? That is another question, and of that I shall speak in a moment. But here it is enough only to note the fact that we have been redeemed, redeemed from all the loss and misery occasioned by our sin. We have been recovered by Someone Who was, and is our Redeemer. They speak about redeeming things from a pawn-shop. Somebody in his extremity puts an article into pawn, a watch or some-

## The Gospel Witness

and

### Protestant Advocate

Published every Thursday for the propagation of the Evangelical principles of the Protestant Reformation and in defence of the faith once delivered to the Saints.

\$3.00 Per Year. Postpaid to any address. 10c Per Single Copy.

Editor

T. T. SHIELDS

Associate Editors

W. S. WHITCOMBE, M.A. (Tor.)

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

S. S. Lesson and Exchanges

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

Address Correspondence:

THE GOSPEL WITNESS

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2, Canada

Telephone RAndolph 7415

Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada

thing else, and in compensation for that which he leaves as security, he gets a mere pittance, a fraction of the intrinsic value of the thing he has deposited. Perhaps he never recovers himself sufficiently to be able to redeem that which was lost. But we have redemption from all the damage inflicted by sin, and all the loss, sorrow and misery which it occasioned — we have been redeemed. That is something on the negative side.

But we have been redeemed from bondage to liberty. We sing,

"My chains fell off, my soul was free;  
I rose, went forth and followed Thee."

We hear a great deal about freedom in public discussions today, about the infringement of our liberties, the various curtailments of those freedoms to which we have been so long accustomed. We hear a great deal about controls, the removal of them, and the possibility of their re-imposition, and we do not like it, do we? We like to be free. I would rather be free and live in a barn than be manacled in some ivory palace, with all the doors locked, so that I could not go where I wanted to. But we have been redeemed from such a life of curtailment and restriction and limitation and confinement; the doors have been thrown wide, and we have been brought out into a large place,—like Peter, when in a daze he came out of prison, out into the street, and the angel left him, and then he said, "Now I know of a surety that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews." He was once more a free man. It is well that we should recognize that that is involved in our redemption.

I could go on enumerating some of the elements of our redemption, but let me put it in a word. By our sin we were ruined, reduced to moral nothingness, to spiritual bankruptcy; we had lost the Divine image; we had lost the glorious vestments which belong to the children of God; we had left the Father's house, and were away in the far country in want and utter destitution. But in Christ we have redemption, and from ruin we have been brought to complete restoration: "The Lord is my shep-

herd, I shall not want; He leadeth me beside the still waters, He restoreth my soul." That is what it is to be redeemed, for the work of sin to be completely undone, and to be restored to the place we should have occupied if Adam had never sinned, nay more than that. Before the fall man was merely innocent, a negative quality—he had done no wrong. Restored by Divine Grace he is reckoned to be righteous, and does right from an inner impulse, by choosing to be and do right.

We have our redemption, and you see it is such a big word it comprehends everything, not merely the beginning of salvation, but the completion of it, and in Him we have redemption, even the redemption of our bodies. I wish I had a new body, don't you? I would give a great deal for a new body. Had I my choice I might choose one that is a little better looking, and certainly more comfortable to live with; but of all that in the future we are all assured. The whole creation is waiting to keep us company, waiting to be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God, which is to be effected at the redemption of our body, when Jesus shall come again and we shall have bodies like unto the body of His glory.

Well now that is what salvation is in brief. Did I not rightly say that redemption is a very big word?

But "In whom we have redemption THROUGH HIS BLOOD." That is how it comes to us — "through His blood". They are having an educational convention in Toronto just now. They are meeting in Maple Leaf Gardens tonight, the World Sunday School Convention, or Association, under a new name, and just like the Roman Catholic church, which seeks to capture every available organization and use it for its purpose, this absurd amalgam, this synthesis of negatives, called World Council of Churches, which is founded in unbelief, and comprises in its official membership those who deny everything that I have thus far said, and which is most certainly believed among us; and yet they will talk about Christ, and about salvation being in Christ.

Dr. Stanley Jones speaks of that, he speaks of trusting Christ, of being born again, even regenerated, and he means virtually the opposite of everything that those terms mean on the lips of a true evangelical, for Modernism has stolen the terminology of Christian orthodoxy, and emptying the words they employ of their significance they deceive the multitude. Yes, Christ may be preached. Modernists preach Christ, of course they do; Modernists preach Christ crucified. They couldn't preach Him without preaching Him as crucified — that is an historic fact, but they preach a crucified Christ without any atonement, without any expiation. The vast majority of people will go and listen to it and imbibe the poison, and wonder by and by that these small doses of religious arsenic have so reduced their moral and spiritual resistance that they find themselves in a decline, in consumption, instead of in the enjoyment of the exuberant health which is the right and privilege of the children of God.

Now "we have redemption through His blood." What do we mean by the blood of Christ? We had a professor in McMaster University some years ago, whose name was Marshall. I think perhaps I had some little part in facilitating his departure from this country. I hope I had at least. But he was accustomed to hold up the "doctrine of the slaughter house" and of the blood to contempt, and sometimes even spoke as though Chris-

tian orthodoxy believed that we were saved by the physical blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. What is the blood? The blood is life in solution. "The life of the flesh is in the blood." You remember Dr. Schwarz told us a few weeks ago that there is no part of the flesh that can live without blood, that even the bones of our body are full of blood, and it is literally, scientifically, incontrovertibly true that "the life of the flesh is in the blood", hence the Lord said, "and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul". What is the blood? It is life in solution. What is the blood, the precious blood, the Scripture calls it, of Jesus? It is the life-tide that throbs in the heart of God. The blood of Jesus Christ was His life. I hold, and I think the Scripture is quite clear in its teaching at this point, that the principle of substitution is of the very essence of the Gospel. He gave His life, the Scripture says, a ransom for all. He gave His blood, for he couldn't give His life without giving His blood, and by pouring out His blood He paid, to use Lincoln's great phrase in his Gettysburg speech, the "last measure of His devotion". Incarnate Deity as He was, He reserved nothing; He gave His life through the outpouring of His precious blood.

But now what did that mean? It meant that God, for He was God and is God, substituted His life for ours. There was no other way. To deny the vicariousness, or to use a stronger word, the expiatory quality and character, and nature, of the sacrifice of the cross, is to offer insult to the Divine Majesty. If you conceive of God as being before all things God, infinite in all the qualities of His being, existing from everlasting to everlasting, yet wrapping Himself in swaddling bands, and appearing among men as an Infant of days, while throbbing within that infant heart the eternal life of Deity, awaiting the predestined hour when the last crimson drop should be outpoured, and there should gush from His side blood and water,—I say if you postulate God, assume God to be what He is — God, beside Whom there is none else, it is inconceivable that any part of the universe should be unrelated to Him. Infinite in all His qualities, while personally transcendent yet He is ubiquitous and inherent in the universe of His creation; and sin is a foreign element, the alien thing which, in its purpose and effect, would displace God from His position. Now that is what sin is — a denial of all the rights of Deity.

Now to deny the necessity of Divine interposition, to deny the necessity of God's becoming Man, of stepping into the breach and filling the void, restoring the balance, making up the moral equilibrium of the universe — to say that anyone but God could do that is to deny that God is God. His absolute supremacy makes such a suggestion impossible.

So you see in Jesus Christ we have the Source of all law. Listen — "He is before all things, and by him all things consist," or hold together. If you remove Him from the created order there could be nothing but universal chaos. Hence, the moral void must be filled, and that emptiness can be supplied only by Him in Whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. Hence, inevitably, we have our redemption only through His blood. Mark the pronoun—not through blood, no, no; not through your blood or mine, nor anybody else's—we have redemption through His blood, for He only is God, and beside Him there is none else.

Oh, the security, the joy of knowing that this provision of salvation is something that God has done! Therefore it cannot be improved upon. There is no Gospel without the blood; no salvation for any one of us of woman born but by the life of God. Jesus said, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

Well, so much for that security.

Then here is another — "THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS." What do you mean by forgiveness? Do you mean mere exemption from punishment, escape from wrath, pardon for the guilty, the opening of the prison doors, a remission of sentence? Is that the meaning of forgiveness? Yes, it does mean that, and let me assure you that is very much, *very much*. A man that is living under the shadow of the gallows; and has his sentence commuted, and he is told that on such a day he will not now have to go forth to death, I suppose would say, "Well, I can be thankful for that." Death was his desert perhaps, but sentence is commuted to life imprisonment. But that is not everything, is it? We do not forgive anybody by merely withholding punishment, restraining our wrath. Forgiveness, real forgiveness implies a capacity and a worthiness to receive it. It is inseparably wrapped up with the principle of repentance; as we have sorrow for our sin and repent of our iniquity, we are prepared then to become the recipients of the pardon, to have our sentence remitted. But surely forgiveness implies also the quality of mercy and lovingkindness on the part of the person who forgives. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." No hell for us! What is the alternative?

I cannot think of any illustration anywhere that so perfectly illustrates what forgiveness is as the story of the Prodigal Son, when he came home with contrite heart, breaking the long silence with the words, "Father, I have sinned." He was not met with a single reproach, not a word of censure, or of blame, but by the open arms of his father, and the kiss of parental affection upon his cheek: reception into the realm of his father's affection, and then, objectively, of course, to participation in all the wealth and comfort and satisfaction of his father's house. Why, my dear friends, that is what it is to be a Christian — to have our sins forgiven.

You remember how Joab pleaded with David for Absalom and asked David to let him come home. David said, "All right, he may return to his father's kingdom, but he shall not see my face. He can live in his own house; not in mine." That was only partial forgiveness. Not thus does our gracious Lord receive those who return from exile in the land of Geshur; He receives us to his heart. "We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins."

#### IV.

Then lastly, here is another. How did it all come about? "ACCORDING TO THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE." Its origin and completion are found in the boundless grace of our Infinite God. "According to the riches of His grace." It was He who devised means that His banished be not expelled from Him; it was He who gave His only begotten Son. I hadn't been very long Pastor of this church when I received a letter from a man who was then President of the Alumni Association of McMaster University. I suppose he thought he was a very clever man, I do not know; but he wrote me a letter and said: "I want to be in agreement with my Pastor,

and I write to ask you a question: Did I understand you to say last Sunday evening that Jesus Christ had to die to make God willing to save sinners?" I wrote him a brief note and I said, "I haven't the remotest idea what you understood me to say; I do know that I couldn't have said that in a nightmare; and for your information I remind you of the sixteenth verse of the third Chapter of John, that 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.'" Oh, yes, it was His grace that gave His Son from all eternity. The whole scheme of redemption originated in the heart of God, and Father, Son and Holy Ghost, three in one, are all exercised in the effecting it. The means of salvation were from Him. He devised means, as the woman of Tekoa said. His blood—that was His way of doing it. He Himself devised the scheme of becoming Man and wrapping Infinity in the swaddling bands of a human Infant, and then at last pouring out the last crimson drop of the life blood of Deity, as I have said to you a hundred times, the wealth of the Universe in solution.

"The riches," of course imply the abundance, the inexhaustibility of Divine grace. The biggest word in any language is the word "grace": You cannot define it in any language. It is just as deep as hell; it is wide as the east is from the west; it is as high as Heaven, and as long and vast as eternity. A big word of one syllable, Grace! And because of the riches of His grace all this came about. Oh, what shall I say? Redemption, that is one of our securities; forgiveness, another — forgiveness, the riches of His grace. That my dear friends is the multi-billion dollar bond. There just isn't any limit to it at all.

We live, some of us, at a poor dying rate. I think I will tell you a story: An old man, so far as I know he is still living, but he is away out West now, and I haven't seen him for some years. He is very old; I think he must be nearer to ninety than he is to eighty. Some years ago he came to see me and asked me if I would become his executor; he didn't want to waste his estate on lawyers, and so he wanted me to do it, and of course do it for nothing. I said, "Yes, I won't charge you anything." "Well, can you make my will?" I said, "Yes, I think I can make it as well as any lawyer, better than most. You tell me what you want to put in it, and I think I can write it so that no court in the world can break it."

He told me what he had. "It is all in cash," he said, "It is all in bonds, and it is in a certain place." He told me the place. It wouldn't be difficult to administer, because it was all in bonds. Then he named a couple of sons. He had a wife in England, whom he hadn't seen for thirty years. That was a long separation, wasn't it? But she was about as old as he was, so he thought five hundred dollars would be enough for her. But there were his two sons. They were no longer young, and each of them had a grown or growing family. One lived in England, and one in the West. So he decided he would leave a little token to this one, and that one, of a few hundred dollars; and the residue of his estate was to be divided between his two sons. Then he said, "You know, I don't use it. Some years ago I bought a Government annuity, and that gives me a thousand dollars a year, and I don't know how to use that." He lived in one room. He said, "I don't know how to spend it." I could have told him, but I didn't! I might have volunteered my help in some other capacity than that of execu-

tor. He said, "I have more than I can use." A thousand dollars a year! I think he had one suit of clothes, that looked to me as though he had had it for fifty years.

When he was in town he was at every service, particularly in the winter time. He came in, and had a good sleep. I used to think he came because it was warm, warmer than the room he lived in. He said, "You know my chief trouble is this. There it is, so many thousand dollars," and it was a very considerable estate. He had been what was called a working-man, had worked for the city, got a certain wage, and had skimmed himself all his life, in this country at least; saved everything he could, and invested it. He seemed to have a shrewd sense of where to put his money; and so it increased. He said to me. "It's getting bigger all the time, and I don't know what to do with it." Well, I did say to him, "Well, I do not know whether that is a question or not, but you can leave something to the church if you don't know what to do with it." But he didn't know about that. "Very well then," I said, "Why not divide your estate and give half to each son now? You have an annuity; you say you cannot use that; that is sufficient to care for you for the rest of your natural life. Why don't you give your money to your children when they need it, while you are still alive?" "Yes, yes, I guess that would be the best way. There wouldn't be any succession duties then, would there?" I said, "No". I didn't know how much there would be on his estate anyhow, but I said, "Give it to your children now and let them have the use of it. Their children, your grand-children are growing up, and they need help, perhaps, for their education and in other ways." "Yes, yes, I think maybe that is what I ought to do, but — no! I cannot do it. It is hard to let it go." I said, "You are not letting it go, it is yonder in the bank." "I know, but it is there." And he wouldn't let go; he never has let go; and if you saw him you wouldn't think he was worth ten cents; and if you asked him to make a contribution to anything you would find out that he hadn't anything to give to anybody. He had become a miser in the real sense; and with riches piled up and an assured income more than sufficient for his needs, he didn't know how to use either of them.

I have seen some Christians like that. I shouldn't like to say that they are not members of the Royal family; I shouldn't like to say that they have not an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them: it would not be for me to pronounce upon that. But oh, they live at such a poor, dying rate, riches abounding, and they do not know how to spend them.

I thought it might be profitable to remind you of your securities this evening, and tell you where you will find them, safely, deposited in Christ, Who is over all, so that no one can rob you of your inheritance in Christ. You may live in the enjoyment of it even now. "Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence."

You read in the paper of a certain rich man dying. He has left a lot of money, and his will is entered for probate and the particulars of it are published. He has made certain provision for his younger children, for their education and training, but he doesn't give them their whole fortune; he knows it wouldn't be wise. He abounds toward them, but in all wisdom and prudence. They are to have so much until they are twenty-one, and maybe something more when they get to be perhaps

thirty. I heard of one man who willed that his son should have a certain income as long as he remained a student in the University. At the time of writing he had been twenty years in the University. Why not? He had a steady income as long as he stayed there.

Now, my dear friends, the Lord doesn't give us everything all at once you know. "He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence," but we have an annuity, enough to carry on, enough to get on with in the meantime. By and by at "the redemption of the purchased possession", we shall enter into the possession and enjoyment of all that is ours in Christ Jesus. Examine your securities, clip your coupons, live in such luxury as becometh members of the household of faith! Let us pray.

We thank Thee for all that we know even now of the riches of Thy grace, Oh Lord, but still we praise Thee for the grace we have not tasted yet. Keep us in school, O Lord; teach us how to grow up into Christ in all things. May we know something of the meaning of the sanctifying grace of God, so that when at last we reach the end of our voyage and enter upon our majority we shall not be ashamed among the princes of the Royal house, but shall be able to live as those who are redeemed by blood. Bless our meditation, for Thy Name's sake. Amen.

### "LET'S STICK TO MOSES!"

*Apropos* of our remarks in these columns a few weeks ago regarding Dr. Rowell's book answering one of the deceitful and misleading advertisements of the Knights of Columbus, a subscriber in Western Ontario has sent us the copy of a letter which she sent to *Maclean's Magazine*. We reprint it here, for, so far as we know, it was not published by that magazine which has carried the complete series of Romanist propaganda. The correspondent's letter reads thus:

**Let's Stick to Moses! O.K. O.K. Let's!**

In the Douay or in the King James' version of Exodus 20:4-6, we find: "Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above or in the earth beneath, nor of these things that are in the waters under the earth. 5. Thou shalt not adore them nor serve them: I am the Lord thy God, mighty, jealous, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me: 6. And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments."

The Roman Catholic Catechism has deleted this commandment. Protestant schools teach that one from ten leaves nine. That makes the Roman Catholic Church the Church of the Nine Commandments.

Let's Stick to Moses!

Yours truly,

(Signed) .....

P.S. Judas sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver. God knows what *Maclean's* is selling Moses out for. *God knows.*

### AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

From a friend in London, Ontario, we have received a gift of \$25.00 in response to our article of last week entitled "No Religious Freedom in Quebec". We acknowledge this gift with sincere gratitude.

# THE ANGELS' HALLELUJAHS

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, on a Sunday Evening.

(Stenographically Reported)

"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."—Luke 15:10.

**A**LTHOUGH not every one of us may know as yet what sin in the sight of God really is, I feel certain there is not one of us who does not recognize some departure from the principles of righteousness. Hence there is not one of us here who does not know that he has some sin to confess: "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Though we may not know the height and depth and length and breadth, and the full content of that word "repentance" as used in the Bible, yet we all have some idea of what it means.

I suppose I should still carry your judgment were I to say that inasmuch as we all have sinned, we ought all to repent of our sins. There is no exception to that rule.

I think it is recognized too, in principle, that there can be no forgiveness without repentance. If a man has offended against you, if he has committed some wrong, inflicted some injury upon you, upon your reputation, or has occasioned you pecuniary loss, however generously disposed you may be toward him, if you know that his heart is set upon repeating the offence to-morrow, it is not likely that you will be disposed to forgive him to-day. But if his mind is entirely changed toward his wrong-doing, if now he is sorry for it, and sufficiently sorry to lead him to confess it, and to resolve that so far as it is in his power, the wrong shall never be repeated, then perhaps even men may sometimes find it in their hearts to say, "We will let by-gones be by-gones, and begin all over again."

At all events, that is the principle of the gospel, that there can be no forgiveness without repentance. I venture to believe that there is no true faith without repentance. There must be repentance toward God before there can be faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

But I fear there are comparatively few people who have learned to look upon moral evil, in all its varying degrees, with repugnance, with positive antipathy toward it for its own sake, apart from the person who is guilty. How few there are who have learned to hate wrong-doing because it is wrong-doing! I read of One of Whom it is said, "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." But comparatively few have learned to hate sin for its own sake, and to long to be delivered from it. I mean, of course, those who have been untouched by the Spirit of God.

Too often men feel a measure of gratification when sin is discovered in other people, when the white light is turned upon somebody else's record, and it appears that he is in very truth a sinner and a flagrant sinner. Too often people look upon it and say, "Oh yes! There are many men, if the light were turned upon them, who would be in the same position." Very probably, my dear friend—yourself included! It is exceedingly difficult therefore for many men publicly to acknowledge

their sin. Perhaps we ought to try to make some allowance for Nicodemus who came to Jesus by night. He was a man in an official position. He knew that his visit to the Prophet of Nazareth would be much talked about, that his name would be discussed among the religious leaders. Therefore he sought a private interview.

I wonder what would happen if we could see each other in the light which shines from heaven? If we could estimate our own character and read our own record, and estimate the characters and read the records of others, as they are estimated and read by Heaven itself? I have been told that some people become uncomfortable by attending this place of worship. But after all there is but one end to all our preaching, and that is to lead men to face whatever there may be which interferes with a proper relationship to God.

I remember when our late friend, now in the glory, Professor Keirstead, used to worship with us frequently here. One evening I was coming along Gerrard Street, and I overtook him. Putting my hand on his shoulder I said, "Good evening, Doctor. It will be a joy to have you with us to-night." "Oh! Oh! Is that you. Good evening! Good evening! I thought I would come down and hear a little about the divine side of things. We do not hear very much about the divine side of things, and I thought I would come down and hear about it."

We have not faced life's problems until we have faced "the divine side of things", until we are able to say as did our brother in his appealing song this evening, "I walk and talk with the King." That is the main consideration.

I have read to you a very familiar text, and yet perhaps we may view it from a less familiar angle. I call your attention to this principle, that it is a subject of remark by our divine Lord that the one earthly thing in which the angels of heaven are particularly interested is not, for example, the stock market, nor the condition of trade, nor the result of elections; that is not the thing in which they are supremely interested,—but our Lord Jesus says they are interested when a man really repents. He tells us that the relationship between earth and heaven is so real and so sensitive that whenever a sinner repents the angels in heaven rejoice.

What is there therefore about repentance that distinguishes it from other emotions or motions of the soul, commands the attention of Heaven, and leads the angels to sweep their harp-strings and make Heaven echo with their music? What is it? What would happen in Toronto if certain men were to take an interest in other things than business or their families? If God by His Spirit should so lay hold of a man here this evening that he should be brought to recognize that there is nothing in all the universe so important as that he should be brought into pacific and saving relationship to God through Christ; if he should resolve that no matter what it costs him in friendship, in association, in prestige, in



dollars and cents that salvation being the great desideratum it is the one thing for which all other things ought to be sacrificed, and to which all other interests ought to be subordinated, and that therefore he will get right with God, and be right with Him, so that he can walk and talk with the King, such decision would make the vaults of heaven ring with the angel's Hallelujahs.

## I.

Why are the angels so supremely interested? I rather think it is because THEY KNOW, AS WE DO NOT, THE TRUE NATURE OF SIN ITSELF. Who knows what it is to sin? Who knows the potentialities of a single sin? It was but one solitary act apparently which brought death into the world, and all our woe. If that be so, how terrible a thing sin is!

The angels know *what sin does to God the Father*. For mark you, we shall never see and understand the nature of sin until we discover that it is something that disturbs our relationship with God. When David had come to see his own sin in God's light he brushed aside, for the moment, in contemplation of it, all human relationships and said, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." Sin is an offence against God, and the angels know what sin does to God. The dwelling of God is infinitely holy. It is written of the heavenly city, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." The seraphim veiled their faces and cried, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts."

And yet—will you follow me?—there must be a sense in which sin intrudes upon the presence of the Holy One. There must be a sense in which the influence of our sin—yours and mine—gets past everything to God, and disturbs God. Some of you live in apartment-houses. Did you ever have a neighbour with a radio? Did you ever have a neighbour with a taste for jazz, and for everything that is objectionable, who keeps up the din all day—and sometimes well on into the night? It was in his own apartment, but the sound came into yours.

You remember the words of Tennyson?

"But when the heart is full of din,  
And doubt beside the portal waits,  
They can but listen at the gates  
And hear the household jar within."

Somebody is standing at the door, hearing all the discord and contention within. How the conflicts of life—this moral eccentricity—disturb the divine dwelling-place until it becomes obnoxious to the angels!

Putting aside everything else, I could spend many hours with you discussing that one aspect of things, of how sin goes on and on until it disturbs the repose of Deity. It is a something that God hates, and because of that the angels hate it too.

Then *the angels knew of the long preparation for dealing with sin*. I suggest an interesting subject of study: turn the pages of your Bible and mark the places where the ministry of angels is recorded, and see down through the unfolding centuries as God was bringing to His people line upon line and precept upon precept, gradually disclosing His purposes of grace formed in the mind of the Eternal before the worlds were made, see what place angels had as divine messengers. For example, when the angels came to Abraham, and went down to Sodom; when they came to the sleeping Jacob, and ascended and

descended upon the ladder set up upon earth, whose top reached to heaven. How often the angels came with a message, speaking of Somebody,—of Somebody—of Somebody spelled with a capital "S", bringing the glad message that Somebody some day would come! They knew that there was serious wrong upon the earth, and were witnesses of the long unfolding of the divine purpose of grace. They knew—and know—what sin does to God the Son.

A thought comes to me—yes, it is more than a fancy; for I am sure it is based in the reality of things. We conceive of Jesus as God the Son, and, being God, He is omnipresent, ubiquitous, everywhere. Can you localize Him? "The Word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us." That was a miracle when the Infinite, so to speak, almost—I speak thus because of the poverty of our language, or of my knowledge of it—I was going to say, the Infinite almost rendered Himself finite that He might come and live in our human flesh. I know the danger of that suggestion, but my point is this: Jesus Christ said, "I came down from heaven . . . I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." There must have been a sense in which there was a time when God the Son was absent from the glory.

Some years ago when His Majesty the King was very ill and the Prince of Wales was somewhere in Africa, there was general anxiety that he should come home. He hastened his return, using every facility afforded by modern science for rapid transit.

Have you ever thought of what heaven must have been while Jesus Christ was upon earth? He was here,—He had always been here, but He was here as He had not been before, tabernacled in flesh. While He was here, there was a sense in which He was not there. What a place heaven must have been when Jesus was absent! It belongs to the realm of infinite conceptions—or conceptions of the infinite. It is beyond us. But how the angels must have felt His absence! How they must have mourned the transfer of His glorious presence from heaven to earth! They knew that He had come in fulfilment of the long expectation to deal with the fact of sin.

So, following Him through His earthly ministry, coming at last to His passion in the garden of Gethsemane where an angel ministered to Him when His soul was "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death", a heavenly messenger was sent from heaven to stand by the Son of God as He passed through that indescribable agony. The angels knew all about it,—how sin grieves the Father, wounds the Son, and offends the Holy Ghost. Heaven never looks lightly upon sin, even the smallest sin.

In one of the Lord's discourses there is a disclosure of conditions obtaining beyond the grave: He spoke of the rich man and Lazarus. He did show us—and does show us—in that teaching that even heaven itself can look upon hell. So that I suppose the angels know what sin does to men as men never have yet learned themselves.

We see a man drinking his life away, or see a young fellow plunging into all kinds of sin. We see him trampling the Decalogue under his feet, and by and by reaching the penitentiary, and an editorial in the press tells of the "end of the trail". People are taught that crime does not pay. But if we could see far enough we should see that every sin is a crime, if not against human

governments, then against God's government; that sin never pays, and that sooner or later every sinner is brought to account, and every sin dealt with in the economy of God. There is no escape.

The angels know all about it, and have an abhorrence of sin to which even the most devoted saint is a stranger; for the farther we go on with God the intenser does our abhorrence of sin become.

## II.

**THE ANGELS KNEW—AND KNOW—THE SIGNIFICANCE OF REPENTANCE.** You have seen someone pursue a foolish course. He has been advised by all his friends not to do it, but he is wiser than all of them; and he persists in his course. Friends say, "What shall we do? What shall we do to keep him back from the precipice?" How often I have had mothers come to me and say, "I wish you would persuade my son not to do a certain thing." Or a wife, "I wish you would see my husband, and see if you can do anything with him. He will do nothing for me." Everybody else can see the precipice ahead but the man himself. On he goes to certain ruin—but he will not be advised by any or all his friends.

But what lies beyond that precipice the angels know better than we do, and they are far more concerned than we are. Heaven bends an attentive eye and ear to the things of earth.

But at last you get the news that this man you have been trying to influence has changed his mind. The question is asked, "Is he really going to turn back after all?" What good news that would be, that a gleam of sense has entered his darkened understanding! His friends begin to hope that he is going to turn to paths of righteousness and wisdom again.

But when a sinner repents, do you know what happens? A light from heaven shines into a man's heart and conscience, and suddenly he is awakened. The thing which he called a pleasure, which he believed to be profitable, he sees at last in God's sight, and discovers that it is indescribably horrible. He changes his mind about it. He says, "I do not want any more of it." When the angels see that a man's mind is changed toward sin, that is good news in heaven. That is better than news of the stock-market. If to-night you were to go home and listen to the news over the air, and hear of some great revival somewhere of trade you would say, "What good news that is!" It would not make a stir in heaven. But if one sinner—one sinner, not many, but one sinner, only one—made originally in God's image and likeness, the image marred and defaced, and the soul ruined, condemned, and all but damned, when at last on the edge of the precipice light shines, and the man turns back, a great Hallelujah rings through the arches of heaven because a man has seen and repents of his sin.

Oh, that God Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness would shine in our hearts "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ".

The angels know, too, that *repentance is the first symptom of recovery from the disease of sin*, it marks the passing of the crisis. How often have I been in homes where there was serious illness! Upstairs there is a patient who is unconscious, who knows nothing of what is going on about him or her. The physician comes. He steps quietly about the house and presently comes downstairs and says, "I am correct in my diagnosis. I know

what is the matter, but I can do nothing. The disease will have to take its course. It is now a question of nursing. The disease will reach the climax in two or three days."

Friends come quietly and ask, "What is the news today?" "There is not much change," says the nurse, "we are just waiting for the crisis. We minister as carefully and tenderly as possible, but that is all we can do." There is sadness on all faces; deepest anxiety is manifest throughout the family. The doctor comes again, and at the hour expected he sits and watches. The question is, Will the fever abate or increase? Will the patient grow worse or better? After a while the doctor heaves a sigh of relief and says, "It is all right, nurse."

The patient has said nothing. He has not spoken. But the doctor knows that the great divide is past; life is coming back again; the tide is coming in. Now watch that dainty nurse as she comes out of the room smiling. Still the patient has not spoken, but she says, "We are all very happy. The crisis is past. The disease is checked; the patient is on the road to recovery."

How the angels watch to see if there is any sign of repentance, for they know that without repentance, there is no turning back from the edge of the pit. It means an everlasting descent apart from that. But when at last sorrow for sin steals into the stricken heart, the conscience awakes from its long sleep, and begins its ministry, and by and by the tears start as the man begins to weep for his sin. I can almost fancy the leader of the angel choir saying, "Come; it is time for the Hallelujah Chorus. Let us praise the Lord." That is in the text,—*"Joy in the presence of the angels of God."*

In some stricken home is a woman, the wife and mother, and the father of the home is ill. How utterly downcast is that woman! But meet her after the crisis is past, and see how happy she is! How full of gladness! I wonder if it be legitimate even to ask the question, Does any shadow ever fall upon the divine glory? Are the angels' harps ever silent? If so, it is on account of your sin and mine. Is there ever sadness in the heart of God? Oh yes; there is sadness in the heart of Him Who is our Redeemer, Who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities". As He wept over Jerusalem because it knew not the things that belonged to its peace, so must He still be concerned for us. But when we truly repent, what gladness there is in the heart of God Himself—not only with the angels but "in the presence of the angels of God".

I wonder if there is something else here? In that story to which I referred Dives saw Lazarus in Abraham's bosom. He identified Abraham, and he identified Lazarus. I wonder if the spirits of just men made perfect do ever join with the angels in their concern for our welfare? I wonder if, when a prayer is answered and a sinner is saved, when a man repents, and somebody who had long desired that repentance is in the glory—I wonder if there is not gladness "in the general assembly and church of the firstborn that are written in heaven"? I do not believe they have to wait until by and by. I cannot believe that those who have left us are shut out from all knowledge of mundane affairs.

There is "joy in the presence of the angels of God" because one sinner repents, *for that ensures ultimate recovery*. Repentance is the work of the Spirit of God. It is said of our risen Lord: "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give



repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." When He lets His light shine, repentance is the issue, repentance is the invariable result. It is the beginning of the work of God. It is like one watching through a glass. He sees that man yonder looking for the lost sheep. He sees him going roundabout, skirting the edge of the precipice until he comes at last to some particularly dangerous spot. The poor silly sheep is almost over the edge—then the watcher sees the strong arm of the shepherd reach out for the sheep, lay it upon his shoulders, and bear it back to safety. I can imagine the watcher crying, "He has him. He has not brought him home yet, but he will." "The counsel of His grace in me He surely will fulfil."

Did we not sing it this evening in both those hymns?—

"'Twas grace that brought me safe thus far,  
And grace will lead me home."

And in the other:

"Grace taught my soul to pray,  
And made mine eyes o'erflow;  
'Twas grace which kept me to this day,  
And will not let me go."

I will tell you why I am a Christian. It is not because I wanted to be, nor because I did anything toward it; but because God in His sovereign grace saved me, and because through the years He has sovereignly kept me—and would not let me go. The angels rejoice because they know that when God begins a work He always completes it. Though we may wander far, at last He brings us home.

Shall we join the angels to-night? I am not going to talk to you about joining the church only, I exhort you to join the angels. I am not going to ask you to join the choir, although that would be a fine thing if you are a Christian and can sing. But I offer you a higher honour than that: join the angels; find your joy where they find theirs. If there is anybody here to-night who came into this building out of harmony with God, unsaved, uncleansed, I beseech you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God, be ye attuned to the divine will so that you can sing in harmony with the angels.

Will you come? Will you come this evening?

### THE RAILWAYMEN'S STRIKE

As we are about to go to press, the strike called by Canadian Railwaymen is still in progress, and hence many thousands of our readers will not read this note because the Post Office is completely dependent on the railways for the transportation of printed matter. We are informed that first class mail will be carried by air and by truck where that is practicable, which means that our readers outside Toronto may write to us, though we shall not be able to reach them. Thus we are inserting this brief note to say, as did the Irishman, "If you do not get this, write and let me know!" It is our hope that settlement of the strike will be made before the date for next week's edition, or it may be necessary for us to cancel that issue. If such should be the case, we promise our subscribers that we will do our best to make it up to them at a later date by a double issue.

You cannot strike religion out of men's thoughts, as you might take a stone out of a wall and leave the wall standing; you take out foundation and mortar, and make a ruinous heap.

—ALEXANDER MACLAREN.

### THE LEAVEN OF MODERN PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES.

How the Extremes of Romish Superstition and Modern Scepticism Meet

THE newspapers of this week gave considerable space to two dispatches having to do with matters of doctrine. At first sight the two view points expressed seemed to be so utterly at variance as to exclude the possibility of their having anything whatsoever in common. The one report emanated from the Vatican in Rome and announced that on November 1 next the pope will promulgate the dogma of the Assumption of Mary. In itself this is rather stale news since it has been common knowledge for some months, if not for some years, that the pope was about to proclaim this strange new dogma. The other news dispatch originated in Cambridge, England, and told of several ministers of the Anglican Church who denied on successive days the Biblical doctrines of Creation, the Virgin Birth of Our Lord, and His Second Advent. One of these "leading Anglican professors of religion," as the newspapers described him, asserted that there were a number of "possible and permissible theories of what is called the resurrection, the ascension and the judgment." He also asserted that the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds were not "adequate expressions . . . of the Christian convictions of a large body of thoughtful people!" Gentlemen who pontificate in this sort are always described as "scholars", and they invariably claim to speak for "a large body of thoughtful people".

In all this adding to and subtracting from the Word of God there is nothing new. The Bible long ago prophesied that "in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim. 4:1, 2). And there is also written this description of modern unbelief, which is even more accurate than the news report we read in our papers: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And, saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they are willingly ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water" (2 Peter 3:3ff).

### Scepticism Is Not Modern

Though these blatant denials of the teaching of the Scripture are shocking, there is nothing new in them as we have already pointed out. Back in the dawn of history, it was the Old Serpent who first suggested doubt: "Hath God said?" And unbelief has been but re-echoing this first lie of the Father of lies ever since. The only new thing about this modern infidelity is that it emanates from ordained clergymen of a Christian Church, men who cling to the name of Christian and the office of the church with its emoluments. The early church had to fight against the unbelief of the ancient philosophers to whom the preaching of the cross was foolishness, but they were at least open enemies outside the church, not ravening wolves within, cloaked in sheep's clothing. A few generations ago, the rabid unbelief of men such as Tom Paine and Bob Ingersoll shocked the Christian Churches, but they at least had

the decency not to attempt to intrude within the fold and to pose as shepherds of the flock. But it is apparent that these "leading Anglican professors of religion", as they are called, would cast past generations of sceptics into a deeper and darker shade by their almost total denial of everything which the Bible teaches. They deny the great doctrines of Scripture in such a way as to lead one to think that they class themselves with the one who, according to the Psalmist, says in his heart, "There is no God." Oh, the folly of unbelief, and its unscrupulous immorality in taking the name, as well as the gain, of being a Christian, while denying all the name stands for. That is the sad condition of many so-called Protestant Churches to-day, and yet there are thousands upon thousands of well-intentioned believers in all the great denominations who are still unaware of the almost total unbelief of their leaders.

#### Rome's Latest Superstition — the Assumption of Mary

And on the other hand, standing in striking contrast with the doubt of the Anglican leaders is the news that the pope at Rome has announced his intention of proclaiming the Dogma of the Assumption of Mary on November first next. That is to say, a Roman Catholic now, at the present moment of time, is not required under penalty of the church's thunder to believe that the body of Mary was taken up into heaven just as Scripture records that Our Lord's body was taken up into heaven. But on and after November first next, when the pope intends to promulgate this strange new dogma, every Roman Catholic in the world must subscribe with implicit faith to this strange new dogma if he wishes to remain in the church which teaches there is salvation nowhere but in her bosom. What a strange superstition, what a frivolous conception of faith, that at the single whim of an old man in Rome it must change its content as rapidly as a weather cock blown about by the vagrant winds that blow. What is faith today, becomes disbelief tomorrow by the decree of an ecclesiastical potentate who is utterly irresponsible in his decisions to any governing body. Up till the last century, it was necessary to call a council of the Roman Church in order to give a new dogma the force of law, but since 1870 the pope alone, even without the aid or voice of any other prelate proclaims, *ex cathedra*, what must be believed or not. How utterly irrational that is! It is religious absolutism run riot.

#### Not One Jot of Scriptural Support

And to add, if that be possible, to the folly of this rigid totalitarian system, the dogma-to-be of the Assumption of Mary has, according to the confession of Romanist theologians, not one shred of support in Scripture. There is not a direct word or even the remotest indirect hint in the Bible that the body of Mary was taken up into heaven. The fancy is wholly dependent on tradition; the traditions of men, which our Lord condemned as being contrary to His Word.

The spirit of the papal dogmatism of Rome was well represented at the gigantic spectacle staged at Ottawa a few years ago which we called Rome's Pagan Circus. At the close of that huge theatrical, an effigy of the Virgin Mary in fireworks, carefully erected on a framework at great expense, was literally blown up to heaven! This was the grand finale of the Marian Congress, whose purpose, according to the leading prelates, was to plead

for the promulgation of the Dogma of Mary's Assumption. That sort of child's play is on the same moral and spiritual level as the custom of setting off firecrackers on the New Year's Day in order to ward off evil spirits.

The priest in the Vatican who has thus announced his intention of calling a secret consistory to inform it of his intention—not to ask advice or permission note—but to inform it of his intention of promulgating the new addition to the faith of the Roman Church, claims that when he speaks on matters of faith and morals his voice is the voice of God. And yet the same man cannot foretell whether he will be alive and well on that date to make this foolishly solemn statement that what is now a matter of doubt will become a matter requiring blind, implicit acceptance as an article of faith.

#### The Leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees

We have said that these two different pronouncements on religious doctrine, the one pure scepticism the other crude superstition, while seemingly diverse, actually have much in common. We remind our readers of the warning of our Lord and Saviour to His disciples: "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" (Matt. 16:6). The Pharisees with their rigid exclusivism, their slavish devotion to the letter of the law and their legalistic conception of righteousness, would at first sight appear to bear small likeness to the scepticism of the Sadducees who are distinguished in Scripture by what they did not believe: "which say that there is no resurrection"; "the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit . . ." These were the ancient sceptics cast in a negative mold, and like their brethren in all ages they found it easy to accommodate themselves to the spirit of worldliness that sought its rewards in political power. Our Lord's divine insight enabled him to see that the religious credulity of the one party was not essentially different from the worldly scepticism of the other group. And finally they joined their forces in that last desperate struggle against righteousness and truth that condemned the spotless Son of God to the cross in a vain attempt to silence His testimony and to do away with Him and all that He had come to do. In His warning against these two seeming contraries, Jesus Christ saw clearly that the two extremes met in a common hatred of righteousness and truth, and He links them together as one: "the leaven" — not "the leavens" — of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. The spirit of antagonism to God and His Kingdom is all-pervasive in the world and the flesh, and though it assumes different, and sometimes apparently diverse forms, it remains, notwithstanding, the same evil power that works its wicked will in the hearts of men and movements arrayed under different titles and in different camps.

#### The Bitter Fruits of Apostasy

Consider the relation of modern unbelief to modern credulity as represented not only in Rome, but in the increasing popularity of the wizards that peep and mutter, of necromancy and idolatry, for these are the accurate Biblical descriptions of present-day systems that boast such high-sounding names as spiritualism, astrology, and Romanism. After the first great war, even such a man of small religious faith as Thomas Hardy, lamented the flood of "spiritualistic" mediums in England who professed to call up the spirits of those who had fallen on the field of battle.

And why did men and women turn to such evil sources for a deceitful comfort in the hour of sorrow and death? Because they were almost completely ignorant of the assurances of hope and of the Scripture and its doctrine of a personal immortality in Christ. These great truths had not been proclaimed in the churches with the note of certainty because sceptics such as the Cambridge leaders had scoffed at the doctrine of future things until they were no longer preached in their Scriptural fulness. In the face of the growing tide of unbelief, thoughtful people are compelled to ask themselves, where this will end. If to-day the "leading professors of religion" deny as much as the Paines and Ingersolls of a few generations ago denied, what will become of the moral and spiritual foundations of the nation? "When the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?" In the face of such a threat, some timid souls become panic-stricken and in despair cast their lot with the largest and loudest voice that they seem to hear ringing in their ears. They decide that rather than believe nothing, it is better to believe everything. Fleeing from Scylla they fall into Charybdis. To escape scepticism they throw themselves into Romanism. This in brief is the story of John Henry Newman, the Anglican minister who died a Cardinal of the Roman Church. One of Rome's chiefest lines of defense is that it provides a bulwark against the waves of atheism and godlessness that are beating with relentless fury on the world to-day. But Rome's superstitious credulity will not be confused by men of spiritual discernment with the truth of God's Word. To add to the pure Word of God is as blameworthy in the sight of God and as evil in its fruits as to subtract from it.

#### Rome Breeds Atheists

-And on the obverse side we see how Rome's arrogance in dogma as well as in every other realm, drives men into the opposite camp of blind unbelief. Countless hosts of thinking men down through the ages have weighed the Romish system of self-contradictions and found it wanting. They have been driven by the folly of Rome's excesses to a blank refusal of any sort of belief. Catholicism, both Greek and Roman, has always been the prolific mother of infidelity. It is not by chance that atheistic communism had its home in the land of the so-called Catholic Church, while in the land that has been the cradle and then the kingdom of the popes for hundreds of years, the same communist forces are second in strength only to those within Russia itself. In France, it was the sinful stupidity of the Roman Catholic Church that played a major part in bringing about the horrors of the French Revolution, and transforming the eldest daughter of the church into a land impregnated with the spirit of Voltaire and Rousseau. The same may be said of almost all the Latin American Republics of South America.

#### Why the World Council Woos Rome

This essential oneness of the leaven of modern Phari-seeism and of modern Sadduceeism further explains how it is possible for the "liberal" theologians of the World Council of Churches and of the Federal Council of Churches, to make overtures and arrive at understandings with such apparently diverse movements as the Greek Catholic Church and even the Roman Catholic Church. Just as the seeming differences of the opposing parties were forgotten when their rulers took council

how they might put Jesus to death, just as Herod and Pilate became friends by sharing in the murder of Christ, so Modernists and Romanists will find it conveniently possible to make a common cause against the Word of God and the Gospel of Christ.

Notwithstanding, history warns us and reassures us at the same time that the forces of evil only unite to destroy themselves. "We can do nothing against the truth, but only for it." The wicked hands that crucified Christ and nailed Him to the tree did not relegate Him to oblivion. The priests' puppets cried "away with him, away with him," but they were decreeing their own sentence not His, had they but known it. The Cross of Christ was not His defeat but His triumph. In our day the forces of unbelief and of superstition will but pronounce their own doom, for the Cross, it standeth fast. "The Word of God cannot be broken!" We may sing in the same spirit of faith as past ages have sung:

Stand up! stand up for Jesus!  
Ye soldiers of the Cross;  
Lift high His royal banner,  
It must not suffer loss;  
From victory unto victory  
His army shall He lead,  
Till every foe is vanquished  
And Christ is Lord indeed.

—W.S.W.

#### A WARNING TO BE "HAMMERED" INTO PARENTS

A SUBSCRIBER has sent us a letter on an important matter which is always timely, namely, "Mixed Marriages". Writing as a mother, she remarks that the great number of the marriages, contracted between Roman Catholic and Protestant young people deserves more than a casual mention in THE GOSPEL WITNESS and should be "hammered into" the parents week after week, until they are aroused. We agree, and to that end allow this Christian mother to sound the alarm.

August 6, 1950.

Dear Mr. Whitcombe:

It has been brought to my attention again recently the great number of boys from Protestant families who are marrying Roman Catholic girls. I am convinced that it is a well-planned and carefully executed campaign and one that Protestant parents should be warned about in THE GOSPEL WITNESS.

I understand that in some cases at least, Roman Catholics are told that leading an outsider into the church insures heaven for the successful proselytizer, and in view of the uncertainty they all feel, this should be a strong inducement. Further, it is quite possible that they prefer Protestant boys. I asked a French-Canadian girl why she preferred her Protestant fiancé, an American soldier, and she said that "he treated her with respect!"

I am told that these girls go to the Y.M.C.A. dances and other affairs, and when a boy shows them attention, they take him home to entertain him, instead of expecting the lads to take them to a restaurant, and that the families make the boys very cordially welcome. It cannot, in any case, be purely a coincidence that there are so many mixed marriages. It would seem to be part of a definite plan on the part of the Roman Catholic priests.

There is not much use opposing these affairs after they have progressed—that is too late. The parents should be instructed to warn their children against this plot and to explain what it means in lack of privacy in their married life and in the defiling of their children's minds by the confessional. I am convinced that the ease with which some Protestants are gained for the church in this way is just another indication of the unhappy fruits of the backslidden condition of many

Protestant churches, which has left their young people without conviction. It is also notable that it appears that it is always for the Roman Catholic girls that these matches are planned. The priests seem to feel that the women are less easily detached from their religious background.

There have been a great number of these marriages brought to my attention and I think it deserves more than casual mention in THE GOSPEL WITNESS. It should be "hammered into" parents who read it week after week until they are aroused. Each one probably thinks that it is just "one of those things"—regrettable but unavoidable — and has no idea that it is a definite plot. I think if the boys realized they were being trapped they would not be so amenable. Parents should tell their sons that if they promise to bring their children up as Roman Catholics they are selling them into slavery. Few realize what is involved.

Yours,  
(Signed) .....

### An Organized Campaign

We agree with our correspondent in what she says about the gravity of the danger that confronts those who enter "Mixed Marriages". And despite the protestations of the Roman Catholic Church that it also disapproves of them, we are strongly inclined to agree that there is nonetheless a definite campaign to entice Protestants to the papal fold by using matrimony as a bait. Certainly the Church of Rome is not averse to its young people marrying Protestants when the latter can be induced to "turn". Roman Catholic priests know how to exploit the wiles of scheming mothers and the subtle little tricks of lovers to put pressure on the Protestant party so as to make him or her appear to play the rôle of a hard-hearted wretch or an obstinate egotist who is unwilling to make even a slight sacrifice for the happiness of all the others concerned. After the unsuspecting Protestant has guilelessly signed, but not read, the marriage contract drawn up by the priest, there will be plenty of time to tell that he or she has unwittingly signed away the souls of unborn children on the spur of the moment under the spell of a romantic love that was not wise enough to enquire into the meaning of the carefully planned plot in which the family, the priests and the whole dogmatic system of the Church of Rome had their share.

### Rome's Wiles

Our correspondent is convinced that there is a special campaign being directed against Protestant boys. That may be so, and we confess that we ourselves have wondered if it were not. However that may be, we are certain of another principle that is not often considered by Protestant parents nor by Protestant young people who contemplate marriage with Roman Catholics. It is this: When it comes to the "conversion" of Protestants to Romanism through matrimony, the Roman Catholic party, reinforced by his or her family and the priests who directly or indirectly control the whole campaign, enjoy an enormous advantage. In the first place, Protestant young people who keep company with Roman Catholic young people do so very often because they themselves have little connection with Protestantism. Hence they often have little to lose except a name in giving up Protestantism, and in many cases they are not informed as to what either church teaches. Religion seems to them in many cases to be nothing but an uncomfortable necessity for their elders and the sooner and more easily it can be disposed of, the better for all concerned. Such young people present an easy prey for the priests

and his pawns, for Roman Catholicism is a religion that is made-to-order for the indifferent, the worldly, the thoughtless, and those who are seeking a religion that makes a minimum of spiritual demands upon them. Romanism not only allows many amusements that are frowned upon by Protestants, it actually approves of them and utilizes them for her own ends. We need only refer to bingos and lotteries which provide priests with a large part of their income, without mentioning the easy attitude which Rome takes towards dancing, drinking, gambling, etc.

### Prevention Is Better Than Cure

Rome does not demand heart conviction, it is satisfied with assent; it does not expect the new convert to understand or even to try to understand, it is enough to give implicit faith, that is, blind acceptance. For those who are seeking for, or willing to accept a cut-rate religion, Rome's wares have a tremendous sales appeal over anything that Evangelical Protestantism can or will offer. Parents as well as young people need to keep the principles in mind.

As the above letter remind us, it is too late to do much about a "mixed marriage" when the ring has been bought, or even when the young people have fallen under the magic spell of love. It is then too late to tell them that what now seems love may turn to the bitterness of gall when religious controversy is introduced into the home and when a priest thrusts himself between a husband and wife and dictates to them the course they must follow in their married life and how they must bring up their children. The time to warn young people is before they are "keeping company", it is when they are little children, and the best antidote is a knowledge of the Word of God and a personal heart experience of the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then the Protestant young people will naturally seek their companionships among those of like precious faith and will be too wise to fall a prey to scheming ecclesiastical designs.

—W.S.W.

### 'GROW IN GRACE

Every soul that sees Jesus by faith is saved thereby. If I look to Christ with bleared eye, that is ever so weak and clouded with tears, and if I only catch a glimpse of him through clouds and mists, yet the sight saves me. But who will remain content with such a poor gleam of his glory as that? Who wishes to see only "through a glass, darkly?" No. let my eyes be cleansed till they become as doves by the rivers of waters, and I can see my Lord as he is seen by his bosom friends, and can sing of those beauties which are the light and crown of heaven itself. If you do but touch the hem of Jesus' garment, you shall be made whole; but will this always satisfy you? Will you not desire to get beyond the hem and beyond the garment, to himself, and to his heart, and there for ever take up your abode? Who desires to be for ever a babe in grace, with a half-awakened dreamy twilight consciousness of the Redeemer? Brethren, be diligent in the school of the cross, therein is enduring wisdom. Study your Saviour much. The science of Christ crucified is the most excellent of sciences; and to know him and the power of his resurrection, is to know that which is best worth knowing. Ignorance of Jesus deprives many saints of those divine raptures which carry others out of themselves, therefore let us be among those children of Zion who are taught of the Lord.

—C. H. SPURGEON.

## MORE OF QUEBEC'S BURNING HATRED

**H**APLESS and misguided people who dare to misname themselves "Jehovah's Witnesses" were put in jail in Quebec for distributing a pamphlet entitled "Quebec's Burning Hatred". THE GOSPEL WITNESS protested against this high-handed and arbitrary interpretation of the law and ventured to reprint the whole of the pamphlet in these pages. A few months ago the meeting house of the Christian Brethren was wrecked in Shawinigan Falls, Quebec, and we again took up the defense of their liberty to preach the Gospel. In last week's issue we discussed in the article, "No Religious Freedom in Quebec", another glaring example of Quebec's denial of religious freedom to Protestant minorities. Since that time, two more persons have been arrested for preaching on the street corner in Val d'Or, Quebec, making a total of ten thus far arrested and jailed for the supposed offense of exercising British liberty of speech. In another town, LaSarre, Quebec, a mob systematically abused other open-air preachers while a policeman stood idly by and refused to intervene. We suppose he was sent there by the ecclesiastical authorities of the town to indicate that in Quebec the first duty of policemen is not to enforce the law and guarantee peace and order, but rather to fulfill the chief duty of the civil state as demanded by the papal encyclical:

All who rule, therefore, should hold in honour the holy name of God, and one of their chief duties must be to favor religion, to protect it, to shield it under the credit and sanction of the laws and neither to organize nor enact any measure that may compromise its safety. This is the bounden duty of rulers to the people over whom they rule." (Encyclical Letter of Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei* on "The Christian Constitution of States").

The proper interpretation of the papal doctrine will be found in the intolerant and bigoted misconduct of the Romanist mobs, policemen, and priests, involved in these and in other acts of persecution in Roman Catholic Quebec. In the official language of the Church of Rome, "religion" means the Roman Catholic religion, no other being worthy of the name, and hence all others are to be harried and troubled by the civil governments under the direction of the priests. "The name of God" in these same papal documents is limited to the name of that church which is said to be endowed with the exclusive means of grace, and outside of which there is no salvation. All others are heretics, schismatics and infidels, and as such are worthy, according to the intolerance of Rome, of the same treatment that was dealt out to their spiritual forebears by the bloody Inquisition.

If the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of Quebec do not wish such pamphlets as "Quebec's Burning Hatred" to "stick", they should take immediate steps to revise their statutes and to instruct their law enforcement officers, including magistrates and policemen, to enforce the civil code of the Province rather than the Canon Law of the pope of Rome.

French-speaking and Roman Catholic Quebec objects to being described as backward in culture and education, or to being regarded by Protestants as a Pagan province. But it is giving us a fine demonstration of its reactionary policies in the civil realm and of its blind hatred of the Bible and the Gospel of grace in the religious realm.

—W.S.W.

## SEMINARY STUDENTS IN THE FIELD

**A**NOTHER issue of the students' *Newsletter* is off the mimeograph machine, reminding us among other things that there will be only one more edition before lectures commence again on Tuesday, September 26, a little more than a month away. Summer is almost ended, harvest is near! We have reason to believe that our student-workers will return to their classrooms rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them. We share the following excerpts with our readers:

### Courtland, Ontario

A faithful band of believers have laboured unceasingly in the neighbourhood of this church for many years and they are beginning to see some of the fruits of their labours. Student-Pastor John Eseppe writes thus of the cause:

The work here has been moving by the Grace of God. Four weeks of D.V.B.S. brings with it much joy, but weariness of body and mind. Preaching about seven times or more a week is a little hard in many ways. We have seen a few souls profess faith in Him, but what rejoices our hearts are the prospects of the future. We see great workings of God in our Church here, both in Courtland and in the new mission at Delhi. The presence of an ever-loving Saviour has been felt in my life during these summer months. As we seek to ascend the ladder of spirituality, His face can be seen ever more clearly. His grace which cannot be measured has been manifested in many ways.

Since the above lines were written, we learned with sincere regret that Mr. Eseppe was ordered to bed by his doctor. The latest reports indicate that the illness was not as serious as at first feared and that our brother has since then been preaching at the Sunday services. Mr. Donald Melville, one of our second-year men, has been assisting Mr. Eseppe in the very strenuous activities of the weekend on this field, which includes services in two places, two Sunday schools and several open-air meetings, which are largely attended.

### From a French-Canadian Student in Quebec

From Brother John Hurtubise now labouring in Malartic with his brother, Rev. Yvon Hurtubise, comes the following report of visitation work:

My work this summer has been visiting those who have listened to our radio programme and have written to obtain a French New Testament. First of all we visited between Sudbury and Timmins, then went between Ottawa and Cornwall, and now I am in Quebec visiting between Ville Marie and Malartic with my brother, Yvon.

This work is not very encouraging sometimes, because many times we travel many miles trying to find someone who has written to us, and when we do find, we get the answer that they are not interested and have been burning our papers since they received them because the priest told them to do so. But among these we find some who are really seeking for the truth and in this we rejoice. I hope that you will remember in your prayers a family which we visited in Quebec. We had trouble in finding them, but our hearts rejoiced to see what the Lord had done with them just by the paper that is sent to them every month. When we left they asked us to send six New Testaments and a quantity of tracts that they may give them to their neighbours. This we did, and two weeks later we received a letter saying that they had given out all those and wanted some more. So God has blessed that family and we hope He will bless their work also.

### Vacation Bible School Work

A number of D.V.B.S. programmes have been carried



on by our lady-students, among others that at Essex, where a time of blessing was experienced, and that at Bobcaygeon, where the Misses Doris Orrit and Betty Newman are now labouring. And those who fancy that our use of the word "labouring" in this connection is a figure of speech, may apply for further information to those who know by experience. But again, the good seed implanted in the minds of children will not go unblest or unfruitful.

#### From France and Switzerland

From two graduates of last year's class now in Europe, Messrs. Appéré and Bauman, come messages of welcome home and of warm Christian fellowship with those of like precious faith. We are eagerly looking for news from these brethren in the near future, and in the meantime would assure them of our most earnest prayers as they take up their labours in that far-off field which is white unto harvest. —W.S.W.

### BRAINERD AND THE INDIAN REVIVAL

THE name of David Brainerd, like that of Robert M'Cheyne and Henry Martyn, lingers in the memory of the Church with a haunting sweetness. His life was brief, but the influence of his devoted spirit is felt to this day, moving men to a noble self-forgetting. In the great story of Revival his place is assured. Answering the question, "What can be done in order to revive the work of God where it is decayed?" John Wesley replied, "Let every preacher read carefully over the life of David Brainerd."

He was born in 1718 near Hartford, Conn., and was early orphaned. He inherited a constitutional weakness, and the seeds of consumption were early sown in his feeble frame. Throughout his life he fought a losing battle with this terrible physical foe. But his story is like that of Turner of Peterhead, and shows how weakness itself, linked by faith to the power of God, can triumph gloriously.

He was trained at Yale College, and in 1742 he was licensed to preach the Gospel. At first his desire had been to evangelize the heathen abroad, but his eyes were now open to the needs of the poor Indians of his own land. Miserably debased by the white man's vices, and despised as an inferior creation, he saw in them souls for whom Christ had died, a field ready for harvest. Eagerly he accepted the appointment of the Scottish Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge amongst the Indians.

He had little success in his first setting out. His station was at Kaunaumek, in New York Province, "a most lonesome wilderness," where he lodged on a heap of straw. The Indians were indifferent or suspicious, while the white settlers bitterly resented his presence. His health began to decline rapidly, and after a year of unremitting toil and hardship, he was forced to retire from the field.

He was soon invited to the pastorate of several New England churches. The temptation to settle in East Hampton was especially great. Here, in a lovely country, amid a wealthy and kindly people, he might recover his strength, and spend happy and useful days. The tender tie of a pure affection for the daughter of Jonathan Edwards also constrained him to stay. His experience at Kaunaumek had clearly shown him that the Indian

wilderness held for him certain and speedy death, and what fruit had he to show for his labour? Surely then in this sweet clime, where health and love and delightful service awaited him, he should cast his lot. But as Brainerd hesitated, hesitated literally between life and death, he heard from the far-off woods a pathetic cry. It was the wail of "his poor Indians." No man cared for their souls! They, too, were calling him, and turning from the white church, taking his life in his hands, he set out again for the Indian wigwams. This was the decisive moment in his life. Had he settled amongst the good folk at East Hampton, he would in all probability have regained his health and discharged a faithful ministry. But we should never then have heard of David Brainerd. He deliberately cut short his days, but in the brief moment of life that remained to him, he accomplished a glorious work and unlocked a spring of heroic inspiration for generations to come. He made the uttermost sacrifice, and God gave him the uttermost reward. Henceforth his journal is the record of constant journeyings among his poor Indians, covering more than 3,000 miles, through pathless forests, over dark, dangerous mountains, in fierce rains and freezing cold. His body was reduced to a pitiable state of extreme weakness. But as his strength ebbed his compassion grew, grew till it became a great hunger that would not be denied. Whole nights were spent in agonizing prayer in the dark woods, his clothes drenched with the sweat of his travail.

Just at this point, on the very eve of Revival, he felt a strange straitening. God seemed to desert him. His message began to halt. Like John Livingston at Shotts, before the great outpouring, he was made to feel that he was indeed but a man, that the blessing must come from above. When Brainerd, in utterly humility, acquiesced in this, all was ready for the forthputting of the mighty power of God.

Suddenly—how often must that word be used in the history of Revival!—suddenly, the Spirit was outpoured upon the whole region of the Susquehanna. His first audience there had consisted of four women and a few children. Now there came streaming in, upon him from all sides a host of men and women, who pressed upon him, and grasping the bridle of his horse, besought him with intense earnestness to tell them the way of salvation. In a great, glad wonder he looked upon them, and the text that leaped to his lips was, "Herein is love."

Men fell at his feet in anguish of soul. These were men who could bear the most acute torture without flinching. But God's arrow had now pierced them; their pain could not be concealed and they cried out in their distress "Have mercy upon me." What impressed Brainerd most deeply was that though these people came to him in a multitude, each one was mourning apart. The prophecy of Zechariah was fulfilled before his eyes. The woods were filled with the sound of a great mourning, and beneath the Cross every man felt as if he and the Saviour God alone were there. Gradually as the missionary spoke, there came to them one by one, the peace and comfort of the Gospel. As the days passed he had full proof that a Heaven-sent Revival had come. A passion for righteousness possessed the converts. The wretched victims of the fire-water were delivered, and the Indian camps were cleansed at once from their physical and moral filthiness. The love of Christ expelled every unlovely thing. As one poor woman expressed it, "Me to be Him for all," became the motto of their lives:



They became themselves ardent missionaries of the Cross. The Light spread throughout all that dark region, and a strong Indian Church was established.

Brainerd's work was done. His body, utterly exhausted by his labours, was quickly mastered by disease. But what mattered that? It had been the means of a triumphant work of faith. It endured until the Divine Purpose had its perfect fulfilment, and when in 1747, in the house of Jonathan Edwards, he breathed his last, he died in an ecstasy of joy.

### A PROFITABLE RACKET

THE following news item appeared in our Toronto papers of recent date and we reprint it here for the benefit of any of our readers who might be interested in calculating the probable profits of the many Roman Catholic priests who engage in the business of gambling by means of lotteries and bingos.

#### Swindles Two Priests by Lottery Promise

Montreal, Aug. 19—(CP)—Emile Provencal, 32, who allegedly swindled two Roman Catholic priests in Megantic county of \$1,200 by posing as a postal inspector, was arraigned yesterday on charges of fraud.

Preliminary hearing was set for August 24. Bail was fixed at \$950 bond or \$200 cash.

Provencal is alleged to have obtained \$700 from Rev. Roland Mainguy and \$500 from Rev. Alphonse Delandes by pretending he could arrange for the priests to use the mails for the sale of lottery tickets for charitable purposes.

Without doubt the racketeer who allegedly posed as a postal inspector in order to mulct large sums from these priests will be punished to the full extent of the law — as he richly deserves to be. The Canada Post Office does not view lightly the crime of stealing from His Majesty's mail or of using his name in order to swindle His Majesty's subjects. But what shall we say of the two alleged priests of the Most High God who seek to use the mails in order to engage in the sordid business of gambling that wrecks the lives of men and women and is invariably allied with every sort of crime known to the underworld? And in addition to that, they apparently sought to use the mails illegally and to that end had also taken steps to bribe one whom they supposed to be a servant of the state. If the man who accepted these large bribes is reprehensible, what shall we say of those who offered him the bribe? Are they less blameworthy or more because of their religious profession and their ecclesiastical office?

While we are speaking of the moral and religious aspect of the attempted bribery and corruption of these Roman priests, there is also the legal aspect of the case. If it is a crime in the eyes of the law to accept a bribe for misuse of the mails, is it not also, for the same reason, a crime to offer a bribe? It will be interesting to see if any charge is laid against the priestly accomplices of this swindling rogue.

But what shall we say of the immense profits of this racket which enables two Megantic county priests to have at their disposal large sums of money to buy their way into a criminal misuse of His Majesty's mail? A couple were recently arraigned before a magistrate in Toronto for acting as agents of one of the gigantic sweepstakes conducted by the government of a certain Roman Catholic country. They were fined large amounts. Why should not these priests and their many fellow-gambling agents throughout Quebec and Ontario be likewise brought to

justice as professional gambling agents? If they were, one of the richest sources of income of the Church of Rome would disappear overnight. In view of this, it is perhaps too much to hope for such a demonstration of justice. —W.S.W.

### A LIFE HIDDEN IN CHRIST

My life—so frail that an insect can consume it, a lamp, flickering so that a breath might blow it out—that is my life in itself; but hidden in Christ, hidden in God, hidden in the living Vine, part of the fellowship divine, "I can the darkening universe defy to quench my immortality, or shake-my trust in God."

—JOSEPH PARKER.

## Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 15 Third Quarter Lesson 10 September 3, 1950

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

### THE TEMPLE FOUNDATIONS LAID

Lesson Text: Ezra 3.

Golden Text: "O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever."—Psalm 136:1.

I. The Feast of Tabernacles: verses 1-7.

During the year following the decree of Cyrus in 536 B.C., which gave the Jewish exiles permission to return to the homeland, about 50,000 took advantage of his kindness, and in accordance with the plan and purpose of God took up their abode in their beloved Palestine (Ezra 2). For a few months they were busy making homes among the ruins, but from the first their thoughts were centred upon the erection of a temple wherein they might worship God according to His commandments. The chief men gave liberally toward the purchasing of materials (Ezra 2:68, 69).

As the seventh month of the sacred year approached, the appointed time for the Feast of Tabernacles, the Jews determined to keep the memorial feast (Lev. 23:33-43; Neh. 8:14, 17), in spite of the fact that the temple had not yet been built. The festival would be held on the 15th day of the month, but before participating in that holy ordinance, the people must be prepared in heart (2 Chron. 19:3; 27:6; Ezra 7:10). Accordingly, on the 1st day of the month they all gathered in Jerusalem for a holy convocation (v. 6). The Feast of Tabernacles looked backward to their redemption from Egypt and forward to their restoration (Lev. 23:42, 43; Zech. 14:16-19; Rev. 21:3). This particular celebration of the feast was thus full of significance: the people had once again been delivered from bondage, and they were assembling once again in their own land.

The leaders of the returning exiles took the first step in restoring the ceremonies of their worship. Joshua, the high priest, was the grandson of Seraiah, the high priest who had been put to death by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (2 Kings 25:18-21), and son of Jozadak or Josedech, who had been carried captive into Babylon and had died in exile (1 Chron. 6:14, 15). Zerubbabel, the civil leader, the natural son of Pedaiah (1 Chron. 3:17-19), was the adopted son of Shealtiel (Hagg. 1:1, 12; 2:23) and was in reality the heir to the throne, being called Prince Sheshazzar by the Persians (Ezra 1:8; 5:14-16).

The first essential element in the worship of the Lord was the erection of the altar of sacrifice (Gen. 35:5, 6; Deut. 12:5-8). This is the first step toward God in the individual life as well. Let us give God the first place in our hearts, homes, community and nation (Exod. 20:3-5). The leaders realized the necessity of restoring the altar as a means of keeping the Israelites true to the Lord when they were living in the midst of idolatry (v. 3; Deut. 26:16-19). We, too, live in a generation of idolaters: all about us are those who worship self, pleasure, force or gold, rather than God (2 Tim. 3:1-7).

The altar was reared upon the old foundations, still in their original position. Let us return to the reality of our first love (Psa. 51:12; Jer. 6:16; Rev. 2:4, 5; 3:3). The

burnt-offerings were sacrificed in order that the sins of the past might be atoned for (Numb. 29:12-39), and as a token of the consecration of the people to God. These sacrifices were also pledges of their obedience to the laws of God. Again, they must bring their burnt-offerings, if they would call upon the Lord for His blessing upon their undertaking—the rebuilding of the temple (Psa. 127:1; 1 Cor. 3:11).

The daily offerings, the continual burnt-offering (Exod. 29:38) and all the appointed feasts (Numb. 29:39) would henceforth be maintained. All of these ceremonies were preliminary to the erection of the temple, for which preparations in the way of men and materials were already being made (v. 7; Ezra 2:68, 69).

**II. The Foundations of the Temple: verses 8-13.**

“Order is heaven’s first law,” and order in the church of God is a token that His Spirit has control (1 Cor. 14:40). It is according to the purpose of God that each Christian, each member of His body, should perform his own function in co-ordination and in co-operation with his brethren (1 Cor. 12:4-30). The Levites from twenty years old and upwards were to be overseers in the work of building the temple (1 Chron. 23:24). The Jeshua mentioned in verse 9 is not Jeshua or Joshua the high priest (vv. 2, 8), but Jeshua the Levite (Ezra 2:40).

When the builders laid the foundations of the temple, the children of Israel celebrated the historic occasion with great rejoicing, just as present-day Christians do when the cornerstone of a church is set in its place. The priests in their new robes (Ezra 2:69) with trumpets in their hands (Numb. 10:8; 1 Chron. 15:24); and the Levites with cymbals (1 Chron. 15:16) led in the service of praise. There is a difference between Levites and priests (2 Chron. 35:10). The Levites, the descendants of Levi, son of Jacob, helped in the tabernacle and later in the temple in a minor capacity (1 Chron. 6:48), but only those Levites who were of the family of Aaron could act as priests (Numb. 3:10, 17, 19, 27-32). Those Levites who were of the family of Asaph were traditionally in charge of the service of praise, according to the command of King David (1 Chron. 6:31-39; 15:17; 16:4, 5; 25:1, 2; Neh. 7:44; 11: 22, 23). The name of Asaph himself, David’s celebrated musician and seer (2 Chron. 29:30), is prefixed to 12 Psalms (Psa. 50, 73-83).

The Hebrew choirs were divided into two sections, as they frequently sang antiphonally; that is, one choir would sing a refrain, then the other choir would answer. The Psalm used in the service of dedication (v. 11; Psa. 136; 1 Chron. 16:34, 41; 2 Chron. 5:13; 7:36) is one of the Psalms written to be sung in this manner (See also Psa. 24, 29, 67, 124). The

phrase “sang together by course” may refer to this antiphonal singing, or it may refer to the fact that the members of the choirs, like the priests, were organized to serve in turn (1 Chron. 25:8-31).

The people took part in this glorious service of praise, as well as priests, Levites and choirs. Such united and sincere praise to the Lord is most acceptable to Him, and is a means of grace and victory (Josh. 6:16, 20; Psa. 92:1-4; Neh. 8:10; Heb. 13:15).

Sadness was mingled with their gladness; wails of sorrow accompanied the shouts of joy. It is ever so in life. When the Feast of Tabernacles was first celebrated, the people brought branches of palm trees in one hand and willows in the other (Lev. 23:40); the palm which speaks of triumph (John 12:12, 13) and the willow which signifies sorrow (Psa. 137:1-4). Those who had known the size, glory and beauty of Solomon’s temple wept when they contrasted it with the present small, partly-built structure, rising in the midst of utter desolation (1 Kings 7:9, 10; Hagg. 2:13). The people were few compared with the great throngs of former days. Moreover, they missed the sacred ark and the Shekinah glory, visible tokens of the presence of God (1 Sam. 4:21; 1 Kings 8:11; 2 Chron. 5:14; 7:2). Yet, in one important particular the temple of the restoration far surpassed the temple made by Solomon. It would be graced by the personal presence and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ (Hagg. 2:9). The Saviour Himself, God in the flesh, would walk within its sacred precincts, and teach in its courts.

**FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS:**

Teach the children the meaning and value of the services of the church. Show them that it is the Father’s will that all who can should gather in His house on His day to worship Him and to hear His word read and explained. Point out the fact that Christ is the only foundation for true living (1 Cor. 3:11).

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS**

- Aug. 28—The First Feast of Tabernacles ..... Lev. 23:33-43.
- Aug. 29—Another Feast of Tabernacles ..... Zech. 14:16-21.
- Aug. 30—The Great Feast of Tabernacles John 7:1-14, 37-39.
- Aug. 31—The Foundations of the First Temple ..... 2 Chron. 3.
- Sept. 1—The Glory of the First Temple ..... 2 Chron. 5.
- Sept. 2—The Psalm of Praise ..... Psa. 136.
- Sept. 3—The One Foundation ..... 1 Cor. 3.

**SUGGESTED HYMNS**

I love Thy Kingdom, Lord. O day of rest and gladness.  
Pleasant are Thy courts above. The Church’s one foundation.  
We love the place, O God. Sweet is the work.

**THE GOSPEL WITNESS,  
130 Gerrard Street East,  
Toronto 2, Ontario, Canada**

**ORDER FORM**

Enclosed find \$..... to be applied as follows:—

- A subscription to *The Gospel Witness* ..... \$3.00
- Renewal of subscription to *The Gospel Witness* .. \$3.00
- The Priest, The Woman and The Confessional* ..... \$1.00
- The Plot That Failed* ..... \$2.00
- Other Little Ships* ..... \$2.00

NAME .....

STREET .....

CITY OR TOWN ..... PROVINCE .....

The following books are offered as premiums to subscribers to **THE GOSPEL WITNESS**. Check the one you wish to receive:

- 1. *The Papacy, in the Light of Scripture*, by Dr. T. T. Shields.
- 2. *The Greatest Fight in the World*, by Rev. Chas. H. Spurgeon.
- 3. *Russellism, or Rutherfordism (Jehovah’s Witnesses)*, by Dr. T. T. Shields.

NOTE:—If cheque is used other than drawn on a Toronto Bank 15c exchange should be added.  
U.S.A. subscribers kindly do not use Postal Notes.