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The Jarvis Street Pulpit

In View of the Pope's Pronouncement, November 1, How Can Bible-Believing Protestants Be Silent?

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, November 5th, 1950
(Electrically Recorded)

"I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me. For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision daily. Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay."—Jeremiah 20:7-9.

"And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so. Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee."—1 Kings 22:20-23.

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." (English words change in the course of time in their use. That word "let", which so often now is used in a permissive sense, is used here as a hindrance: "He that now (hindereth) will (hinder) until he be taken out of the way.")

"Then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."—2 Thess. 2:3, 4, 7-12.

IT is given to some of the Lord's prophets to proclaim truths which are as unpalatable to themselves as they are unpopular with those to whom they are proclaimed. But whether people will hear or forbear, the faithful prophet must declare the whole counsel of God.

It was so with Jeremiah. Living in a day of general apostasy, when the whole nation had turned away from God, he was commissioned of the Lord to warn his nation of the inevitable consequences of such apostasy. And it cost him much. "The word of the Lord," he tells us in the text I have quoted, "was made a reproach . . . and

a derision daily." He was mocked at; he was scorned; he was held up to contempt, because he proclaimed the word of the Lord. At length the weakness of his human nature—and prophets and preachers are just human you know—except the pope!—but in the weakness of his human nature Jeremiah decided he would not prophesy any more. If the people wanted to go to the precipice, then let them go; if they were determined to continue in iniquity, and pay the inevitable price, that was their responsibility. Why should he endure the obloquy attached to faithfulness in such matters? But it did not

last long, for he was a true prophet of the Lord. He said, "I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." He only is a true prophet of the Lord in whose heart the word of the Lord is as a burning fire, and who speaks because he must speak.

The Duty to Tell the Truth

It is incumbent upon the physician that he should watch for symptoms of disease, especially when any particular disease is epidemic, and that he should warn its victim of its ravages. Any and every teacher must combat error as vigorously as he commends the truth. If it were not so serious it would be positively amusing to hear some very pacifically minded people say, "I do not believe in controversy," and immediately they start one! Of course they believe in controversy. The man who said so probably had one with his wife not long ago, or the lady who said so had rather a fierce controversy with some of her children. You cannot teach mathematics without controversy. Even the multiplication table has it in it, and when the pupil goes wrong the teacher must say, "No, that is wrong," and must correct him or her. You cannot teach history without controversy. You must compare one record with another, and by weighing the balance of evidence very often reach a rational conclusion, but in the process you cannot escape controversy. You have to controvert one position by bringing to bear upon it another. You cannot teach science without controversy. Science has not reached finality, and it is of its very essence that it should discover its own mistakes, and be responsive to others' discovery of its errors, so that it may be put right. On all planes of human knowledge we must engage in controversy, that is, we must weigh truth against error. You cannot escape it.

What Is Freedom?

There could be no freedom politically, educationally, or religiously, if we were not at liberty to controvert that which we hold to be erroneous. Whether we are right or wrong, we have a right to say, "I do not believe that," and to give our reason for refusing to believe it. And any preacher, to be true, must expose error, like the physician. The man says, "I am all right, there is nothing wrong with me; I do not feel any pain." "No," says his doctor, "but I am a little bit suspicious. I think we will have an X-ray." "What do I want an X-ray for? I am all right." "Yes, of course you are. I hope you are, but we will see." And so the man is exposed to this penetrating light, and the department of the interior is portrayed in due course upon the film, and the physician and surgeon are able to examine it, and to tell the man whether his opinion that he is all right is well grounded. But if they find an alien thing there, which has the seed of death within it, the faithful physician will say, "I am sorry my friend, you feel all right, but you are not all right." And so they engage in controversy.

All our highways bear witness to that principle. You are bowling along on a level, and suddenly you see a sign, "Steep hill, drive carefully," and immediately you reduce your speed. Why should anybody bother you? If you want to go down hill at seventy miles an hour why shouldn't they let you? Well, because the Highway Department wants to save your life, that is why. Presently you read, "Dangerous when wet," and when you come

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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

to a wet spot in the road, a little bit greasy, you slow down. You are going along to a given place, and you see a sign, "Not a through street." What do you do? Go right on till you run into a stone wall? Do you? Not if you have any sense. You turn back, that is all. "Soft shoulders." Why the sign? Why should they bother me if I want to drive on the side and get into the ditch? That is my business. But not in a civilized community, my friend.

I have said this only to show you how utterly absurd the position taken by a great many religious people is, when they say, "I do not believe in controversy." Controversies of one sort and another mark out the whole pathway of life; and are indispensable to the discovery of truth, and to any progress in righteousness.

I can sympathize with Jeremiah. I have had to deal with unpopular subjects, as you all know. I have endeavoured to warn people these many years against the encroachments of Modernism. I told them it was that, I told them what it was doing, and in my own Denomination for my pains was simply called a liar. Well, that is not surprising, and I am sure it has not been without effect. Many have been awakened, and so with Romanism. I have warned the country against it from this pulpit, haven't I, until some people have said, "I wish he would preach the Gospel." You poor simpleton! Don't you know that that is what I am doing? Don't you know that Romanism is the very antithesis of the Gospel at every point? "O well, I don't want to be bothered." No! There are some people who are experts at diagnosing disease by means of a post mortem examination; they can tell you exactly what the man died of when he is dead.

Optimists and Pessimists

I heard, when crossing the sea once, from a South African multi-millionaire, a definition of an optimist. I had heard a hundred. He said, "I suppose you have heard many." I said, "Yes." "Well let me give you another one—a differentiation between an optimist and a pessimist." I said, "All right, what is it?" "An opti-

mist," he said, "is one who does not care what happens, so long as it does not happen to him; and a pessimist is one who has lived too long with an optimist." I have lived a long time with optimists, poor little shrivelled up souls, who say, "I just want to know how to be saved, and as long as I know that I don't care." That is not Christian. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." You must be interested in other people besides yourself. There is war in Korea. "I don't care, as long as it doesn't come to Canada." The world is half full of idiots like that, because that is what they are.

Endeavoured to Wake Up Canada

I have endeavoured to wake up Canada to the menace of Romanism, to wake it up before it plunges this country into a bloody civil war; and as sure as you are alive, we are on the way to it right now. Even such a man as Lord Bennett, former Prime Minister of this country, the last time he was in Canada, when he called to see me said, "Dr. Shields, I can see, and I think I know Canada, absolutely nothing in prospect that can avert a bloody civil war in this country." Nor can I. For anybody with discernment, it is within sight. I must confess that I have been, like Jeremiah, tempted to weariness. I have felt like saying, "If they do not like it, why should I bother; if they would rather have bullets than ballots, let them have them." But like Jeremiah, the word of the Lord is as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with forbearing, and I cannot stay. I cannot understand how Protestants can even read the papers with their reports of these idolatrous proceedings in Rome without being filled with a holy anger. If people do not heed the watchman's warning, then their blood must be upon their own head.

The Recent Papal Pronouncement

The recent papal pronouncement is but a straw in the wind. Everywhere he is being put forward by Romanists as the one and only qualified ruler of the whole world; and in these days of ecumenism, when carnally minded people who care nothing about the principles of Christ's Gospel, but are obsessed with organizational bigness, are endeavouring to get them all together and make a great big organization, such propaganda is a truly terrible potential danger.

Our difficulty today is that Protestantism is largely devoid, destitute, of Biblical conviction and spiritual passion and power.

Last Sunday's Sermon

I said to you last Sunday evening that there had been only three formal authoritative definitions made by the Roman Catholic church within a century, that is including the one made November first—two before that. One was in 1854, the doctrine of the immaculate conception, which is to the effect that Mary was born without sin. That has nothing to do with the conception of Christ, but with the conception of Mary. Mary came into this world a sinless woman. Then in 1870 another doctrine, long preached, but never formally defined until then — the doctrine of papal infallibility was defined and proclaimed and promulgated—that the pope was infallible, not in everything, but infallible when he speaks *ex cathedra*, in his official capacity on questions of morals and religion, as for example, last Wednesday. When he speaks on a subject like that that is the last word. An infallible voice has now spoken, and the

Catholics of the world are required to accept it, or expose themselves to the charge of heresy, and consequent excommunication, which means by implication, the damnation of the soul.

The Fourth Papal Definition

You must see therefore that these three definitions were closely related—the one of 1854, the immaculate conception, and the one of last Wednesday, the bodily assumption of Mary into heaven, teaching, so they say, that as the soul of Mary was preserved from contact with sin, so her body, like that of Christ, was preserved from corruption, and was carried living into heaven. And that doctrine is proclaimed by an infallible pope, so you will see how they work together.

Mr. Slade read the account of the proofs of the resurrection given in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians this evening. Did you notice how very particular the Holy Ghost is to supply adequate proof of the resurrection of our Lord? "He shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs." I haven't time to go into that, but I use it as an illustration. Then when Paul introduces the great doctrine of the resurrection in the fifteenth of First Corinthians, he says, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." He isn't content with just making that as a declaration, he proceeds thereafter to bring forth his witnesses, and to show by how many the truth of the resurrection was observed, "and last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."

The Resurrection of Christ

So then we hold, and I think it is held by Christendom generally, that there is no fact of history more indubitably established than the fact of the resurrection of Christ. The "Assumption" that was proclaimed last Wednesday was not observed by anybody. I repeat for those of you who may not have been here last Sunday this one word. Nobody knows when Mary died. There are differences of opinion as to whether it was three or fifteen years after the ascension of the Lord Jesus, but certainly nobody knows when. Nobody knows where; nobody knows where her tomb was, whether in Jerusalem or Ephesus, but a legend says that the apostles gathered about her bedside, one of them only being absent, Thomas, and after her burial, Thomas arrived, late as usual, and he demanded that the tomb be opened. He wanted to see Mary. When they opened the tomb, so it is alleged, it was empty, and so they concluded that angels had taken the body of Mary, that she was raised from the dead, and they had taken the body into heaven. Nobody saw her after her resurrection, nobody saw anything about it, nobody heard anything about it, for four hundred years. Then it was invented, and it gradually gained credence among "the faithful", and has for some centuries been believed by devout Catholics.

You can see the object of it. We believe there is one Mediator — Roman Catholicism believes that there are many, but chief among them is Mary. Jesus ascended into heaven, raised from the dead, and entered into the holy place, there to appear in the presence of God for us. But Rome teaches you cannot approach Christ directly, you must approach Him through Mary. Therefore they had to get Mary into heaven somehow, and they

did it. I have some newspaper clippings here, but I won't take time to read them—the pronouncement made by the pope, that at long last in the year 1950, an infallible voice has declared that Mary in her body is now in heaven, and you must believe it. This time last week it was optional. You didn't need to believe it up to Tuesday night, but after Wednesday, to refuse to believe it was to be guilty of heresy, and therefore, if Rome had the power, subject to the death penalty; for the church even now teaches that she has the right to exterminate heretics, on the ground that heresy is the worst of all crimes. Not to disbelieve in the Lord Jesus, but to refuse to believe in the accumulations of tradition with which they have covered up the Gospel of Christ.

A Psychological Phenomenon

I want you to look at this matter, as A RELIGIOUS PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENON. Here is something which has no Scriptural basis, by their own acknowledgment. Absolutely none. The Bible hasn't a word to say about it. There is wanting, entirely wanting, any vestige of historical support. There is nothing to support the contention that the body of Mary is in heaven, any more than there would be a contention that the body of your grandfather is there. Not a bit. And yet, all over the world, in Toronto, all through this country, wherever "the faithful", as they call them, were to be found, they left their places of business, their offices, shops and what not, and went to church, to help celebrate the proclamation of one of the most obvious lies that was ever foisted upon the human intellect. Listen—four hundred millions of people are now theoretically commanded to believe a lie, or be damned! I said last Sunday night that I would be damned before I would believe it.

Now if this latest pronouncement does not stir Protestants and Protestantism, can you tell me what will? Some religious charlatan comes to Toronto with his anointing of oil and all that kind of thing, professing to heal the sick; and people shrug their shoulders and say, "Oh well, just a little bit of fanaticism you know." I could pack this church every night next week if I would just go to the drug store and get a little vial of oil, and announce that I would anoint you all and heal you. They would fall over each other to come. There wouldn't be any truth in it—there wouldn't need to be any truth in it, but other people, the intelligentsia, wouldn't come. Oh no. "What fanaticism," they would say. And yet, the Roman Catholic church can advertise miracles—St. Anne de Beaupre; Brother Andre, the shrine at Midland, (a lot of martyred "saints", who were slain by the Indians, not for their religion, but for their irreligion). And that all over the world.

The Ottawa Marian Congress

We had a procession in Ottawa a little while ago, a wooden image carted all through this country. They were flying that image to India, the image of the virgin, and the plane crashed, and all the crew were killed. The paper didn't say a word about what happened to the image. But thousands have bowed down before it. You must not call that fanaticism, or a superstition. You must not say anything against that; you must accept that as a fact. Why should the absurdities, and superstitions, and ever-multiplying palpable falsehoods of Roman Catholicism be regarded as sacrosanct? I see no sacrosanctity about them: I will denounce them for the strong satanic delusions they undoubtedly are.

Romanism An Idolatrous System

Roman Catholicism is an idolatrous system, founded on a lie. It is founded on a perversion of Scripture, and a perversion of history; and from foundation to topstone it is a fabrication of falsehoods; its whole history reeks with it. It is a "refuge of lies", which the inevitable judgment shall sweep away. Yet our newspapers give them millions of dollars of free advertising. Here is a photograph of his holiness, or his wickedness, or whatever you like to call him, carried on a temporary throne, with his bejewelled mitre. I am pointing out to you that this is a psychological phenomenon. Why will people believe and respect that nonsense, when they hold in contempt events which make a much lesser demand upon human credulity than this? Why do people believe it? I can understand belief of the truth, can't you? When a certain thing is said to be true, and that statement is supported by indubitable proof, as in a court of law; one must believe the demonstrated facts of the case. What else can one do with the truth? You can do nothing with the truth but believe it.

Why Should People Believe a Lie?

But why should people believe a lie? I read to you that story of Micaiah, who said to Ahab, "The Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets." For years I was afraid to read that in public; I knew there was an explanation, but I said, "What in the world can it be?" A lying spirit from the Lord! I know now. It is perfectly simple. Ahab spent his life in an endeavour to silence every voice that told him the truth. He cut the heads off the prophets, and would have slain Elijah if he could have got his hands on him. He simply would not hear the truth, and so he had four hundred prophets to tell him what to do, and they told him to do just exactly what he wanted to do, and he believed them. The one prophet who dissented said that the explanation of that unanimity was that "the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets." Was there any injustice in that? A man can ask for a lie for so long that at last God will let him have what he wants.

What Is Man's Charge Against God?

What is man's charge against God? Why his rebellion? He says, "I want to have my own way, I want to believe what I like," until at last the Lord says to the persistent rebel, "You may have your own way, you may believe what you like. I made you a free agent, and if you prefer a lie to the truth, have it." Do you know what happens then? The worst judgment of all is no judgment at all. When a man is allowed to have his own way he throws the rein on the neck of his lusts, and gallops at breakneck speed to the precipice. It is a terrible thing to be allowed to have your own way, but you may have it.

What does this text say? How does it come about? Well, the Roman Catholic church secures control of education. We are going to have the Provincial Education Report, so we are told—after waiting six years. It has been six years in preparation, and the reason it hasn't come before is because a minority of Roman Catholics object to it. What do they want? They want ninety percent of the cost of education, and in some cases ninety-five percent, paid out of public money. What for? For the propagation of these damnable lies to the little children of our country; for the dissemination of the

sum of these falsehoods which constitute part of this strong delusion. That is what for. Protestants, poor fools that we are, are willing to let them have their own way. That is the entail of George Drew, and Mitchell Hepburn, and if the people of this Province are so utterly foolish as to elect conscienceless men of that ilk to office, we shall have civil war one of these days.

I am profoundly convinced that the Antichrist is here. The Roman Catholic church is the Antichrist. But some of you say, "Dr. Schofield doesn't say so." Dr. Schofield says some good things evangelically, but eschatologically he has written more nonsense and more rubbish in the Schofield Bible than I have ever found between the two covers of any book. What is the Roman Catholic church if it is not Antichrist? It claims to be the church of Christ. Is it? Can it be? If it is we ought all to belong to it, and if it is not we ought all to fight it with might and main. There is no neutral ground.

"The Mystery of Iniquity"

What is this Antichrist? "The mystery of iniquity doth already work." In apostolic times it was working, but under cover, yet working from its satanic source. The mystery of iniquity as against the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh. As surely as Christ came, Antichrist is here; the perpetual person of the papacy is here, and "he who now (hindereth) will (hinder) until he be taken out of the way."

Who Is or Was the Hinderer?

There are all sorts of guesses as to who the hinderer is or was. The mystery of iniquity did not become apparent until papal Rome assumed all the authority of political Rome. My own belief is that it was the Roman Empire that temporarily kept the mystery of iniquity from manifesting itself.

But What Does the Scripture Say?

Who is he? Somebody whose coming is "after the working of Satan"; and if the Roman Catholic church is not the masterpiece of Satan himself, then I do not know what could be so described on this earth. And what is he to show? "With all power and signs and lying wonders." You are foolish if you deny the power of the Roman Catholic church. It is the most powerful organization on earth; it is the wealthiest corporation on earth; it could buy out all Governments if it would. It works "with all deceivableness of unrighteousness". If you want to know the meaning of that great phrase, just cross swords with Romanism, and you will know something about the deceivableness of unrighteousness. You will see it in Ottawa, you will see it in Queen's Park in Toronto, you will see it in Washington, you will see it in London, you will see it everywhere; you will see it in the army, you will see it in the navy, you will see it in the great financial corporations, and see how they obtain control of so many of them; you will see it in the way they acquire real estate all over the world.

At the time of the Reformation the church owned more than half of the land on the Continent of Europe. How much they own of this country I do not know, but they own a very very big slice of it. If you want to see something, when you go along St. Clair Avenue, after you pass the stop-light at Spadina Road, just look on the right side and you will see the church of the Holy Rosary. Past that you will find a bridge and on the left hand side a ravine, but on the right hand side of the bridge

you will find the ravine has been filled up. It was made a dumping ground for our city waste, and a very convenient dumping ground it was too, and now (it isn't finished yet) if you pass by there in the daytime you will see a procession of great trucks all day long, loaded with top-soil, making a magnificent piece of lawn. There is the church, and there is a great school on Bathurst St. separated by a ravine now filled up at the City's expense. I tried to find out what that ravine cost some years ago, but no one could find out. They paid something and then they gave it back, and they paid something and gave it back, and played a game of battledore and shuttlecock, until I do not believe a lawyer on earth could find out how they managed to get it for nothing. But they have, and that is what they do everywhere. After a while in Canada they will own most of the country—much of it obtained by unblushing theft, as they did in Europe.

"With all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish." This is a perfect portrait of the Papacy.

I wish I had time to take you into the seventh and eighteenth Chapters of the Book of Revelation. Maybe I will return to it later, I do not know. Our Millennial friends have given us a doctrine known as Futurism, and they tell us that the Antichrist is not here, and he never will be here and nobody will ever know a thing about him until after the church has been raptured and taken out of the way. Then Antichrist will be revealed. Well, if the papacy is not Antichrist, tell me what it is, will you?

The Pope's Bejewelled Mitre

When I read this about the pope, with his bejewelled mitre, the whole scene the very apotheosis of worldly wealth and pomp and power, carried on a temporary throne (I have been there, and seen all this stuff; I have been through the Vatican, and it screams at you, its wealth is so enormous; jewels galore) — when I read that I said to myself, "I have heard of One who laid aside His garments, and took a towel, and girded himself, and began to wash the disciples' feet. He said, "If I, therefore, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet. I have given you an example." He was the great Exemplar, the Master and Sovereign of the Universe, but His alleged "Vicar" or substitute wears a bejewelled mitre and is carried on a temporary throne! "I am among you," He said, "as one that serveth". The Vatican and all that belongs to it is the very apotheosis of wealth and authority; and the antithesis of every principle of the Gospel.

A Message to Millennialists

Just for your information let me say to you Millennialists that practically every one of the Reformers identified the Papacy as Antichrist. Savonarola inveighed against it even before the Reformation, and for calling the papacy Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, Savonarola was tried, condemned and hanged and burned. Man after man was burned for saying just what I have said tonight. They would burn me if they could. If ever they get authority in this country I should not have a chance in the world. But I say to you who have adopted this strange futuristic delusion, who believe that there is no Antichrist here, and that he is going to come by and by, you have the testimony of all history against you, and of the word of

God besides. Furthermore, the Jesuit invention of Futurism (for such it is), by teaching there is no anti-christ here, has blinded the minds of Protestants to the Satanic character of the Papacy as the perpetual person of the son of perdition, the man of sin.

But so many believe it. How shall we explain it? This text explains it.

The Strong Delusion

It is charged against the votaries and victims of the Antichrist, that "they receive not the love of the truth". However plainly the truth may be set before a human soul, if there be not a love of the truth within, the truth will not find entrance. Only the divine Spirit can so change the hearts of men that they will love the truth for the truth's sake, whatever may be the consequences of their obeying it.

"And for this cause"—God always has a reason for what He does. Sin is lawlessness; notwithstanding, the great Lawgiver and Ruler is still upon the throne, and the law of cause and effect is still operative. There is no hap nor chance where God rules. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap"; and if men love not the truth, but prefer a lie, "for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

How profoundly philosophical is this statement! How inevitable and inexorable its logic! And this is of the very essence of Roman Catholicism. It is, indeed, a comprehensive compendium of its philosophy. Roman Catholicism, from its priesthood to the humblest member, is designed to pander to the natural man. Romanists need no repentance in order to forgiveness. Repentance is a spiritual grace, wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God, which changes a man's whole conception and attitude toward God as revealed in Christ. Hence "repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ" are indispensable to salvation. But Roman Catholicism asks for none of this. In its Bible it has changed "repentance" into "penance". Repentance is something God does in the soul. Penance is something a man does for himself. According to the Roman Catholic formula he may sin ever so outrageously and if, and when, he confesses to the priest, certain penance, or penances, will be prescribed, and on the ground of his meritorious penance he will receive absolution, although in his heart he may have resolved to continue in sin.

Those who find pleasure in unrighteousness will always find it easy to believe a lie, while impossible to believe the truth as it is revealed in Christ.

Our text from II. Thessalonians is a divinely-inspired verbal portrait of the Antichrist, and it is an exact reproduction of the entire papal system.

Roman Catholicism is a system which offers salvation to men without regeneration, that is, without a change of nature and a transformation of life from conformity to the world and its ways, to conformity to the will of God. The four hundred million dupes, if there be so many millions, readily yield obedience to the "delusions" of Rome because they have received not the truth in the love of it, but have pleasure in unrighteousness.

Why should we protest against it? Why should I protest against anyone's taking the place of my Lord Jesus Christ? I am jealous for Him; I am jealous for the honour of His name, the efficacy of His blood, and the sovereignty of His authority. I cannot endure that any-

one should take His place, can you? The Roman church does, and if we love the souls of men we shall say to them, "Not that way, not that way; you are not saved by confession to the priest, by the observance of Mass, by all your self-mortifications, by all your church attendance and religious observances, by your prayers to Mary—all that is as filthy rags. "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin." He is our One and Only Mediator, why seek another? I cannot endure the Roman doctrine that the Lord Jesus is a ferocious sort of Being from Whom grace is obtainable chiefly by the intercessions of His mother. All nonsense! It was He who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me." It was He who said, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It was He who, hanging on the cross, prayed, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." We do not need anyone but Jesus, do we? I am sure I do not; He is quite enough for me. I hope He is, enough for you. And if you have Him for the apostle and high priest of your profession you will not be able to tolerate the pretensions of the papacy, but you will stand out against it as witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ, as did the martyrs of ancient time.

O may the Lord teach us to know Jesus so intimately, to love Him so profoundly, that we shall be unwilling that anyone should have a share in His glory.

Let us pray.

Grant us, O Lord, the ministry of Thy Spirit in our hearts. Help us to receive the truth in the love of it, in order that we may be saved, for Jesus' sake, Amen.

THE NECESSITY OF THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST

It is imperative to believe and confess the divinity of Christ. To overcome the sin of a whole world, and death, and the wrath of God was no work for any creature. The power of sin and death could be broken only by a greater power. God alone could abolish sin, destroy death, and take away the curse of the Law. God alone could bring righteousness, life, and mercy to light. In attributing these achievements to Christ the Scriptures pronounce Christ to be God forever. The article of justification is indeed fundamental. If we remain sound in this one article, we remain sound in all the other articles of the Christian faith. When we teach justification by faith in Christ we confess at the same time that Christ is God.

I cannot get over the blindness of the Pope's theologians. To imagine that the mighty forces of sin, death, and the curse can be vanquished by the righteousness of man's paltry works, by fasting, pilgrimages, masses, vows, and such gewgaws. These blind leaders of the blind turn the poor people over to the mercy of sin, death, and the devil. What chance has a defenceless human creature against these powers of darkness? They train sinners who are ten times worse than any thief, whore, murderer. The divine power of God alone can destroy sin and death, and create righteousness and life.

—MARTIN LUTHER

Before my conversion, I worked toward the cross, but since then I have worked from the cross. Then I worked to be saved, now I work because I am saved.

—D. L. MOODY

CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN

A Sermon by Prof. Dr. G. Wisse

Professor Emeritus of the Christian Reformed Churches in the Netherlands
Abridged and translated by Rev. Benjamin Densel, Passaic, New Jersey

"Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son:
for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."
—Gal. 4:30.

NOW, more than ever, it is necessary to commemorate the day of Reformation. We say this with emphasis because it is evident that the ancient and dangerous "Bondwoman" is attempting to utilize the present-day circumstances to penetrate the Tent of Abraham.

We refer here to the Roman Catholic Church as it endeavors to overshadow the doctrine of sovereign Grace by proudly offering oblations of a carnal religion, which is nothing less than a self-righteous attempt at self-redemption.

The Divine command saith,
"Cast out the Bondwoman".
*As a hazard in the Tent;
through omnipotent Grace;
unto God-glorifying Fruit!*

I.

CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN
—AS A HAZARD IN THE TENT!

When the Apostle Paul sets himself, in this epistle to again assert and maintain the doctrine of sovereign grace, the Gospel doctrine of justification by faith, against all erroneous teachings or false conceptions of man, such as, righteousness and salvation through the works of the Law—he points us to the striking incident in the tent of Abraham. He cites this to exemplify the sound doctrine of truth with a portion of Old Testamental history.

The Lord had made great and precious promises unto Abraham. A son would be born unto him out of whom a generation would spring forth innumerable as the stars of heaven. And out of this posterity, according to the flesh, the Christ of God would be born, the Saviour of the world, the eternal and all-sufficient way of salvation for all kindreds of the earth.

But how impossible it seemed that this promise could ever be fulfilled—seeing Abraham was old and well stricken in age, and Sarah was barren.

However, God glorifies Himself in that which is impossible for us. This is the crowning feature of Grace. God would have to redeem and deliver, yea, God alone and completely; otherwise all hope of fulfillment of the promise of salvation would be forever cut off. Here we may observe the very grounds of salvation laid in His eternal love and good pleasure.

And now—something takes place in Abraham's tent which also presents itself in our souls—life.

When the promise is not immediately fulfilled and seemingly becomes more and more impossible, what happens? Instead of waiting and letting the promise be fulfilled by Him who hath promised, Abraham undertakes, in an unholy hour, the carnal endeavour to offer God a helping hand.

Hagar!

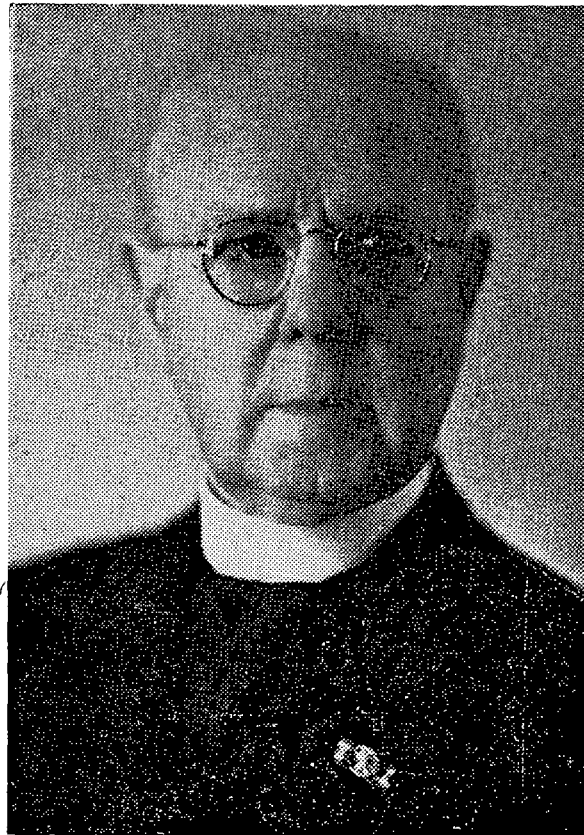
No, that is not but to reject or doubt the promise; it

is a still greater departure from God's way. It is an attempt, while accepting the promise, to obtain the fulfillment thereof through personal co-operation with God. Hagar is brought into the rights, privileges and just expectations of Sarah. What an injustice—what grave iniquity. It is nothing else but mixing our own work with the appointment of Grace.

This is one of the sinful manifestations of a nature departed from God; a direct and subtle attack of our carnal enmity against free and sovereign Grace. This principle has revealed itself time and time again in the history of the Church of God, and it has finally processed itself into a definite doctrine in the Roman Catholic Church.

We must well understand what the principal content is of the false doctrine of Rome. No, it does not primarily concern the Mass, nor the worshipping of Mary, nor iconolatry, and not even the ques-

tion of the necessity of good works,—because they are necessary. And let us always remember they are rewarded of Grace and not of merit. The great and grave matter which is presented here is this intricate point—whether or not we can bring forth such works through which we can merit the benefits and blessings of Grace. According to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, Christ hath merited in order that we also might be able to merit something. Even as Hagar we can cooperate to obtain the fulfillment of the promise. Thus man becomes a co-worker with God. The subtlety of the Roman Catholic error is not whether it is works or Grace. It is Grace! However, such a Grace, which enables one to work together unto salvation. Man would



Prof. Dr. G. Wisse

then be able to present something unto God worthy of acceptance by Him. And let us emphasize here that in the matter of Grace we must never come with anything to present unto God—but, to receive Grace and mercy from Him.

This doctrine of Rome is inseparably connected to the Roman Catholic conception of our human nature and our fall in Adam. According to the teachings of Rome Man lost many wonderful gifts, the greatest and most necessary of these being sanctifying Grace, which had placed him in a super-natural state and given him the title of child of God with a right and meetness to enter heaven. They claim, however, that Man's nature itself remained undepraved and that this nature, endowed with a free will, can of itself, with helping Grace, turn to God and with meritorious behaviour make itself worthy of the blessings of salvation. They teach that sanctifying Grace is restored or received in the Sacrament of Baptism. Christ would then have brought about a helping Grace only. This is a denial of Man's total depravity; his being dead in sins and trespasses, etc., and at the same time a denial of the only and complete Saviour and His finished work; as though he had only obtained a possibility of salvation through His precious suffering and death and it would depend upon us, in other words, upon Hagar, if it becomes a reality.

How dreadfully unscriptural this is, and directly in contrast to the true experience of the workings of Grace. It is no wonder that in Rome no one can be assured of his or her salvation. The Roman Catholics lack all peace and comfort of the blessed assurance of Faith.

Out of this error came forth the worship of Mary, not to say—idolatry.

For thus Romanists teach: In Mary we see the acme of co-operation. She placed her human nature at God's disposal to bring the Redeemer into the world. Therefore she must be revered and worshipped as a Co-redeemer, a Mediatrix, who is also bodily in heaven. Not a doctrine to be gathered from the Holy Scriptures but emanating from the many errors of Rome, with its denial of the depth of our fall and total depravity. The more we attempt to detract from the fall of man, the more we belittle Grace.

This bondwoman bore a son indeed—but far from being the heir, the child of promise, we read of him that he was a wild man.

So it is with the Roman Catholic error which places the workings of grace in the hands of our sinful and corrupt nature. What a deformed figure arises from this! Ishmael despised, mocked and threatened Isaac in antagonistic self-righteousness and haughtiness. Is it not so with Rome? This church, void of the living Spirit—is degenerating into self-righteous Phariseism; into dead formalism; and finally, into a fanaticism which does not hesitate for a moment to recommend and command Inquisitions, and dares call them "Holy" matters.

In our days this Ishmael sets himself more and more brutish against Isaac, yea, in such a manner, that in many countries persecutions are becoming more and more severe.

Let us constantly point them and ourselves to God's command:—"Cast out the bondwoman!"

II.

CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN—THROUGH OMNIPOTENT GRACE!

Abraham received orders to cast her out. She resists and opposes God in the glorification of His attributes, and she continually dishonours Him in an abominable way. For this very reason the command is given—"Cast out the bondwoman?" Also unto Rome! What then is our position and calling? No, we are not called to a great anti-catholic movement—neither just be anti-catholic, filled with prejudice; nor is it our task to defend our Protestant principles with humanitarian philosophies—for these things would not reach to the root of this evil. We must answer the all-important question; the great matter it concerns;—"How art thou righteous before God?" The greatest obstacle in the way unto justification by faith, unto the glory of God, is this bondwoman, Hagar, that is to say, our own works, our condemnable self-righteousness, our legality—works of the flesh. Therefore this bondwoman must be cast out. She may not remain under the roof; we may not make a compromise with her; we may not have any dealings with her; we may not have her as a "servant girl" for a few hours a day; no pacts or treaties or covenants with her! She must be cast out. Radically thrown out. This is the command—and the triumph of sovereign grace.

This was also the experience of that great instrument of God in the Reformation—Martin Luther. Luther first experienced this conquest of grace in his own life, in his soul's experience, and thus he became such a wonderful, well equipped and qualified instrument, in the hands of the Lord, for that great work of the Reformation. We assume that you are well acquainted with the most important events of his life. Then you also know how this "bondwoman", how all legality, was cast out of him when the work of grace was powerfully effected in him.

Luther, who was trained and instructed to be a Priest—missed the true peace in his soul. When God sought him, convicted him of his sin, revealed unto him his lost state—then Luther was filled with fear—he was troubled. He became sincere and sought help from Above, but the great question was—how could he participate therein, how could he obtain it? Then, as never before, he began to work, works of the flesh. With and through all manner of penitential exercises and chastenings of self he endeavoured to make himself worthy of the grace of God. However, according to his own testimony—the more he tried to work himself in, the more he was working himself out. All his own efforts were to no avail. Outwardly he was sad and melancholy, and inwardly he felt full of unholiness; one who could not present any righteousness or merit unto God.

Under these circumstances it pleased the Lord to grant him a particular insight into the doctrines taught by Paul in his Epistle to the Romans. He was given to see and understand that God had manifested a righteousness from Heaven; a righteousness without the law; and this Righteousness, a Divine Righteousness, was Christ Himself. And when this Righteousness is revealed—and imputed unto us—before the bar of God's justice—then our own righteousness falls away as unnecessary, yea, as filthy rags, as unworthy—but we may also believe and enjoy this truth,—that God is fully satisfied, that we cannot and need not add anything thereto. A sinner justified by faith through Jesus Christ our Lord. This is the way of salvation. Through satisfaction unto God—reconciliation with God. And this satisfaction is found in the atonement of Christ; must be embraced and be-

come ours by faith. This faith is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; a gift out of the Covenant of Grace. Not a mere historical faith, not just doctrinal matters which we have been taught and about which we speak and assent to and agree with through our natural understanding — not just an emotional outburst — but a gracious work of the Holy Spirit in the soul whereby I learn to know Christ, trust Him and live out of Him.

This is a faith which emanates out of the triumph of grace within—it is a complete and perfect work of God in the soul. It is an all-sufficient deed of the Holy Spirit within and excludes all works of man. Then the promise is fulfilled within, is embraced and enjoyed, yea, then we truly believe the promise. Thomas Boston, an eminent theologian of olden times, once said: "He that believeth in the promises of God, glorifies God more than if he had fulfilled the entire law".

When Luther experienced this grace in his soul, he cried out: "O precious Lord Jesus, Thou art my sins and I am Thy righteousness!"

And then—the "great deed" followed!

It was the night of the 31st day of October, the night before the great feast day in the church—All Saints Day, November 1st—that Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. This caused the world to be troubled and made the Church of Rome to tremble and shake upon its very foundation. The substance of these theses was directed against the accursed Indulgence of Rome and all the errors that were mingled with it—and declared and proclaimed the glorious content of the Scriptural Doctrine of Sovereign Grace.

Since that hour the spiritual and religious face of the earth has been renewed. Amidst all chaos upon the earth and in the strife of our souls, the great question constantly arises: "How may I be reconciled unto and with God?"—"How shall God attain unto His glory, also, from me?" And only one answer remaineth — an answer proven by practice and experience: "Cast out the bondwoman!" If this does not take place, also in our personal spiritual life, regardless of how many attempts we make at reconciliation — we shall perish for ever. Man can only be the undoing of man; self of self. Salvation is of free grace only.

Oh! Beloved reader, may you be given to cease and renounce all your self-righteous endeavours at self redemption. Oh! Turn unto Jesus as a miserable, impotent, lost sinner, and you shall experience that never did two so belong together as—a poor sinner and a rich Christ.

To truly feel and confess: I am a guilty, wretched and lost sinner, yea, fit for Hell—means to be . . . a fit object for the Lord Jesus.

Cast out the Bondwoman—and let yourself be saved by God, by Him alone and completely. Neither Mary, nor any of the Saints, even if they could help you, are more willing than Jesus Himself. Even if they could do something for you, (we know they cannot) it would be superfluous, it is unnecessary—for no one is more able and willing to completely save you than Jesus Christ.

III. CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN—UNTO GOD-GLORIFYING FRUIT.

When Abraham had cast out the Bondwoman, he had only Isaac left, yea, him alone,—but this proved to be sufficient. God's promise speaks for itself—proves itself—and for that reason it is a promise of God. And

the fruit thereof is God-glorifying. This Biblical Doctrine, which is the doctrine of the Reformation, does not make men careless and profane, whereof it is often accused; to the contrary, we could justly retaliate with this same accusation against the adversaries who accuse us. Just think of the licentious and immoral lives of so many in the middle ages, and that in the bosom of the so-called mother church—also among the intellectuals and clergy.

It was the Reformation, and particularly the Calvinistic Reformation which saved Europe from ruin and doom. It was the Reformation which opened up new ways unto liberation for oppressed peoples and nations; and that not in the way of humanitarian philosophies, but that of a sound and healthy scriptural democracy.

We cannot at this time enlarge on this matter. Let it suffice if we place against the aforementioned "wild man" the loveliness of "Isaac".

Many intellectual historians, liberal as they were, have confirmed the fact that Calvinism was the means through which freedom of religion and political liberty were obtained in the strife against tyranny and inquisition.

Respecting our personal life—our religion—the life of our soul—we may say: Whosoever may draw out of the living fountain of gospel promises, receives and enjoys a peace which surpasseth all understanding, for he receives God Himself as his portion and inheritance. Such a person is qualified to walk in the way of the Lord; He enjoys a peace and happiness which cannot be found elsewhere; he may sing psalms in the night. In years gone by concentration camps, prisons and places of execution bore witness of this fact.

When faith is in exercise, wondrous things are beheld.

Once the "bondwoman" is cast out then Sarah and Isaac appear in the full glory of the work of God's grace. On the one side, this faith in God's sovereign and almighty grace gives an unspeakable rest unto the soul, because then we understand and feel that God Himself, in His grace, with all His promises, cares for us. Yea! is responsible for us and will perform and perfect his own work in us and for us. On the other hand—this faith in free grace, excites and empowers us through the power of grace, unto a true activity—because then we begin to live for God, and that, because of God Himself. Then we understand what Calvin said: "We are, because of God". We then know that all things are in the sovereign hands of God; and freely and unhindered we may consecrate ourselves unto our divine calling. Grace calleth to the highest activity with a deep sense of our responsibility.

This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

However, it must be a faith worthy of that name—namely, wrought and established by the Holy Ghost in our hearts.

An eminent theologian, Holtius by name, once wrote: "To be saved must go easily or not at all." So it is. And what does this really mean? That the justice of God, in all its demands, is fully satisfied through Jesus, the All-sufficient and complete Saviour. Oh, there is more power in Christ unto salvation than in our sins unto condemnation. The eminent divine Boston declared "God hath promised and therefore we may come". Truly, because of this promise we have a right to believe. And such a faith, or to thus believe, implies—that as we see

our sin and guilt we fall before God, yea, bow at His feet, confessing our sins, acknowledging that our condemnation is just — but then plead — not on our righteousnesses, which are none, but on God's mercy in Jesus Christ, praying only for grace even as Job says, "I would make supplication to my Judge".

Take note—true and upright faith is not just a matter of the natural mind and convictions of the conscience, but a work in the heart through the Holy Ghost. It is more than a mere assent of the mind to the truth that Christ satisfied for all His own. It is an acknowledgment of Hell-worthiness, but also a trust in God and His promises that He will show mercy unto such a wretched and vile sinner. Then we understand and confess that our death and damnation would glorify His justice, but that our life and salvation is His delight and pleasure.

Do not then offend the promises of God, for this would be a denial of the full doctrine of salvation as contained in the scripture and once again brought to light and proclaimed in the Reformation. Such offence would dishonour God and His attributes. Believe the promises. Ye who have faith, believe that God is your God in Christ Jesus. Come forth in this wicked world as a living witness of this true faith, as such an one in whom it may be clearly seen that you possess that true life which is in Christ Jesus the Lord. Let it be manifested in your entire life, even as Paul said to the Galatians—"I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." This is the true practice in life of the Reformation. And when by grace we may return time and time again unto this source we shall find each other. This is the way to the Reformatory Holy Catholic Church.

Let our prayers continually arise, also in our dark days, that the Holy Spirit may blow upon the Garden, the Church of the Lord, in all denominations—that we may be given to share in the God-glorifying Fruit of a Twentieth Century Reformation. AMEN!

GOD'S MERCIES

On every thing I read the words, "The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy." Mercies arrive on the wings of every hour; mercies supply our table; mercies flow in life's brimming cup. They fall in every shower, and shine in every sunbeam. They lie as thick around man's tent, as desert manna in the days of old. Here, mercy runs to meet the returning prodigal, and opens her arms to fold him to her bosom. Here, she pleads with sinners, and pronounces pardon over the chief of them. Here she weeps with sufferers, and dries the tear upon sorrow's cheek. And here, eyeing the storm, she launches her life-boat through foaming breakers, and pulls for the wreck where souls are perishing. It is her blessed hand which rings the Sabbath bell, and her voice which, on savage shores or from Christian pulpits, proclaims a Saviour for the lost. None she despises; she despairs of none; and, not to be scared away by foulest sin, she stands by its guilty bed, and, bending down to death's dull ear—when the twelfth hour is just about to strike—she looks into the glassy eye and cries, Believe, O believe, only believe, "whosoever believeth in the Lord Jesus shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

—DR. THOMAS GUTHRIE, 1859.

ORDINATION OF ELTON M. BRITTON

ACTING on behalf and by the authority of the Baptist Church at Bobcaygeon, a Council was called last Thursday, November 2nd, by Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, to consider the advisability of setting apart to the Gospel ministry, pastor Elton M. Britton. A fine company of people gathered for the occasion and when the roll call of the churches was taken, delegates responded from Bobcaygeon, Churchill, Courtland, Essex, Victoria Ave. Hamilton, Lanark, Mitchell Square, North Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Tilbury, Jarvis St, and Mount Pleasant Baptist churches, Toronto.

When Mr. Britton completed his three-fold statement, which included an account of his conversion, call to the ministry and doctrinal statement, everyone present felt they had been listening to one who, at God's call and in response to divine love, had come to dedicate himself wholly to Jesus Christ and His service. His statement was so clearly presented and so entirely satisfactory that the Council voted unanimously to proceed with ordination.

Rev. W. N. Charlton of Mount Pleasant Road Baptist Church, Toronto, was chosen to act as Moderator; Pastor George H. Stephens of North Bay as Secretary, and we were led in the ordination prayer by Rev. John Byers of Victoria Avenue Baptist Church, Hamilton.

It was very appropriate that Dr. Shields should, by special request of the candidate, extend the right hand of fellowship. It was under the ministry of Dr. Shields that Mr. Britton was led to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and later felt the call of God into full-time service. With a few timely words of counsel Dr. Shields warmly welcomed Mr. Britton into the Baptist ministry.

Most of the delegates who attended the ordination were able to remain over and avail themselves of the privilege of hearing Dr. Shields lecture on "Elijah" in connection with the Three Year English Bible Course. No more appropriate subject could have been selected, especially for the many preachers who attended.

Rev. Elton Britton has recently accepted a call to an influential evangelical Baptist Church at Portage la Prairie, Manitoba. As he goes to assume the heavy responsibilities of this pastorate about the middle of November, we assure him that he leaves with the hearty good wishes of a great host of friends and their prayers for the Lord's richest blessing.—H.C.S.

THE ALPHA AND OMEGA OF ALL KNOWLEDGE

Nothing can be rightly known, if God be not known; nor is any study well managed, nor to any great purpose, if God is not studied. We know little of the creature, till we know it as it stands related to the Creator: single letters, and syllable uncomposed, are no better than nonsense. He who overlooketh him, who is the "Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending," and seeth not him in all, who is the All of all, doth see nothing at all. All creatures, as such, are broken syllables; they signify nothing as separated from God. Were they separated actually, they would cease to be, and the separation would be an annihilation; and when we separate them in our fancies, we make nothing of them to ourselves.

—RICHARD BAXTER, *The Reformed Pastor*

IS THE PAPACY THE ANTICHRIST?

ON to-day's date, November 7th, we received a letter dated the 6th, from a friend who kindly says, "I enjoyed your excellent sermon on Sunday evening, wherein you laid bare the latest brazen lie to be declared by the Roman Catholic Church". But in the letter which follows our friendly correspondent says that he belongs to that school of Eschatology which denies that the Papacy is the Antichrist. He writes:

"I decided to write to you this letter to clarify our position, which you do not seem to understand." In reply to that objection we can only say that if we do not understand their position, we must be incomparably obtund, for the reason that for nearly half a century we have been reading and studying nearly everything that has been written on both sides of the question. It is not because we do not understand Futurism that we reject it; but because we do understand.

If we were able to accept our correspondent's major premise, we might find his conclusion to be a little less incredible; but our friend has, obviously, imbibed the teaching of Darby, which has been carried to greater length in the Schofieldite position; and he argues from an assumption which is absolutely devoid of scriptural warrant.

For example, our correspondent says, "The Antichrist is portrayed to us in prophecy to be preeminently a political head: he rises from obscurity to the greatest political position: his career will be meteoric. He very quickly becomes top leader, the most astute and wily of the political figures of his time, and, as a result of his clever, but evil, diplomacy, he successfully welds the broken kingdoms of Europe together once more into an iron unit of power and influence. Now, where does the Papacy fit into this? Just this: in order to continue to carry on its religious despotism and controls, the Papacy will be forced to join hands with the Antichrist. He will be in such a powerful position as dictator that all organizations and systems must ally with him, or be 'wiped off the slate'."

We can only reply, We do not so understand the scripture: That "he will be preeminently a political head", that "he will rise from obscurity", that "his career will be meteoric". There can be no possibility of doubt, Antichrist is described in the passage in II Thessalonians, which we used as a text.

Our correspondent recognizes that "the wicked one", "the man of sin", "the son of perdition", "the lawless one" there described, is the Antichrist. We offer no objection to our friend's saying that the Antichrist will be "the most astute and wily of the political figures of the time". Even the present Pope was elected to the Papacy because of his political astuteness. It was he who brought Hitler to power. It was he who engineered the betrayal of the Allies by Leopold of Belgium. It was he who arranged the collapse of France. It was his predecessor who arranged the concordat with Mussolini, and who inspired and financed the Spanish Civil War, which effected the death of millions, and the slavery of millions more.

If we are looking for a political figure we think it will be generally admitted that there is no statesmanship, nor even diplomacy in the world that can out-manoeuvre the political astuteness of the Vatican. All that is perfectly consistent with the philosophy of a "strong delu-

sion". Lying is the principal business of such diplomacy as the Vatican exercises. But if the Papacy were to cast off its religious disguise, if the Pope were, openly, to declare himself a temporal sovereign, claiming the right, arbitrarily, to dictate to the whole world, the Papacy would not last a year. It is, and has been for more than a thousand years, the greatest political force in the world. There has scarcely been one war in Europe in a thousand years that was not fomented by the Vatican. It has ever been "a mystery of iniquity". For a thousand years and more it has been the world's Number One Mischief-maker. We venture to say that outside of Russia there is not another such a blood-guilty fiend in the world as the present Pope.

The worst of all devils is a religious devil; and that is exactly what the Papacy is. It does its hellish business under the guise of religion, being the devil's chief agent in the damning of human souls. The Papacy poses as the world's only saviour. It calls its organization by the name of "Church". It calls itself "Christian". It says it is the one and only Christian "Church". It declares that it is indispensable to the salvation of every human soul that it be subject to the Roman Pontiff.

That is exactly the picture drawn in II Thessalonians. While the Antichrist is undoubtedly the most astute and formidable politician in all the world, yet his chosen sphere is that of religion. Here is the picture: He "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped." Let us pause there. Some will say, "Exactly! That would better fit atheistic Russia than the Papacy." But read again: He "exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped." The god of the Papacy is not the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, but Satan himself.

Let us read on: "So that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." Surely if language means anything at all, it means that the Antichrist, while a deadly politician, as our friend says, in profession and position is preeminently a religious leader. Devout Romanists even speak of him as their "sovereign Lord". Every bishop takes an oath to support him as such, and he is called, in Roman Catholic writings, "our Lord God, the Pope".

Our friend quotes a passage we have heard quoted a hundred times, and always in the opposite sense of its scriptural meaning; "We, brethren, are not appointed unto wrath". Of course, we are not! But Paul is not speaking of the wrath of the Antichrist, but of the wrath of God, from which, through the blood of Christ, we are saved. He further says: "We, the true church members, are not, but the world is very much so, so that the true Church must therefore be removed by the hand of God before His wrath is poured out on a sinful world. That's sound logic, is it not?" Absolutely no! There is no logic in it. There would be if "wrath" in this passage meant the wrath of Antichrist; but it means the wrath of God. Moreover, the "salvation" to be obtained is not immunity from wrath during a great tribulation; but salvation from sin and its penalty.

Our friend also says, "The true Church, the pearl of great price, will have been removed from this scene of death before this devilry is put into operation"—(that is the operation of Antichrist).

Our friend follows the usual pattern. Having read

the first few sentences, we could almost have written the letter.

"How you and others can possibly actually believe that Christ's Church, the body of all blood-bought souls, is decreed by the Lord to go through the awful reign of the Antichrist on earth, is more than I can understand." The so-called pretribulation rapture theory in our view is at once one of the most cowardly and most unscriptural conceptions of things we know.

Our friend's position raises the whole problem of human suffering. Whatever "the great tribulation" may be, we assume it will be on an universal scale; but it cannot possibly be more intense than the suffering inflicted upon individual Christians through all the ages. Were we to accept our friend's theory, what should we say of the millions of martyrs, who, having been tortured almost to the point of death, were burned with fire?

There can be no human suffering in the great tribulation, or anywhere else, more intense than mortals have already endured, except that the pains of hell are prolonged. But how shall we comfort such of the Lord's saints as are chosen in the furnace of affliction if we are to assume that the true saints are not to be allowed to go through great suffering. What, indeed, shall we say of those who are thus described in Hebrews:

Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions. Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection. And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented: (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Our friend's theory involves the most cruel assumptions; and if he is at a loss to understand how we are able to believe as we do, our answer is that the whole Bible, and the whole course of Christian history compels us so to believe.

We have written thus, not because we attach so great importance to our friend's letter. (We are grateful for his kindly spirit, and happy that he does not assume the vitriolic attitude which is all too generally characteristic of Futurists. Usually while insisting that the Church will be raptured before some future great tribulation, they proceed to inflict upon us as much of the tribulation as they can produce; and even if they assume that we are not entitled to escape such tribulation as they hope to do, they rather surrender their case by the fact that they remain here to give us a dose of it.) We have dealt with this letter because we have no doubt it will prove to be symptomatic of the attitude of many who may read the sermon in this issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS.

We are grateful to our friend for having written us so promptly on Monday, so that we received his letter on Tuesday, and were able to dictate this reply for publication in the same issue as the sermon of last Wednesday evening.

JOHN CALVIN, PREACHER

A Review of Two Books

THE DEITY OF CHRIST AND OTHER SERMONS, by John Calvin, Translated from the French and Latin by Leroy Nixon, Th.M. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan. U.S.A. price: \$3.50.

JOHN CALVIN, EXPOSITORY PREACHER, by Leroy Nixon, Th.M. Eerdmans Company. U.S.A. price: \$2.50.

JOHN CALVIN'S seal portrayed a hand offering a heart, as though the great reformer would say to the world that he had dedicated his heart as a living sacrifice to God. In his sermons one feels the warm personal note of devotion to Christ and of intense earnestness in preaching His Gospel to others, in a way that could scarcely be expected in *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, the great theological work on which his fame justly rests. The comparatively few persons who venture to read that masterpiece of doctrinal writing will be pleasantly surprised to discover that Calvin wrote not only for the learned but in such a way that men without specialized training may understand. His commentaries are still of interest not only for their historical value but for their solid exposition of the meaning of the Word of God. We have been glad to note that both *Institutes* and *Commentaries* have been published by the Eerdmans Company of late, and now we welcome a second volume of the great reformer's sermons. The first volume, entitled *The Mystery of Godliness*, was reviewed in these columns in April of this year.

The historical interest of the sermons of Calvin is great, and until these volumes were made available to English readers, it was exceedingly difficult to find a sermon of his in English. Of even greater value, however, is the practical interest of these sermons which were preached nearly four hundred years ago. Recently we reviewed in these columns a volume of sermons by Moody and quoted the excellent advice of R. W. Dale to study sermons that had been preached in great revivals. English speaking Protestants are not accustomed to thinking of Calvin as being a preacher, and least of all as a revival preacher, but sober history records that the great spiritual awakening in which he bore an important part was even more revolutionary and far-reaching than that in which D. L. Moody took part. The sermons of the two men have little else in common than this and the fact that both made it their earnest purpose to win men for Christ. Calvin seldom preached topically, his sermons were simple expositions of the Scripture with practical applications. There are few if any illustrations, scant attention is given to introductions or conclusions. The sole attraction is the Word of God made plain and simple, and if this description appears to make the sermons dull, let the reader turn his attention to them in order to convince himself that they are direct, searching, earnest and vital. They are thoroughly doctrinal, yet pointedly practical. His method was to give a simple explanation of the text of the Bible, which he followed book by book and verse by verse, giving, as Jean D. Benoît, one of his French biographers, remarks, a "paraphrase" of the Scripture:

"In this way following almost word for word the text of the Bible, Calvin preached 200 sermons on Deuteronomy, 159 on the Book of Job, 343 on Isaiah, 174 on Ezekiel, 149 on the Acts of the Apostles, and a great number on Genesis, Daniel, the Epistles and other parts of the Bible."

Following this method of preaching Calvin did not take account of the ecclesiastical year, and the Council of Geneva on one occasion at least recalled the pastors to their duty to preach on the Passion of Christ on Good Friday. In view of Calvin's convictions in this, the choice of sermons in this volume that follows the plan of the ecclesiastical year is somewhat surprising, and, as the translator notes, is "purely arbitrary . . . Calvin would never have done such a thing." While we have had no opportunity of comparing the translations with the original either in Latin or French, we cannot forbear wondering whether the avowed intention to be "as literal as possible" is a wise one. Literal translations are not always the most exact or the happiest renderings of the original. The English, however, is quite readable. These sermons will stand as a monument to the power of the naked Word of God, apart from adventitious aids or artifice of any sort to penetrate the minds of men and set them on fire for the truth of the Gospel. They are the exact opposite of what many modern pulpits attempt to do, for they are saturated with the Word of God while many a sermon in our day consists of a bright little moral essay or a pretty attempt to be amusingly instructive, in which the Word of God has no real place except perhaps as a point of departure. Every preacher who aspires to teach his people the Bible should have a copy of these sermons on his shelves, if not as a model to follow slavishly at least as an ideal to strive after.

The second title noted in the above heading is a discussion of Calvin as a preacher. For those who have not read any other book on the life of the reformer, this is a useful book to begin with and it has the signal advantage of emphasizing that Calvin was preeminently a preacher, a fact which is apt to be forgotten in our day. It contains a number of very long quotations from other sources, including Calvin himself, more in number and greater in length than is usual in most books and these form a very important and valuable part of the book. Benoit, whom we have quoted above, felt that after the classic work on Calvin of the great French Protestant, Doumergue, the best biography of Calvin would be a popularization of this great historian. Doumergue's work, however, is not available in English and contributions such as the book under review are therefore very useful.

—W.S.W.

GRACE WITHOUT AND GRACE WITHIN US

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."—Ephesians 2:8.

Grace is not the means of our salvation, it is the principle, the reason, the cause of it. Our salvation springs in its entirety from the free grace of God as the bird comes from the egg, as the fruit comes from the branch and the hand to pluck the fruit. Grace is then the cause, the source of our salvation, faith is but the means by which it comes; or, if you will, there are two graces, that which is outside of us, and which the Apostle calls simply grace, and another which works within us and which the Apostle calls faith.

In principle grace is one, but it has different aspects, different places, different forms. There are several gifts, but each is a gift. Grace without, grace within us, that is the Gospel.

—ALEXANDRE VINÉT.

REV. F. C. W. KEGEL

In our issue of September 14th we published an all too brief notice of the homegoing of Rev. F. C. W. Kegel, who was greatly beloved by all the Jarvis Street family. His wife had long been a member, and went alone as a missionary to South America, where, in due course, she met Mr. Kegel.

When ill health forced Mr. Kegel to leave the mission field, he came, with his family, to Toronto, and came into the fellowship of Jarvis Street Baptist Church.

We publish below an appreciative article from *The Neglected Continent*, published by the Evangelical Union of South America, under whose auspices Mr. Kegel served in that country.

We are happy to be able to reproduce this splendid tribute to Mr. Kegel's worth, written by one who knew the particulars of his heroic service in South America.

The Scriptures declare that, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints" and, because of this, we wish to give our readers and faithful prayer supporters a brief sketch of our dear friend and missionary pioneer, the late Rev. Fred Kegel. This faithful worker was called home suddenly into the presence of the King on September 11th, 1950. He had been in failing health for some time and, after some recuperation, he suffered another heart attack while on his way to the office.

The history of South America is garnished with the lives of pioneer missionaries who win no earthly rewards but who lay the foundations of the true church at the cost, often, of their own flesh and blood. Fred Kegel was born in London, England, in the year 1896 and, at the age of sixteen, went to Germany for study. With the completion of his studies he entered Switzerland and developed his own business. Here he heard the Gospel and was converted. Speaking French and German, he was an earnest soul-winner; and responded to the call of God for full-time service. He sold his business and entered the Bible Training Institute of Glasgow, Scotland.

In 1931 he sailed for Brazil under the English section of the work, and his knowledge of languages proved of inestimable value. The challenge of the Indian was ever before him, and he laboured for some years among the Tapirapes on Bananal Island, deep in the interior of the country. They were hazardous days when so little was known of the tribes of South America, and when wild rumours were circulating regarding the disappearance of the explorer, Col. Fawcett, and his two companions. While the press wrote of the dangers and problems of life among such Indians, Fred Kegel was quietly and indefatigably preaching to the Tapirapes and reaching into territory hitherto untouched by white men. It is recorded in the book, "Brazilian Adventure", written by the journalist Peter Fleming that, coming round a bend in the river, they suddenly found a missionary on the bank with a group of natives. Mr. Kegel never coveted publicity, and his name is not recorded in Fleming's book, but his presence convicted a man of the world and deflated his pride of being the first white man in this jungle region. Fevers, travel difficulties, and the constant strain on the body necessitated Mr. Kegel's return to the more civilized field of Pires do Rio. He, with his wife, laboured one year in this field and wondered, at times, why God had so directed. Today we see the reason. Under his ministry a young lad was saved, who today is an earnest native pastor. For another eight years he laboured in the town of Pirapora.

His love for the benighted Indian was as intense as ever, but his great work was done in this little town.

The picture accompanying this resumé of his life work, shows the blessing that attended his ministry of the Word and life of prayer. (We regret we are unable to reproduce the picture referred to.) Today there is a splendid new church building erected by the Brazilian Christians, and the national pastor first heard the Gospel in his own home from the lips of Mr. Kegel.

Years of pioneering among the Indians had taken a heavier toll on his physique than at first believed, and the missions' doctor advised furlough. Returning from the field during the war, he found, with his wife and family, that world conditions made their return impossible. Desirous ever of preaching Christ, he felt strong enough to commence mission work among the French in Montreal. Sickness again laid him aside, and repeatedly over the period of four and one half years in Canada he reluctantly had to rest. A few weeks before he passed away, we talked together of the field and his desire to return. He manifested the spirit of the pioneer, ever ready to pack his grips and launch out, if so be that some be saved. This spiritual calibre is often lacking in present-day candidates. He was a man of vision and consistently his thoughts returned to the task of reaching the 60 million unevangelized in South America.

After a brief period of renewed strength, "he was not, for God took him". We ask you all to remember his dear wife and children, whose last memory of him was sitting at the table with the open Bible. Written on its pages are the words "*The family altar is the citadel fortress of a nation*".

He needs no splendid edifice for a memorial, for he has left behind what all missionaries should leave, "a church of the Living God" and, to all missionaries and readers of this magazine, we say, "Whose faith follow".

HOW MODERNISM WORKS IN "OLD CONVENTION" CHURCHES

AMONG the subscribers to THE GOSPEL WITNESS, we are happy to number many persons whose membership is, in churches that are officially committed to that philosophy of unbelief known as "Modernism". We know that many of them would agree to the following letter we received from a good friend who is a member of an "Old Convention" Baptist Church in a large Ontario centre. We venture to quote from this letter, removing all notes of identification, together with the substance of our reply to his frank letter. This subscriber writes:

Dear Mr. Whitcombe:

I received your letter of the 26th instant. Many thanks for your promptness. . . . To clarify my own position, I would say that I have been a member of the Baptist Church here for over, or about sixty years, and am still on their membership roll, although I go there very seldom, and do not contribute to their missions (McMaster getting a slice of it all). I go to an evangelical Baptist Church most of the time, as I find the pastor there believes just what I was brought up to believe, and he makes no quibbling about it either. He did not get angry when I asked him right straight if he believed in the inspiration of the whole Bible. The other ministers get very much upset about such a question. Why, I cannot imagine. I occasionally go to the old home church merely for the old associations that I had there. I knew so many of the older folk, and I can remember when the idea of Modernism was not even thought of there. But now, like all the rest, you can believe any-

thing you like, or for that matter nothing at all and still become a member of the church. . . ."

It is evident that our correspondent speaks without malice moved by nothing but a deep love of his home church and all it stood for when he first knew it. He has nothing but sorrow for its departure from the faith. Only those who have been closely associated with a church or a denomination for long years know how deeply an affection for it enters into the fibre of one's thinking. It is indeed heart-breaking for all such to be compelled to recognize that their beloved church is no longer what it once was, that where its message was formerly "Thus saith the Lord", it has now become more akin to a debating society, or a literary club. It once sought to win men for Christ and saw miracles of redemptive grace, now it is a society for the betterment of the world or a pink-tea meeting. It used to be loyal to the Word of God, now its sole loyalty is to a denominational machine. Those of us who have been brought up as Baptists, and to whom the word meant a New Testament church with New Testament power and grace, are perhaps inclined to think that when modern unbelief invaded our ranks it came in a somewhat less virulent form and without accomplishing all the evil that it wrought in other denominations. That is a vain illusion. When the Evil One arrays himself as an angel of light, he can overleap much water as easily as a few drops and he can twist the letters that spell the name Baptist into a weapon to deceive the unwary as well as he can ply the name of Methodist or Presbyterian or Anglican or any other. Indeed, we have known some well-intentioned persons who, we suspect, would tolerate if not love His Satanic Majesty Himself if he but took the precaution to assure them that he had always been a loyal Baptist, was educated at a denominational school and that he had never spoken against denominational dignitaries and institutions. And the same might be said with equal truth of many old-fashioned Methodists, Presbyterians and Anglicans who without being aware of what they are actually doing, dare to put loyalty to their apostate church before loyalty to their Saviour and His inspired Word.

We speak with full knowledge of what it costs to break associations with a beloved church. Almost a quarter of a century ago we left the ranks of what is now called the "Old Convention" in order to be free, with a good conscience, to preach the whole counsel of God. Some of our friends stayed within those ranks, assuring us that they too were quite as loyal to the Book and quite as orthodox as we. No doubt they spoke the truth then, but not all of them could say so now. And of those few who could say they are still unashamed Evangelicals, not one can say he is free from entangling alliances with unbelievers. As our correspondent says, McMaster gets a slice of all contributions, and directly or indirectly these Evangelical pastors are aiding and abetting the cause of unbelief. In this we speak of ministers, well aware, as we have said, of the great sacrifice involved in cutting oneself loose from the denominational machine that ecclesiastical scepticism has fabricated to enchain its victims and its dupes. But there comes a time when a man must assert his own freedom of soul, and if he has any genuine convictions he must be willing to pay the price for them. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." That is a hard word, but the Master has never

softened one syllable of it, not even for the sake of Baptist denominational loyalties or for timid preachers who wonder where they are to find another church if they forfeit the benignant smile of some denominational secretary.

What shall we say of the rank and file of the membership of Modernistic Churches? Unfortunately some of them have no other place of worship to which they can go to hear the Word of God proclaimed. We know of many who, like our correspondent, have in their heart of hearts written off their unbelieving church home as a spiritual loss, and have given their real affection to another church where the Gospel they love is preached. Such persons must be grateful indeed to the sacrificially daring pioneers who made such a refuge possible for them, or for the valiant faith of pastors and people who years ago stood for the Book despite the threats of denominational wrath. But, have those who find blessing in such places not a duty toward them and toward the Gospel they proclaim and the Lord they serve? Is the Scripture not explicit that we should "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). Membership in a church is no light affair, it is a solemn trust from the Lord. Surely that means that if a loyal servant of the Lord cannot reprove unbelief by his membership, then he ought to reprove it by his withdrawal. The evangelical churches and pastors will obtain no help from the ranks of unbelievers or scoffers, and if they are to continue their God-given task it can only be by the active fellowship of those who share a like precious faith with them. We have a strong conviction that if all Evangelicals in Modernistic Churches were thus to rebuke the unfruitful works of darkness, it would make them tremble to their foundations, while the forces of Evangelicals would be correspondingly strengthened and blessed.—W.S.W.

SEMINARY ACTIVITIES

By W. S. WHITCOMBE

New Students

THIS week we had the pleasure of welcoming three young men from the Province of Manitoba. Rev. Samuel Dempster who came originally from Belfast, Ireland, has been pastor at Emerson, Manitoba, and is now student-pastor of the Courtland-Delhi field. He brought with him two fine young men who had been converted under his ministry and who seek further training.

French Chapel Services

One chapel service each week is held in French, when all unite to sing the praises of God and read His Word in that language. This week we were happy to have as our special speaker Mr. Paul Bauman, one of the Trustees of the Seminary, and a friend to all our students.

Monthly French Services

As an advance notice to all interested in the French language, we announce that the next monthly Gospel service in French will be held in Greenway Hall of Jarvis Street Church on Sunday, November 26, at three o'clock in the afternoon. We are happy to have a number of students at the services and invite all our friends to make them known to all who welcome an opportunity of hearing French spoken. We especially invite those who have French-speaking friends to bring them to this

service in order to get them under the sound of the Gospel.

Graduates at Work in France

The latest number of *Le Lien Fraternel*, the monthly publication of the French Gospel Mission, brings us news of a Pastors' Conference and Regional Meetings held in Mulhouse, Alsace. In reading over the accounts of the times of blessing and fellowship enjoyed by these missionary workers in needy Europe, our regret at being unable to participate in them was considerably mitigated by noting that no fewer than five of the alumni of Toronto Baptist Seminary took part. The President, Dr. Robert Dubarry, is an honorary graduate; Rev. Frédéric M. Buhler, the pastor of the entertaining church, was our first student-professor of French; Rev. Wm. H. Frey, his successor in the Seminary, is now pastor at Tramelan, Switzerland; Messrs. Wilfred Bauman and Guy Appéré are members of last year's class. We also note the name of Marc Huser, cousin of our present student-professor, whom we hope to welcome to Toronto Baptist Seminary in the days to come. We record with gratitude the contribution all these graduates have made to the life and work of the Seminary and rejoice that in some measure this school will, through them, aid in the preaching of the Gospel in France, Switzerland and Belgium.

QUEBEC LAUNDRIES CAN'T COMPETE WITH R.C. ORPHANAGE

ROUYN, Que.—(Staff)—Rouyn laundry merchants confessed today that they viewed the use of orphans in Rouyn-Noranda laundry industry as a threat to the trade, arguing that orphans housed at the St. Michael Orphanage where no wages are paid forced them out of all competition.

"I'm not complaining, but it is a sore spot," Clarence Law, owner of the Sanitary Laundry, admitted today. "With me I must pay business tax and many other licences—but at the orphanage they don't even pay wages except to a man who picks up and delivers the laundry."

By using the children at the orphanage to wash the town's sox and shirts, the proprietor of the laundry who has been in business five years complained that St. Michael's Orphanage was able to under cut his rate by "three to four cents" on each article. This, he said, spelled red instead of black on his ledger.

"I have one girl working for me," he continued. "Her name is Marie Cadieux. She is 19 years old. This is the first job she has had since she left the orphanage. She tells me that she has been working in the laundry for as long as she can remember. But she cannot remember ever being paid."

The orphanage where 110 parentless boys and girls are housed, boasts the most efficient laundry in this copper-rich mining community. Most leading hotels use the orphanage laundry facilities and boast that guests' shirts may be washed and ironed with eight hours separating pick-up and delivery.

"No," the laundry owner said, "we can't match that. We must pay our help and that is a large part in the operation costs of a laundry."

Meanwhile at the orphanage where plans are being completed to oust 12-year-olds and over to a Quebec City hostel, the orphanage emphasizes that the young children do not chore in the laundry.

"It's only the older ones," a sister said, citing 19-year-old Clementine Soumis, a deaf mute who knows the orphanage as her only home. The deaf mute, according to the sister, is a shirt-pressing expert because of her years of experience in the humid laundry.

From *The Timmins Daily Press*

Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 15 Fourth Quarter Lesson 8 November 19, 1950

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

NEHEMIAH'S VISIT OF INSPECTION

Lesson Text: Nehemiah 2:1-16.

Golden Text: "So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days."—Neh. 2:11.

I. The Proposal: The Interview at Susa: verses 1-10.

The Persian Kings were called by different names at different times and among different peoples of their Empire. King Artaxerxes, whom Nehemiah served as cup-bearer, is identified as the great Darius (Ezra 4:24; 6:14) and is probably the same monarch who is sometimes called Ahasuerus (Esther 1:1).

It was now nearly four months since Nehemiah first learned of the distressing conditions which prevailed in Jerusalem (Neh. 1:1-4). Although deeply burdened, he continued faithfully to perform his duties as the king's cup-bearer (Eccl. 9:10). No doubt he found his duties irksome at this time, and a less conscientious man would have been inclined to blame the leader of the Empire for the situation in Jerusalem. But Nehemiah, like David, behaved himself wisely in all his ways (1 Sam. 18:14). No doubt Nehemiah prayed continually in his heart, even while busily engaged with his ordinary labours.

The countenance of the man of God betrayed his sorrow of heart (Prov. 14:10). To be cheerful was in accordance with his disposition, as well as his duty, for he had doubtless been chosen to serve the king in a confidential capacity by virtue of the fact that he was a cheerful, comfortable soul (Esth. 4:2). Nehemiah was at first alarmed that his grief was discovered, but this was the very circumstance which the Lord used to bring about the answer to his prayer. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord (Prov. 3:6; 37:23), and we must not be too hasty in the midst of adverse circumstances and say, "All these things are against me" (Gen. 42:36; 50:20; Rom. 8:28).

The Lord abundantly answered Nehemiah's prayer (Eph. 3:20), giving him not merely mercy, but also high favour in the sight of the king (Neh. 1:11; Dan. 1:9). With genuine, kindly interest Artaxerxes enquired concerning the cause of dejection on the part of his cup-bearer, and then offered assistance (Esth. 5:1-6). Nehemiah prayed, and then made his request (Esth. 4:15-17; 5:1).

Prayer and action must go together. We must do all in our power to answer our own prayers, trusting God to do that for us which we cannot do for ourselves (Acts 12:5-12). The fact that Nehemiah was trusting God for success did not prevent him from making careful plans (Lk. 14:28-33). He had thought out all the details of the desired journey to Jerusalem. Such planning was not the outcome of doubt, but rather of faith, for he was certain that the Lord would open the way before him. God gives us leaders who are men of prayer, of faith, of vision and of administrative ability.

The secret of Nehemiah's strength lay in his assurance that the good hand of God was upon him (vv. 8, 18; Ezra 7:6, 9, 28). If God be for us, who can be against us (Psa. 56:9; Rom. 8:31)? By the guiding hand of God Nehemiah was given permission to visit Jerusalem, and was also assisted by letters (Ezra 8:36) and an armed escort.

II. The Prospect: The Inspection at Jerusalem: verses 11-16.

In the Providence of God, Nehemiah arrived safely in Jerusalem, but rested three days before undertaking his task (Ezra 8:32). It is wise to be prepared in body, as well as in mind and spirit, for the work of the Lord.

Nehemiah had learned to keep his own counsel; not yet did he tell anyone of the purpose which God had put in his heart to relieve his brethren and to rebuild the walls and gates of the ruined city. To divulge his plans before the time was ripe would have exposed him to ridicule or opposition in the very beginning of the work, and discouraged the people from commencing their labour.

Alone, save for a few attendants for safety's sake, the

Jewish leader toured the city in the silence of the night. He dimly beheld the walls, all crumbled and jagged, the gates consumed with fire, and the spaces around the king's fountain clogged with rubble. No one was around to stare curiously at the solitary rider or to ask him awkward questions. Moreover, the quiet night is an appropriate time for meditation (Psa. 1:2; 63:6; John 3:2). When the voices of the busy world are silent, one can hear the voice of God (1 Kings 19:12).

When Nehemiah had completed his survey of the ruined city, he was ready to formulate definite plans for the work of reconstruction. Not until then did he appeal to the Jews to join him in rebuilding the walls and gates, that his people should no longer be a cause of reproach to God and to men (Psa. 44:13; 79:4; Neh. 1:3). He inspired them with his own courage and confidence, so that their hands were strengthened to do the work and to complete it, in spite of all the opposition which they encountered (2 Sam. 2:7).

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

- Nov. 13—An Answer to Prayer Neh. 1:4-11.
 Nov. 14—Faithfulness in Daily Tasks
 2 Tim. 4:1-8; 1 Cor. 15:58.
 Nov. 15—A Godly Concern Gen. 18:16-33.
 Nov. 16—Living in Atmosphere of Prayer
 Lk. 18:1-8; Rom. 12:12; 1 Thess. 5:17; 1 Tim. 5:5.
 Nov. 17—Ready with a Plan of Action: Acts 20:17-21.
 Nov. 18—Opposition in the Divine Task 2 Pet. 2.
 Nov. 19—Wise as Serpents, Harmless as Doves
 Matt. 10:16-23; Lk. 22:35-38.

SUGGESTED HYMNS

A ruler once came. Sun of my soul. Abide with me.
 Tenderly guide us. O happy band of pilgrims! Come, ye
 that love the Lord!

FORGET THE DECEITFUL PLEASURES OF SIN

Some years ago, there was a crossing-sweeper in Dublin, with his broom, at the corner, and in all probability his highest thoughts were to keep the crossing clean, and look for the pence. One day, a lawyer put his hand upon his shoulder, and said to him, "My good fellow, do you know that you are heir to a fortune of ten thousand pounds a year?" "Do you mean it?" said he. "I do," he said, "I have just received the information; I am sure you are the man." He walked away, and he forgot his broom. Are you astonished? Why, who would not have forgotten a broom when suddenly made possessor of ten thousand a year? So, I pray that some poor sinners, who have been thinking of the pleasures of the world, when they hear that there is hope, and that there is heaven to be had, will forget the deceitful pleasures of sin, and follow after higher and better things.

—C. H. SPURGEON

BOOKS AND BOOKLETS

By DR. T. T. SHIELDS

"Other Little Ships"	\$2.00
Beautifully bound in blue cloth with gilt letters, 280 pages.	
"The Plot That Failed"	2.00
Special Illustrated Number of Sept. 2825
"Russellism or Rutherfordism", 71 pages25
"The Papacy in the Light of Scripture", 26 pages25
"The Oxford Group Analyzed"05
"Does Killed in Action Mean Gone to Heaven?"05
"The Christian Attitude Toward Amusements"05
"The God of All Comfort"05

The Gospel Witness

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2 - Canada