

"The Lord Is Risen . . . and Hath Appeared!"—p. 5.  
Sin and the Saviour.—p. 10.

God Makes No Mistakes.—p. 13.  
Gambling Schools in R.C. Churches.—p. 14.

# The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

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## An Easter Prayer

Oh let me know  
The power of Thy resurrection;  
Oh let me show  
Thy risen life in calm and clear reflection;  
Oh let me soar  
Where Thou, my Saviour Christ, art gone before;  
In mind and heart  
Let me dwell always, only, where Thou art.

Oh let me give  
Out of the gifts Thou freely givest;  
Oh let me give  
With life abundantly because Thou livest;  
Oh make me shine  
In darkest places, for Thy light is mine;  
Oh let me be  
A faithful witness for Thy truth and Thee.

Oh let me show  
The strong reality of gospel story;  
Oh let me go  
From strength to strength, from glory unto glory;  
Oh let me sing  
For very joy, because Thou art my King;  
Oh let me praise  
Thy love and faithfulness through all my days.

—FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL.

## THE POPE MUST SPEAK WITH "HIS TONGUE IN HIS CHEEK"

**P**RESS dispatches report the Pope as saying that while the Roman Catholic Church "defends the right of private property", "the better distribution of wealth is one of the most important programs of the Church". The head of the richest corporation on earth so speaks.

The Pope's remarks are all the more ironical in that they were directed "to workers of Spain assembled in Madrid, and all provincial capitals to celebrate the 12th anniversary of his coronation."

Here is the dispatch:

Rome, March 11 (AP).—Pope Pius reiterated to-day that the Roman Catholic Church defends the right of private property, but he said a better distribution of wealth is one of the most important programs of the church.

The Pontiff broadcast to workers of Spain assembled in Madrid and all provincial capitals to celebrate the 12th anniversary of his coronation, which will be marked formally here tomorrow.

The Pope said it was contrary to nature that an enormous mass of impoverished people should live in front of a small group of rich and privileged.

"The just salary and a better distribution of natural wealth constitute two of the exigencies most impelling in the social program of the church," he said, adding that the just salary is one of the principal means to a better diffusion of wealth.

He attacked workers' movements—which he did not identify—which treat of imaginary achievements that sacrifice the truth, human dignity and the real welfare of all the citizens.

"The class struggle can never be a social end," he said, adding that there never had been presented a social program that surpassed the doctrine of the church in consistency and realism.

The church has never preached social revolution but always, from the Epistle of St. Paul to Philemon to the social teachings of the popes in the 19th and 20th centuries, it had sought to teach men that all should do their part so that all could live a Christian and human life.

"The church," he added, "exhorts all who contribute to relations between employer and workers to be more human, more Christian."

Could anyone else in the world be guilty of such hypocrisy—to say that "it was contrary to nature that an enormous mass of impoverished people should live in front of a small group of rich and privileged"? He could scarcely have sketched a more accurate picture of Spain, as Roman Catholicism has made it. All history attests that the Papacy has ever been as a huge octopus sucking the economic life-blood out of individuals, and nations, for its own enrichment. Wherever the Roman Catholic Church holds sway, the great mass of the people are kept in poverty, in ignorance, and in squalor. The philosophy of *Mein Kampf* was evidently learned from the Papacy. The bigger the deception, the more docile its dupes and victims.

Nobody would charge the Pope with a defective mentality, and therefore he must know that any policy involving the more equal distribution of wealth, to be consistent, would have to begin with the Vatican, and descend to every Roman Catholic parish in the world. And because he must know that this inevitably would have to be, we can only assume that the Pope did speak "with his tongue in his cheek".

## THANK YOU AGAIN — REGINA

for gift of \$25.00 to THE GOSPEL WITNESS. This gift is greatly appreciated. May the Lord continue to bless you abundantly!

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## A REMINDER

With the approach of the end of our financial year, we venture to remind our subscribers and readers that we stand in need of their help. THE GOSPEL WITNESS is a non-profit enterprise: it accepts no paid advertisements and its subscriptions do not pay for the actual cost of printing and publishing. If it were not for the generous support of interested friends who are convinced that this paper has a mission to fulfill, we should not be able to carry on. Many religious publications and not a few daily newspapers have been forced to cease publication by greatly increased costs. We are well aware that there are many who would be most happy to hear that THE GOSPEL WITNESS had gone to the wall, but they are not friends but foes of the gospel of grace. We candidly admit that we are no lover of Rome, or of modern unbelief. But we rejoice to know that many persons have been blessed through the messages of this paper, faithful pastors have found encouragement, missionaries inspiration, needy churches and pastors and other causes have had their causes pled in these pages. We therefore dare to appeal to those who sincerely desire to see such work as this continued and who believe that THE GOSPEL WITNESS was raised up "for such a time as this". Remember that our financial year ends with March. Send in your contribution now, if you have not already done so.

—W.S.W.

## ROOTS AND FRUIT

We employ a universe to rear a lily-of-the-valley. We need the power of the Holy Spirit to rear a fruit of the Spirit. We require evangelical grace if we would create evangelical patience. We require "the truth as it is in Jesus" if we would furnish even a truly courteous life. Ruskin says that if you were to cut a square inch out of any of Turner's skies you would find the infinite in it. And it ought to be that if men were to take only a square inch out of any of our preaching, they would find a suggestion which would lead them to "the throne of God and of the Lamb."

—J. H. JOWETT

## THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION

**T**HE resurrection of Christ is not only the supreme miracle recorded in the Gospels, it is also the fulfilment of the deepest longings of the human heart and the profoundest reason of the human mind. If men of modern scientific training call the possibility of the resurrection into question, we reply with the question that the Apostle posed to the sceptics of his day: "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (Acts 26:8). Unless we are ready to deny the existence of God, we cannot rule out the possibility of this miracle. He that shaped these bodies of ours can He not also call them again a second time from the dust and form them anew? Who shall dare to limit the Almighty and draw the bounds His power and wisdom shall not surpass?

The pyramid tombs of the Egyptian pharaohs still stand in the desert sands after thousands of years have passed over them as silent witnesses to the hope that ancient peoples had of a life beyond this life. Testimony to the existence of similar longings in the minds of primitive aborigines is found in the bows and arrows that were buried in the graves of the Indian warriors of this Continent to serve them in the happy hunting grounds. Poets of all nations have sung of the immortal mind of man, and the thinkers of all ages have reasoned as to the necessity of the world to come. Man's sense of human dignity forbids him to imagine that he will lie down in the dust to rise no more. There are some thoughts whose very sweetness lendeth proof of immortality.

Man thinks he was not made to die;  
And Thou hast made him; Thou art just.

Conscience pronounces that earth's books are not balanced here and that the Judge of all the earth shall do right in another sphere of existence. So far as faith has laid hold upon God the Eternal One in the here and now, it refuses to believe that death can interrupt the goodness and mercy of the Good Shepherd that have followed the believer all the days of his life.

Our Saviour came to abolish death and bring "life and immortality to light through the Gospel" (2 Tim. 2:10). That is to say, His death extracts the sting of death, which is sin, and robs it of its terrors by making it the portal through which the saint passes into the presence of His Lord and Saviour. The Old Testament believers caught glimpses of the truth that death does not end all and they longed ardently for the revelation of the fulness of joy in the presence of God. Our Risen Saviour not only confirmed by His doctrine the aspirations of their souls, He himself passed through the portals of death and came back to say to the sons of men, "Be not afraid." Here as in every other department of truth, it is not merely what Christ says that manifests the truth, it is what He is as well as what He does. Where, for instance, can we find a more glorious statement of the love of God than in the prophet of the old dispensation who said in the Lord's name: "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. 31:3). Yet those words remained but a promise until the Word became flesh and demonstrated the love of God to men by dying the Just for the unjust to bring us to God. It was not only His teaching but His living and His dying that brought salvation within the reach of mankind. And so it was with life and im-

mortality. Men have ardently longed for the fulness of life, they have reasoned that it must be, and have by faith risen to heights of prophetic confidence that their Redeemer liveth; but now as we stand at the empty tomb and hear the voice of the Risen Son of God, we know that prophecy has become reality. That which was vague and abstract is now embodied in a personality. One has spoken to us who is Himself the resurrection and the life and He has shared with us the glory of His power.

The resurrection of our Lord is a literal historical fact; but it is also a present reality to the believer, a spiritual experience that is daily renewed as a pledge and a foretaste of that great day when the trump shall sound and "the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1. Cor. 15:52). Many who profess and call themselves Christians do so because they accept a certain creed or because they are members of some church. They strive to fulfill what they conceive to be the duties of a Christian and hope that their best efforts will be accepted, but of fellowship with the living Christ, of personal acquaintanceship with their Saviour, they have no experience whatever. Their condition is like to that of the two disciples who walked along the road to Emmaus bemoaning a dead Master who had been taken from them, and left them to face a hostile world alone, bereft of His presence to cheer them and of His power to enable them to gain the victory. What sorrow can be likened to theirs? Greater than the loss of money, greater even than the bereavement of a loved one, for to these saddened disciples Jesus had become more than a mere Friend or Teacher; they had learned to lean upon him in the hour of trial as in the hour of joy; all life had become irradiated and transformed by His presence, they had been taken out of themselves to live a new, richer, deeper life in Him. And now, this new, richer experience had tumbled down into ruins. They had lost their reason for living for they could not go back to the old empty life of mere existence on an animal plane. It was true that His precepts and his teaching remained, but what were they without Him but vain hopes, high aims that condemned them by the very impossibility of fulfilling them. Then as they walked with leaden feet, Another drew near them and joined in their conversation. Their hearts burned within them as He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself, and as they constrained Him to tarry with them, their eyes were opened in the breaking of bread and they knew Him. That is what it is to be a Christian in the New Testament sense of the word. Christ promised to the wondering disciples to whom He had just foretold his death, that He would not leave them comfortless, that is literally "orphans", but that He would come and dwell with them. Without Him we can do nothing, the world is too much for us alone; the enemy of our souls is stronger than we are; through the weakness of the flesh, our poor unaided human will cannot do the things that it would. But, we can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us.

Christ is not a new Lawgiver who multiplies demands upon us by giving a deeper and more spiritual interpretation to the old commandments. He is not merely a Teacher, or a Great Exemplar in whose steps we must strive to put our feet. He is above all the Redeemer, who has put away the guilt of our sin by His Cross and who lives to "break the power of cancelled sin and set the prisoner free", as the old hymn has it. "What the law

could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:3). In Christ there is not only new doctrine but new power; not only a new example but a new dynamic. O that the glorious springtide of His resurrection power might flood us all with the joy of a new life before which old dead things will slough off to give place to the fruits of the Spirit!

—W.S.W.

### DON'T BE FLIPPANT TOWARD HALF A MILLION

Reprinted from *The Peterborough Examiner*, February 14th, 1951

**WE** ARE annoyed by the attitude of some of our Ontario politicians toward the Hope Report on Education. Premier Frost announces blithely that the Government is in no way obligated to put any of its recommendations into effect. The Liberal leader in the Ontario House, Mr. Farquhar Oliver, has jocosely compared the Report with "The Thing", and says that the Conservatives are not going to implement it and that the Liberals will not; Mr. Oliver is also reported as saying that the Report does not commend itself to the people of Ontario, and that it might as well be put in the waste paper basket.

It seems time that these complacent gentlemen, so happily at ease in Zion, woke up to the fact that the Hope Report has occupied the time of twenty of the ablest men and women in Ontario for five years, and that it has cost the people of this Province nearly \$600,000. The flippant suggestion that the report is of slight value, and may be ignored, does not reduce the value of the Report in any way, but it gives us a new, and markedly lower quotation value of the Premier and the Liberal Leader. If these politicians are not prepared to give heed to this expert and extremely costly advice on education, perhaps it is time to take education out of the hands of the provincial governments and put it in the hands of the Federal Government, where men of keener intelligence and a more highly developed sense of responsibility might possibly be found.

For Mr. Oliver to say that the Report does not commend itself to the people of Ontario is windy nonsense. How many of them have had a chance to read it? We have the Report on the table before us as we write; it is typed on foolscap pages, and it is six inches thick; to read it and digest it would be a month's solid work. We have only had time to read parts of it, but it impresses us as worth careful study; apparently the Legislature is prepared to ditch the whole thing, because a few suggestions in it would lose votes for whatever party put them into effect.

Education was a very uneven affair before it became a government concern, but it had some pinnacles of achievement; in government hands it appears to be at the mercy of politicians who care nothing for education and who are prepared to throw a half million dollars worth of advice, much of it excellent, into the waste paper basket rather than exercise their heads. The angels must weep for education in Ontario.

If the spring brings an intensification of the war in the East every government in Canada will be wagging a finger at the private citizen, urging him to the utmost

in economy—which will mean lending his money to governments. When governments themselves are prepared to waste money in this reckless way is it any wonder that politicians appear to the private citizen to be — we will not say either fools or knaves — but of something less than complete sincerity?

### THE TRUMPETER HAS HIS PLACE IN THE CHURCH

The trumpeter has his place in the Church. The trumpeter is the minister of God, the teacher sent by Christ to state the terms of emancipation and sanctification. We must therefore have a warning ministry. We are getting more and more afraid of such an instrumentality. We prefer the lute to the trumpet; we like to hear the harp rather than the ringing blast that calls men to arms or wakens them in the night to tell them that there is danger in the wind. Let us pray that our rising ministers may be men who are not afraid to be up all night, watching in the darkness, ready to give the signal on the occasion of an approaching enemy. But if the trumpeter give an uncertain sound, how can any one prepare for battle? If we are uncertain that there is an enemy, what can we do? If the trumpeter should muse with himself, saying, Is the enemy a person, or is the enemy an influence? the enemy will say, Go on; keep asking the question—for he is making his preparations to overturn the Church. But I do not want any little fledgling trumpet to stand up before me and begin to reason, whether there is an enemy, whether there is a devil, or whether by some *prosopopoeia*—ah, that devil will ruin you through your Greek—there is a personal enemy, or a sort of cloudy general feeling of miasma in the air. If the trumpeter is in that condition of mind, he has no business in the battle; let him go and talk the matter over with some of his most venerable relations he is not a divinely commissioned trumpeter. Let those men preach who can preach — who have something to preach about. I would rather have some of the grand old preachers that had seen the devil and wrestled with him and thrown an inkhorn at him,—I would rather they should be near me in perilous times, than that I should be found in unhappy association with men who have not yet settled the question whether there is a personal enemy, or whether there is simply a malignant and diffused influence.

—JOSEPH PARKER

### STRONG FAITH

Skilful swimmers are not afraid to go above their depth, whereas young learners feel for the ground, and are loth to go far from the bank-side. Strong faith fears not when God carries the creature beyond the depths of his reason. "We know not what to do," said Jehoshaphat, "but our eyes are upon thee" (II Chron. 20). As if he had said, "We are in a sea of trouble beyond our own help, or any thought how we can wind out of these straits, but our eyes are upon Thee. We dare not give up our case for desperate so long as there is strength in Thine arm, tenderness in Thy bowels, and truth in Thy promise." Whereas weak faith, that is groping for some footing for reason to stand on, is taken up with how to reconcile the promise to the creature's understanding.—WILLIAM GURNALL.

## The Jarvis Street Pulpit

### "The Lord Is Risen . . . and Hath Appeared!"

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

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

"And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them.

"Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon."—Luke 24:33, 34.

**W**HAT if our dead could come back to us again?—not with diseased, emaciated, decrepit bodies, but with bodies aglow with health, with all the vigor of youth and invested with all the attractiveness which once they possessed in the days of their strength. I think a sanctified imagination is sometimes very useful. Have you ever tried to enter into the experience of the mother of the young man of Nain? He was probably the only man who ever walked home from his own funeral. What a wonderful experience that must have been when Jesus took the young man by the hand and lifted him up and delivered him again to his mother! I can imagine that it was impossible for her to find language with which to express the joy into which she had entered to the mourners, who, in sympathy, were accompanying her to the burying place where she might bury her dead. I have tried sometimes to picture myself as one among the company at that supper at Bethany, where Jesus came to sit with those He loved, where Martha served, and where Lazarus was one of them who sat at the table with Him. You remember Tennyson's picture of the scene?—

When Lazarus left his charnel cave,  
And home to Mary's house return'd,  
Was this demanded—if he yearned  
To hear her weeping by his grave?

"Where wert thou, brother, those four days?"  
There lives no record of reply,  
Which telling what it is to die  
Had surely added praise to praise.

From every house the neighbours met,  
The streets were filled with joyful sound;  
A solemn gladness even crown'd  
The purple brows of Olivet.

Behold a man raised up by Christ!  
The rest remaineth unreveal'd;  
He told it not; or something seal'd  
The lips of the Evangelist.

Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,  
Nor other thought her mind admits  
But, he was dead, and there he sits,  
And He that brought him back is there.

What a marvellous experience that must have been! And I suppose we who have lost loved ones have sometimes dreamed of the joy we should feel if in health and strength and beauty they could suddenly come back to us. Nothing else would be of interest to us but the presence of those whom we have loved and lost awhile. Can we enter into the experience of the disciples who had learned to love Jesus Christ? It seems to me that they must have loved Him more than they had ever loved any one

else, for never was there another half so lovely or loveable. No mother ever loved her child as they had learned to love Jesus, although they did not know it. They were like some children who do not know how much they love their mother until they have laid her in the grave. But when He was gone, when He had bowed His head and given up the ghost, they followed Him weeping as He was laid away in the rocky sepulchre; they saw the stone rolled against that sepulchre and sealed with the Roman seal, and Roman soldiers set on guard at the grave; and they turned their weary way home again; the moon and every star were gone out of the heavens, and the world was dark indeed. "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel," they said, but they knew not the scripture that He should rise from the dead. And the hope that had been rising within them during these years of companionship with Him, the expectation to which His gracious teaching had led them, — all these things were destroyed; Jesus was gone, and in the darkness they were utterly dismayed.

But what if our dead were to come back? It would be a solitary rejoicing. I wonder when the news was spread abroad in Nain that that widow had received her son restored to life again, if there was another widow mother who said in her heart, "I wish the Man of Nazareth could have met me when I was going to the grave; but He did not. I left my boy there, and he is there still." Perhaps there were some in Bethany who almost envied Mary and Martha their joy when the news spread abroad that Lazarus was alive again, that he had come back from the grave, that he was sitting there at home with his sisters. There were other bereaved homes in Bethany. Somebody said, "Ah yes, it is all very well; Mary and Martha are to be congratulated, but alas, alas, mine has not come back. Our family circle is still incomplete; our loved ones will not return." I was in London on Armistice day. The armistice was to become effective at eleven o'clock; but there was no official announcement that it had been signed. Great London went on about its work as though nothing were happening. There was a very tense feeling; you could feel it in the very air;—we could feel a tenseness about everybody's spirit; and just at eleven o'clock the streets suddenly became alive, and boys rushed everywhere crying their papers. There was no premature announcement in London. They did not do as they did in America, announce it two or three days in advance. Not until the armistice became effective, and the last shot had been fired, was the official announcement released that the war was over, so far as actual fighting was concerned. But now suddenly, as I have said, the streets of London became like a rushing,

raging, torrent; people came down from their offices, out of their stores, men in their shirt-sleeves, women from the factories; they climbed on taxicabs, lorries, and everything on wheels, and in fifteen minutes it seemed as though all London had suddenly gone mad with joy. Just at that hour I got down from a bus to get a paper, as the people began to give every possible expression of joy. As I got to the sidewalk and was getting a paper, I observed a little woman in black, in mourning robes—I shall never forget her. She did not buy a paper; she knew what had happened. But as the significance of it all seemed to come upon her, she covered her face with her hands, and broke into a paroxysm of grief. I did not ask her why she wept; I knew! I knew that she was saying in her heart about somebody, "O that he were here to share the joy of the victory he helped to win." It was by the blood that someone she loved had shed that that day of victory had dawned at last.

But, my brethren and sisters, the resurrection of Jesus may be everybody's victory; it may be everybody's joy; for He was the representative man, our federal Head, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, Who came to be a quickening spirit: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Two people have just heard the news, and late as the hour is they retrace their steps and hasten back to Jerusalem to those whom they think would be interested in the story. On arrival they find the eleven and those that were with them assembled behind shut doors for fear of the Jews. As they quietly come into that company they find that they are all talking, they are all filled with joy, they have one theme, they are saying, "The Lord is risen indeed." That was the theme of the Apostolic Church. No sooner had they learned the truth than it monopolized their attention; and in that first gathering of the disciples after the resurrection they had nothing else to talk about but the resurrection: "The Lord is risen." And they said, He "hath appeared to Simon." That was the proof of it.

I. I say that THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS WAS THE THEME OF THE CHURCH, that was the great story they had to proclaim. On the day of Pentecost that was the burden of Peter's sermon, that the One Who had been crucified was risen again, and had ascended to God's right hand; and that the gift of the Holy Ghost was the evidence, the proof of His resurrection: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." Then if you follow the succeeding chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, you will find that it is said that the apostles "preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead." "With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." They did not speak so much about the crucifixion, they spoke of the resurrection as interpreting the significance of Christ's death. The crucifixion of Christ was a fact known to everybody, but the resurrection of Christ was a divine revelation given only to those to whom He had appeared. And the New Testament Church conceived it to be its mission by the power of the Holy Ghost to bear witness to this great central cardinal truth, that Jesus is risen from the dead. And from then until now that has been the theme of the Christian Church. Men have turned aside from it sometimes to talk about other matters; but the one message of the Christian Church is the message of resur-

rection: and we ought to preach it, not merely on Easter Sunday, but whenever the gospel is preached, because there is no gospel without it.

Now why did they lay special emphasis upon the resurrection of Christ? In the first place, *it invested His teaching with divine authority*; it established the truth of His testimony; it clothed every prophecy which He had uttered with new importance; it gave to every word that had fallen from His lips the authority of divine approval. Every word that Jesus had uttered came back to these disciples; by the ministry of the Spirit in their hearts they were reminded of what Jesus had said, and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken. I venture, therefore, to remind you of the importance of holding fast to the great truth of the bodily resurrection of Christ. I am not at all surprised that it should be the object of attack as every other doctrine of the gospel is attacked, for "if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." That is the great message which we all must deliver if we are to give due authority to the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ. You will remember how in one of His parables He described a man in the other world who asked that somebody be sent to his five brethren "lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham said unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." But Dives answered, "Nay, father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent." They ought to believe if one had actually passed through the experience of death and returned from the other world with a message as to conditions obtaining there, rising from the dead, reappearing in his own body, unmistakably identified as the one who had died, and had been raised again,—such an one would be heard, one might suppose, as no one else would be heard. And if it could be announced that a man who had died and had been buried and the third day had risen from the dead, that such an one would stand in any place in this City at any hour of the day or night, such a multitude of people would flock to hear what he had to say that there would be no other attraction even in these modern days that could for a moment successfully compete with the supreme attraction of a voice out from among the dead. And yet that is the very testimony of the Gospel. Our Lord has answered the demand of Dives; He has come from the dead to tell us of the things of God.

*The resurrection was the complement of a supernatural birth.* The supernaturalism of the Bible is nowadays very generally rejected; but this is all focused, at last, not upon the inspiration of Scripture—that is only incidental, that is only part of the road that leads up to the main citadel of truth: the supreme thing is the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ,—whither He has gone, and whether He will come again; and it is therefore not at all surprising that the fundamental truth that Jesus came into this world, not by a process of natural generation, but that He was born of a virgin, begotten of the Holy Ghost,—that that should be the truth which the devil everywhere denies. I read recently of a professor who said, "Yes, I believe that the doctrine of the Virgin Birth is what the scriptures teach, and when I teach the scriptures that is what I teach; but I do not understand it, and I prefer to say that I believe in the incarnation." But the scriptures teach that Jesus was an entirely unique character, that He came into this world as no other man did ever come into this world: "The Holy



Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." He was supernaturally born, He lived supernaturally, He wrought supernaturally, He manifested at every step of the way the powers of Deity, and at last He said, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." And when He said that, nobody understood Him, nobody could comprehend the tremendous truth He uttered. He went to the cross, and down into the grave; and when at last it was announced, "He is not here, but is risen," with what tremendous significance it clothed His whole life, supernaturally begun, supernaturally ended! We now see that the days of His flesh were but a parenthesis, a manifestation in human flesh of Him, Who is without "beginning of days, or end of life; but . . . abideth a priest continually."

These two truths are complementary to each other,—the virgin birth, and the physical resurrection of our Lord; for if it be true that He was begotten of the Holy Ghost, and that He was begotten again from the dead by divine power, then His is the one authoritative voice in all the universe which should command the attention of all men everywhere. But if you do away with those two cardinal doctrines, then you have reduced Jesus to the level of a man; you have robbed His testimony of all authority; you have classed Him among the sages who have uttered words which are wise, and which men may follow; but He is not a voice from God. No wonder that the Apostolic Church gave witness of the resurrection: for if that can be proved, then every mouth must be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God.

The early Church bore testimony of the resurrection *because that truth gave significance to the death of Christ*. What does the death of Christ mean? A young lady said to me last night, "Some years ago I professed to be a Christian. I knew that Jesus had died, for it was written in the Word; but I had no conception at all of the meaning of His death; I did not know that He had died for me; I did not know that His death had any special value to me." No; there are a lot of people who do not know that; nor can any one know it except in the light of His resurrection. Have you observed in your reading of the gospels the relatively small place which the death of Christ occupies in the teachings of our Lord Himself? It is true it was mentioned. John introduced Him as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." For a time Jesus said nothing of His death; but from a certain period He began to show to His disciples that He must go up to Jerusalem, and He told them at last in the passage I have quoted that He would lay down His life. He said, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Jesus uttered these words, but you remember what He said to His disciples: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth,—there is an Interpreter of My words to come; there is to be a further revelation of the significance of My ministry here among you; but if I were to tell you to-day the full purpose of My coming you would not understand it." He said to the Jews, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple

in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?" Even His disciples did not understand what He meant; but it is said that when Jesus "was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said." But only in the light of the resurrection did they understand the significance of that prophecy. If He had told them in advance that He was going to die for sinners, they would not have understood how sinners could be saved by a human death; for remember, while some strange things were said about His origin, the truth of the virgin birth was not known; it remained for men of inspiration to draw the veil and write that great and glorious truth. Mary knew that her Son was not like any other son; Mary was never surprised when Deity began to shine out through Him: "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory." You will remember it was Mary who said on that occasion, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it,—after the flesh He is a son of mine, but He is more than a son," although even she scarcely understood: "but Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart." But that great truth was not generally known; and if He were a man, how could man be saved by the sacrifice of a man? But when He had laid down His life, and had taken it again, and was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead," they looked back over His ministry and remembered His teaching; they remembered His prophetic utterances about that cross, and how John by inspiration had said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Thus in the light of the resurrection morning, the death of Christ, the cross of Christ, contained a new significance, and the glory of it never faded from their minds. They saw that He was the eternal Sacrifice, "the mediator of the new covenant," that it was His blood that would speak "better things than that of Abel."

My brethren, we cannot rightly interpret the death of Christ apart from His resurrection. You must in a sense read the New Testament backwards to understand it; you must go back from the resurrection to the cross, and from the cross back to His ministry, back to the cradle, back to the prophetic scripture, back to Genesis, and behind Genesis to the counsels of the Eternal, and remember that the Lamb was "slain from the foundation of the world." That is the way to read Scripture. The light of the resurrection certifies the value of His character, and discloses the identity of His Person; in the light of the resurrection we know that "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory,"—just God stooping down, coming into this human life of ours, as a mere parenthesis in His eternal existence.

This Easter truth is not something to be pondered once a year; but must be believed as the surest and most certainly attested fact of history; and it is a message to be proclaimed to all the wide, wide world; because the fact of the resurrection attests in a word the Saviourhood of Jesus. I do not want any better Saviour than that; He is enough for me. When I reflect that He came out of the glory down to Bethlehem, and Nazareth, and Capernaum, and up at last to the holy city and to the cross, and down into the grave, and up again to Mount Olivet, where He spread His hands in blessing, and, ascending, a cloud received Him out of the disciples' sight; and that the

angels said, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven," I want to shout "Hallelujah!" And if the critics come to talk to me about that, I say, "Talk to somebody who does not know anything. Do not bother me. I have the only Saviour I need."

He is the only Saviour we need because He has provided an adequate salvation. Some of us have been blessed, and helped, and strengthened over a number of years, and we ought to be very grateful for it; but we have had little twinges of pain, and we know what it is to be weary; and we know a little of what Jesus meant when He said, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." We can understand, too, a little, why the disciples went to sleep in Gethsemane, so that when He came He found them sleeping with sorrow; for we have passed through some of these experiences ourselves. Sometimes we feel, not only that we want to be rid of our sins, but we want to be rid of this body, that sin has so terribly impaired; we feel like birds in a cage, confined,—

"Our souls can neither fly nor go,  
To reach immortal joys,"

and we wish that we had a Saviour that would not only satisfy our minds, but that would carry us right back to the beginning of things, and before the beginning, back to God, explaining everything that has come into our lives, and then put our sins away, and restore us to fellowship with God,—and take the sting out of death, and the curse out of our bodies, and remove all the limitations that sin has imposed upon them, and give us each a body that would never give us pain, nor confine the spirit in any way, but a body that would be in absolute harmony with God and His laws.

Now if there is a Saviour anywhere that can save me after that fashion, I, for one, want Him. And when I read the story of Jesus I discover that that is just the very thing that He came to do, to enlighten my understanding, to redeem my spirit, and at last to quicken this mortal body by His Spirit that dwelleth in me. Paul said, "Our citizenship is in heaven—we do not belong here anyway; we belong to another kind of kingdom—from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Well, that is the kind of salvation I want, and that is the kind of salvation I have in Christ Jesus. We all have lost loved ones, and we often wish they were back again! As a minister, I find myself, although it is many years since he went home, I find myself often waking in the morning with a desire to tell my father something, and then it dawns upon me that he is not here, and I cannot do it. But I have no doubt that some day I shall be with him. Mary said, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." She turned around and saw somebody standing, to her he said, "Woman, why weepest thou? whom seeketh thou?" She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, "Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." And the voice spoke again, "Mary." She turned and said unto Him, "Rabboni. The Saviour I am seeking is here! The loved One I had lost is found." "Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." There is going to be a day when all our loved ones will come back to us; and just as surely as

Mary knew Jesus on the resurrection side of the grave, we shall know our loved ones when they rise again.

You have heard of the old minister, a quaint old man he was. He and his wife were getting to the end of their journey, and she was troubled as to which would go first, and what would happen after the one had gone, and whether they would ever meet again. And she said, "Dear, do you think we shall know each other beyond the grave?" "Well," he said, "do you know me now?" "Yes," she said, "I rather think so." "Well, do you suppose we shall be any bigger fools over there than we are here?" That was a very common-sense and straightforward remark; but its logic is irresistible. That, then, was the theme of the early church.

II. And here is THE PROOF OF IT: "The Lord is risen indeed"—"Thank you for the message, sir, but who says so? who is qualified to bear witness to that?" Simon, stand up! He "hath appeared to Simon"; let Simon speak. It is as though they had said, "There is one in this company who knows that Jesus is risen because he saw Him himself." The resurrection was not attested by angels, nor by the testimony of circumstances. Read this story as found in the twenty-fourth chapter of Luke. Two of the disciples, Cleopas and his wife, were on their way to Emmaus, and as they communed together a stranger drew near. "And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?" And one of them said unto him, "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people. And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel, and beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; and when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive." Well, that is fine, isn't it?—the testimony of angels, who said He was alive. But they were not convinced by the testimony of angels. "And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said; but him they saw not." They heard what the angels had to say; they observed the circumstances which seemed to prove that what the angels said was true; but, notice, it is said, "Him they saw not." And because they had not seen Him for themselves, they did not believe. And you remember later: "as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight." Then they said, "No sleep for us to-night," and the same hour they returned to Jerusalem to tell the story. And as they came into that company where the eleven and others were gathered, they heard the same story: "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon."

And that is the proof of the resurrection, my friend,—not that angels said it, not that the grave is empty; but that somebody has seen Him, and somebody knows from his own personal experience that Jesus is alive. That is how the truth of the resurrection has been perpetuated from that day until this: Jesus "shewed himself alive



after his passion by many infallible proofs. I never feel any great desire to explore the holy places of Palestine. I think perhaps if I had the opportunity I would go; but it has not been a passion with me at all. For I think there is a more convincing proof than the possession of the holy sepulchre. The Crusaders shed much blood, and went back again and again to take possession of the holy sepulchre. What do we want the holy sepulchre for? They saw the sepulchre; they saw the grave-clothes; "but him they saw not;" and no one was convinced by the empty sepulchre, nor by the grave-clothes, nor by the testimony of angels; no one was convinced of the resurrection of Jesus until they saw Jesus for themselves. That was the proof of it; and that is the proof of it still. Hence, it is said that "he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Jesus tarried on this earth for forty days, just to exhibit Himself. He said, "Look at my hands and my feet and my side. I want you to know that I am alive. That is what I am staying for. It is all ordered of the Lord; and when you have all seen me, and you are all sure, then I am going back to my Father, and you will see me no more. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, Who will know the great truth you know, and will help you believe the truth that I am alive." Therefore He tarried forty days, and returned to His Father. And I rejoice in this, that the mightiest exponent of the doctrine of the resurrection was one who did not see Jesus in the days of His flesh. I wonder why the Lord did not select Peter to write the fifteenth of I. Corinthians; I wonder why He did not select John? The mightiest argument was written by the pen of Paul. You will remember how he begins that chapter, "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;" and that He was seen of this one and that one, and of above five hundred brethren at once, and then, "Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. I was qualified for my apostleship by a special revelation from heaven, and I saw Jesus."

And it is possible to see Him still. It is just as possible for you to see Jesus as it was for John to see Him. No man has ever preached the gospel with power and effectiveness until he has seen Jesus. I cannot tell you how; but I have seen Him, though not with these eyes. I am absolutely sure; I have no doubt about it at all. I know that Jesus is alive. It would not disturb me for a fraction of a second if I were informed that all the presses of the world were busy turning out a book that would prove that the body of Jesus was still in the sepulchre. I should not be disturbed because I know better. My Saviour is not there: "He is not here: for he is risen." I know that because I have seen Him. We are ourselves living witnesses of the great truth that the Saviour lives. There are young men here who are going to preach. I wonder what you would have thought if on that evening you could have come into that company; if you had been the two, for instance, who had seen Him on the Emmaus Road, and you could have come into that little meeting with the eleven and the others, with your burning message that you had just seen Jesus on the road, that He had been with you in your home, — how would you have felt, coming with such tidings, had you found that company of people who professed to love

Him discussing what some Greek philosopher had said, or talking about the prospects of the Roman Empire, talking about mere things; and if on your giving your testimony Simon had said, "Oh, yes; by the way, I saw Him too." Can you conceive of it? What are we to understand when we see great churches engaged in talking about something else than this great and tremendous fact that Jesus is alive? There is nothing else in the world worth talking about; there is nothing else in the world that can thrill men as this old story of the resurrection; nor is there anything that a heart-broken, sin-cursed, bereaved, disappointed world, needs to know so much as this, that life can be lived over again, the past blotted out, the years that the locusts have eaten restored, and heaven brought down to us again; all because Jesus lives.

Will you try from this Easter morning to make every morning of your life an Easter morning, and every evening of your life an Easter evening? Will you live in the consciousness of His presence, and walk and talk with Him every day, so that you will have a testimony from your own burning, joyous, experience that you know Jesus is alive? If you do, nothing can stand against your testimony. It will be again as it was in apostolic days. If people will go back to the simplicity of the gospel, and will be content to deliver the simple gospel in the power of the Holy Ghost, it will prove still to be "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

### SHUN SPECULATION

To leave the consideration of well-known and soul-saving truths to fight over unimportant subtleties, is to turn our corn fields into poppy gardens. To imagine that the writers of unintelligent mysticism are men of great depth, is to find wisdom in the hootings of owls.

True spirituality shuns the obscure and dilettanti, and delights in the plain and practical; but there is much to fascinate in the superfine shams of the hour. Some are zealots for a certain theory of 666, and the two witnesses, and the little horn, who would be far better employed in training up their children in the fear of God or listening for their instruction to a sober preacher of the Word of God. It is a most fitting thing to be looking for the coming of the Lord, but a most miserable waste of time to be spinning theories about it, and allowing the millions around us to perish in their sins.

Ragged-schools, orphanages, street-preaching, tract distributing, almsgiving, these are the present and pressing questions for the Christian Church; whether the stream of the Euphrates is likely to diminish, or the Dead Sea to flow into the Mediterranean, may be settled in less needy times.

—C. H. SPURGEON

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The Gospel Witness

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2 - Canada

## SIN AND THE SAVIOUR

By Dr. Robert G. Lee, President, Southern Baptist Convention. Message delivered over "The Baptist Hour" Network.

Text: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.—I Tim. 1:15.

**I**N THE First Constitutional Convention four men—Roger Sherman, James Wilson, Gouverneur Morris, Mr. Madison—spoke of a total of 637 times. Were I, with all wisdom and eloquence, to speak ten times 637 times on "Sin and the Sinner's Saviour", I could not describe the ruinous ravages of sin and the greatness of the sinner's sinless Saviour.

What am I to believe about God? Man? Sin? Salvation? Life? Death? Hell? Heaven? The future life? The Bible answers.

The Bible teaches that—

### I.—Sin Is a Reality

Listen! "Jews and Gentiles . . . are all under sin" (Romans 3:9). "All have sinned" (Romans 3:23). "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Romans 5:12).—"Let not sin reign in your mortal body" (Romans 6:12). "God sending his own Son . . . (as an offering for sin), condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3). "Sin hath reigned unto death" (Romans 5:21). "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15).

These Bible statements show that sin was and is in the life of all men—except Jesus Christ, in whom was no sin. Every man must say, "I have sinned." And unpardoned sin, ever a terror, disturbs hardened souls. Lady Macbeth dreams that she sees "the damned spot" of sin upon her hand and that she cannot get it washed off. King Macbeth, in his guilty imagination, thinks he sees the airy phantom of a dagger. Both confirm Shakespeare's belief and your belief that conscience hath one thousand different tongues; that every tongue brings in a separate tale, and that every tale condemns you for your sin. And sin is in you as surely as in Adam, who ruined a whole race; or David, who said, "My sin is ever before me"; or Manasseh, who made the streets of Jerusalem run red with the blood of God's saints; or Mary Magdalene, who had seven devils; or Peter, who denied Jesus; or Judas, who betrayed Jesus; or the rich young ruler, who would not give up earthly wealth for heavenly riches; or the swine herdsman of Gadara, who asked Jesus to "depart out of their coasts"; or Saul of Tarsus, who "destroyed them which called on Jesus' name in Jerusalem" (Acts 9:21).

Ghastly great among life's factors is the fact of sin—plague and tragedy of the world, death head set amidst life's feast, quintessence of all horrors, causative element of all world suffering.

And we know that—

### II.—Sin Is Ruin

Though many relish their sins with impenitent hardness of heart, still sin is the nightmare of the human race.

Though certain scientists tell us sin is an upward stumble in man's progress, still sin is the evil that subverted the constitutional order of man's nature and destroyed the harmony of his powers.

Though some philosophers teach that sin is goodness

in the making and that modern "prodigal sons" are only expressing themselves into a higher experience, still "the wages of sin is death."

Though some tell us that sin is just a disagreeable hindrance to the smooth ongoing of the social machinery, still sin is no light discord, but a thunderbolt that crashes life's organ into splinters.

Though some psychologists say sin is egotistic abnormality, still sin is madness in the brain, poison in the heart, frenzy in the imagination, leprous pollution in the blood, blindness of eyes, deafness of ears, prostitution of tongues, palsy of feet, withering of hands—the black darkness that invests man's whole being.

Though some theologians lighten man's sense of the enormity of sin, still sin is the curse of all curses.

The only thing true about the teaching that makes sin "the backward pull of outworn good" is that it is a lie—because sin abuses the authority of God interposed in his law; abuses God's justice as though he would not punish; abuses God's power as though the sinner's breath was not in God's hand; abuses God's wisdom as if God's laws were not right and reasonable; abuses God's omniscience as if he did not see all our ways; abuses God's threatenings as if they were not to be feared; abuses God's promises as if they were lies; abuses Christ as though he were a deceiver and a devil; abuses Christ's death, blood, righteousness, salvation.

Whether we say sin is transgression, overstepping the divine boundary between good and evil—or INIQUITY, an act inherently wrong whether expressly forbidden or not—or ERROR, departure from the right—or MISSING THE MARK, failure to meet the divine standard—or TRESPASS, the intrusion of self-will into the sphere of divine authority—or LAWLESSNESS, which is spiritual anarchy—or UNBELIEF, insult to divine veracity, still we know that sin, which originated with Satan (Isa. 14:12-14) and entered the world through Adam (Romans 5:12), was, and is, universal, Christ alone excepted (Romans 3:23 and I Peter 2:22).

When sin reigns, deadly your soul's state. Sin, insidious like disease, ruins like rot. Sin darkens your understanding, defiles your conscience, ossifies your will, hardens your hearts, disorders all the affection God wishes you to maintain. Sin puts your soul under the sentence of God to eternal wrath.

But from sin's ruin you can get—

### III.—Relief

Sin incurs the penalties of spiritual and physical death. Where is relief to be found? In God's forgiveness.

Sin is debt; God's forgiveness and God's acceptance of the crimson coin of Christ's blood the payment for that debt.

Sin is a cloud; God's forgiveness the sun which does away with the cloud.

Sin is stain; God's forgiveness the fire which burns the dross out.

Sin is darkness; God's forgiveness the light which dispels it.

Sin is a burden; God's forgiveness the removal of it.

Sin is a corpse—the "body of death" (Romans 7:24); God's forgiveness the burial of that corpse in the sea's depths.

Sin is poison; God's forgiveness the antidote.

Sin is captivity; God's forgiveness freedom from captivity.

Sin is a blotted and blurred record; God's forgiveness the erasure of the record.

Sin is death; God's forgiveness Christ's meritorious life substituted for your forfeited life.

What relief to experience the truth that "where sin abounded grace doth much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 5:20-21), "set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins . . . that he (God) might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Romans 3:25-26).

Think of the—

#### IV.—Sinner's Saviour

You have no remedy for your sin except in the sacrificial death of Christ who "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Hebrews 9:26) and to whom is given the only name "under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). And this remedy in Christ is available by faith, because through Christ "is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:38-39).

"Christ died for our sins" (I Corinthians 15:3). "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all". (Isaiah 53:6). God "hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Corinthians 5:21).

From sin's death, how is the sinner, "dead in trespasses and sins," made alive? From bondage so galling and servitude so severe, how is the captive made free? Jesus said, "He that heareth my word and believeth . . . is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). That's how. John said, "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son" (I John 5:11). That's how. Paul said, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2). That's how.

Jesus Christ, the everlasting source of human salvation, is your Saviour, through faith in him. He only, by a work consistent with the character of God, can break the power which holds you in chains, avert the punishment which threatens you, fortify with fresh sanctions the law which you have broken and, reconciling justice with mercy, open to you the fountains of grace. Through Christ the law is vindicated, the holiness of God is doubly honoured, and mercy is offered to you because "Christ receiveth sinful men."

The sinner's Saviour received the wages of sin which he never earned that you might have eternal life which you never deserved: Christ went to the pit that you might sit on his throne; went into awful gloom that you might enter into glory; was sold that you might ransomed be; was unjustly judged that you might escape the severity of God's judgments; was scourged that by his stripes you might be healed; became for you, on the cross, all that God must judge, that you, through faith in Christ, might become all that God cannot judge.

The sinner's Saviour, the perfectly righteous One, was judged as unrighteous that you, the unrighteous one, through faith in him, might be judged as righteous.

The sinner's Saviour stood before God with all your

sins upon himself that you might stand before God with none of your sins upon yourself.

When the *Squalus* crew realized they had taken their last dive and that they were lying helpless at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, two hundred and forty feet below the surface, they sent up smoke flares and a buoy. Would one of the sister ships find them, and if so could they be rescued? Their help must come from above. In agonizing silence they waited.

Soon after that fatal dive the submarine *Sculpin* set out in search. The red smudge was found, then the buoy. But twenty-four hours passed before actual rescue work could be started. A giant ten-ton diving bell dipped and rose again and again, each time taking several men alive from those awful depths, until all thirty-three men who were alive in the submarine had been rescued.

When that huge diving bell came down for the *Squalus* crew, not one sailor refused to be rescued, but all gladly accepted the way to safety.

When the *Sculpin* sent down the ten-ton diving bell, not one of the thirty-three men said, "I will think it over," or "There are hypocrites on the *Sculpin* and I want nothing to do with them" or "I will wait for a more convenient season." Not one said, "I am in good condition as I am" or, "I will wait until I get married" or, "There is too much to give up." Not one said, "I am waiting for a loved one or friend" or, "I do not understand the workings of the diving bell" or, "Sometime I will" or, "I don't feel like being rescued" or, "Tomorrow I will ask rescue." Not one of them found fault with the *Sculpin* crew—as some find fault with the preacher. Not one of them said, "I can't hold out" or, "Next year will be soon enough." All gladly accepted the way to safety.

Christ is ready to forgive—to save. Highest willingness has he. Will you be wise today to get rid of your sin? Would you continue as an impenitent sinner and "nourish your heart as in the day of slaughter"? Will you treasure up wrath "against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God"? (Romans 2:5). The day of wrath is not yet come. This day of grace is yours. God acquits—through Christ Jesus. God declares you free from guilt through your trust in Jesus "whom they hanged on a tree" (Acts 10:39), "who bare our sins in his own body . . . that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness (1 Peter 2:24). Who, then, can condemn you? You are eternally safe—against the day of calamity coming, the day of judgment coming, the day of death coming, the day of Christ's coming.

O young sinner, come to Jesus. God says, "They that seek me early shall find me" (Proverbs 8:17). Quicker than a speeding wheel turns on its axle, quicker than swiftest wing ever moved in flight, come to Jesus. He says, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). And you who are older, who have long been dead in sin, come quickly out of your grave. The Lord Jesus calls you. Come! Come now! Come more quickly than ever wounded man cried for a doctor. Come more quickly than ever drowning man reached for a lifeboat. Come today, even while I speak. And Jesus will glorify His name in your salvation.

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

# Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 16 Second Quarter Lesson 1 April 1, 1951

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

## ABRAHAM PLEADS FOR SODOM

Lesson Text: Genesis 18:16-33.

Golden Text: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you."  
—Matt. 5:44.

### I. The Lord's Intervention: verses 16-22.

Abraham was preeminently a man of faith, and as such, he pleased God (Heb. 11:6). As a result of his faithful heart and obedient walk, he was spiritually prepared to receive special manifestations from the Lord (John 14:21; Acts 5:32). We read that the Lord appeared unto him (Gen. 12:7; 17:1; 18:1; 26:2). On this occasion the Lord appeared in human form as one of the three angelic visitors who came to the door of his tent (v. 1).

Abraham recognized the Lord. All three visitors were welcomed, and all were offered the hospitality which is a necessary courtesy to travellers in the East, but before One of them Abraham bowed, and One of them he addressed as "My Lord" (v. 3).

How condescending and how gracious for the Lord to accept refreshment at the hand of His servants (v. 8)! Favoured beyond measure were those who welcomed the Saviour into their homes in the days of His flesh (Lk. 24:29; John 12:2). We have not that privilege, but we may receive Him into our hearts and into our homes, by faith (John 1:12; Rev. 3:20). We may commune with Him day by day.

As the men rose up to leave Abraham's tent, they looked toward Sodom, the goal of their journey, but the Lord had not yet completed His mission with Abraham. His servant, with whom He had communed, was to be honoured still further. The Lord had already revealed His plans concerning Abraham's personal life, the promised son and the blessing which should come to his family and the nations through him (verses 9-15), but now contemplated a disclosure of His plans concerning Sodom. Happy is the man whom the Lord can thus trust (John 2:24). God knew Abraham; He knew that His servant would obey Him, and teach his family and household to honour Him (Gen. 17:27; Deut. 4:9, 10; 6:7; Josh. 24:15; Eph. 6:4). What a splendid reputation to enjoy before the Lord (2 Tim. 1:4, 5)! Abraham is known as the friend of God, for God did not hide from him the secret counsels of His will (Psa. 25:14; Isa. 41:8; Amos 3:7; Eph. 1:19; Jas. 2:23). Friendship is possible only where there is mutual confidence.

The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah called out, as it were, to God for vengeance (Gen. 4:10; 19:13; Jas. 5:4). God is righteous, and in His own time and way, all sin must be atoned for and put away. Just as the Lord came down that He might Himself visit judgment upon Sodom, so in the person of His Son did He come to this earth to bring salvation (Exod. 2:23-25; 3:7, 8; Lk. 19:10; 1 Tim. 1:15). So will He also come again to execute vengeance upon the wicked and upon those who refuse to turn from their sins to the Saviour (2 Thess. 3:1-9).

### II. The Friend's Intercession: verses 23-33.

After the two angels had departed for Sodom, Abraham stood yet before the Lord, and drew near unto Him. We, too, have access into the Father's presence through the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:1, 2; Eph. 3:12; Heb. 10:19-22).

It was possible for Abraham to exercise the holy privilege of prayer and intercession because God had first spoken to him. God's word is brought home to our hearts, and we repeat that word to Him with the request, "Do as Thou hast said" (2 Sam. 7:25). The Holy Spirit speaks to our hearts, inspiring us to prayer, and through the same Holy Spirit that prayer ascends to the Father (Rom. 8:26, 27).

Abraham thought of his nephew Lot, who dwelt in Sodom, and whose righteous soul was troubled from day to day

because of the wickedness of the people of the city (2 Pet. 2:7, 8). Would God's wrath be visited upon the righteous as well as the wicked (Numb. 16:22; 2 Sam. 24:17)? In considering the problem Abraham knew for a certainty that the Judge of all the earth would do right (Deut. 32:4; 2 Chron. 19:7; Job 8:3; Rom. 3:5). Confidence in the justice, wisdom and love of God must be the foundation of all our dealings with Him.

Abraham asked God to save the city for the sake of the righteous ones who dwelt therein. That is God's plan sometimes, and God could have done so (Jonah 3:9, 10). At other times God destroys the city, but saves the righteous inhabitants, as He did at this time. God in His holiness hates sin, but in His mercy He provides a way of escape for the sinner.

Abraham exhibited humility before the Lord, and also a holy perseverance (Gen. 32:26). The Lord was not angry with him, but rather was pleased because of his importunity (Lk. 11:5-10; 18:1-8). Such importunate prayer should always be in the spirit of submission to the Lord. Some people would continue to beseech the Lord for something which may not be in accordance with His will. There is a great deal of difference between stubbornness and perseverance.

Abraham doubtless thought that there would be more than ten righteous people in Sodom, and that he would be safe in stopping at ten. Mention is made of at least eight in Lot's family—Lot, his wife, two daughters, sons (at least two), two sons-in-law (Gen. 19:12-14). Had his faith been greater, the city might have been saved, although the works of God are beyond the understanding of men.

Just as Abraham engaged in the holy ministry of intercession on behalf of Lot and his family, so may we have the privilege of drawing near to God to request blessing for others (Phil. 1:3-11; Col. 1:9). Lot was ungrateful and caused his uncle much trouble, yet Abraham overlooked these faults, thinking only of Lot's danger (Matt. 7:44).

God hearkened to the prayer of Abraham for Lot's deliverance, but answered the prayer in His own sovereign manner. Lot was saved, not for his own sake, but for the sake of Abraham, the friend of God (Gen. 19:16, 29; Numb. 16:48). Believers are saved for Christ's sake (Eph. 1:6; 1 Pet. 1:21). Who intercedes on their behalf (1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 7:25).

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Mar. 25—Moses Pleads for the Israelites ..... Exod. 32:7-14.  
Mar. 26—Aaron Pleads for the Israelites ..... Numb. 16:41-50.  
Mar. 27—Ezra Pleads for the Israelites ..... Ezra 9:5-15.  
Mar. 28—Nehemiah Pleads for the Israelites ..... Nehemiah 1.  
Mar. 29—Daniel Pleads for His People ..... Dan. 9:3-19.  
Mar. 30—Christ Pleads for Believers ..... John 17:11-26.  
Mar. 31—Christ Pleads for His Enemies ..... Luke 23:34-49.

### SUGGESTED HYMNS

Hushed was the evening hymn. What a Friend we have in Jesus. God make my life a little light. Sweet hour of prayer. I need Thee every hour. There is a green hill far away.

## THIS PASTOR MUST HAVE HEAD-TROUBLE—OR, IS IT HEART-TROUBLE?

### Pastor Would Sooner Ban Cars Than Sale of Liquor

Norwich, March 7—"I cannot go along with those who would ban the manufacture of beverage alcohol," Rev. R. D. McDonald of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Tillsonburg, told a meeting of men-in-Knox Presbyterian Church here.

"I would sooner support a movement to ban the manufacture and sale of cars, because the liquor business was here first, and because there is infinitely more harm caused by cars than by beverage alcohol," Mr. McDonald said.

Mr. McDonald, who was sent by the Liquor Control Board of Ontario to the Yale school of alcohol studies last summer, said alcohol did not harm the tissues of the body in a permanent way. It might be a contributing cause to disease, because it contributed to loss of appetite and body upset, but, of itself, it did not work permanent injury.

Advocating blood and breath tests in car accident cases, he said: "It might work injustice for the few, but it would mean a longer and happier life for the many."

## GOD MAKES NO MISTAKES

By Rev. John B. Cunningham, Calgary

OF ALL the scriptures none is so widely read by the saints of God in times of trouble as the Book of Job. The experiences of that patient and humble servant of the Lord never fail to comfort our hearts in the midst of our own troubles in life—and most of us have plenty of them too! What a blessed thing it is to know that Job's God is ours, that He is the same God, that the intervening centuries have not wrought the slightest change upon Him. Our lives, and all that concerns them, are in His care, as surely as Job's was.

Divine Providence is not merely a theological doctrine; nor is it an idle myth: it is a glorious truth. There is an eternal God who is above all and in all, One who so orders our lives and all that concerns them, that they minister in the end to His own glory. He brings to pass that which is always the best for us. Were our faith strong enough to grasp that truth as we ought, we would enter upon a life of sweetest peace and boundless joy, a life such as we have not known before. Could we believe it, nothing in life would worry us or disturb us, but we would experience that calmness of spirit and rest of soul that God has promised us.

Then too such faith would lead us to acknowledge that God makes no mistakes. We do, even in our interpreting of Divine Providence. We are much like Jacob, who hung his head in his hands and cried, "All these things are against me," when all the while he stood upon the threshold of the happiest day of his life. "Oh," you say, "but Jacob didn't know it." No, he didn't, but that is just the place that faith should occupy in our lives. Faith confesses that nothing is against us in life when we are Christians, but that everything is for us through the overruling hand of the Almighty God.

Surely if any one had cause to doubt God, it was Job. Calamity after calamity came to him, but the book that bears his name takes us behind the scenes of life, and we see that God was in it all, tempering the trial, and fitting it to the good of Job's own soul. So life for us all would have a deeper meaning if we would let our faith pierce the heavy clouds that hide God's face from us, so that we could see that He still sits upon the throne. There is nothing comes to us by chance. Behind it all is God's hand, and He makes no mistakes. He only sends what is best for us. Though His discipline at times seems harsh, yet it's always for our own good, and through it He brings us to the place where He would have us to be.

The Book of Job teaches us also that God works in our lives today with the end in view. So Job's biblical history ends with these words, "So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." And if it also be true in our lives, then we ought not to complain about the trials along the way. God sees the end from the beginning, and He plans to-day with to-morrow in view; He orders our lives on this earthly scene with eternity in view. And when the record of our lives is complete, when we look back upon all the way that He has brought us, we shall confess that His way was best, though at times the path was rough and the way was hard. Surely it was not mere fancy on the poetess' part—

When my spirit, clothed, immortal,  
Wings its flight to realms of day,  
This my song through endless ages—  
Jesus led me all the way!

At the same time Job showed great restraint of spirit, and great submissiveness to the will of God as messenger after messenger came to him with the word of calamity. His enemies had come and taken his oxen from the field; his flocks had been killed with fire from heaven; his sons and daughters had died in the overthrow of their house; then Job himself was afflicted physically. And his wife said to him, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die." So might we have done, but twice it is recorded of this man, "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly."

Would to God that we all might exercise the same restraint in the face of the adversities of life. With most of us the first thought that enters our minds in times of distress is that of rebellion against God. How often we have heard the cry of a rebellious spirit, "Why has this happened to me?" That is not easily answered, except thus—God makes no mistakes. Beyond that we cannot go, but may the faith of our souls in the overruling Providence of God seal our lips, that we might refrain our tongues from charging God foolishly.

## THE THRONE OF GRACE

Is it not a great bliss to have the entrée of Jehovah's palace day and night? Is it not heaven below to have access without ceasing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? How blessed to enter the golden gate unchallenged, and remain unrebuked in the pavilion of the King of kings! O believer, you may come when you will to the throne of grace and never fear a repulse. You may come not only into the King's palace, but what is infinitely more, into the King himself; for he is your habitation whereunto you may continually resort. The Persian kings forbade any one to come near them; and if any ventured into the king's court, and the monarch did not stretch out the silver-scepter, the guards cut them down at once. Yet there were certain favored courtiers who, by special privilege, had the right to approach the king at all times, guard or no guard. These were the noblest in the king's dominions. Such honor have all the saints. No cherub with flaming sword guards the way of approach to God against any child of the great Father. You have a privilege that is much greater than any dignity belonging to the mightiest monarchs of earth—the privilege of perpetual intercourse with God, at whatsoever hour you will. It ought to make your heart leap for joy to think of it. Come in the dewy morning, come at dusky night, come in the mid-night's dreariest hour, the Lord is ever ready to receive you, and you may speak freely with him.

—SPURGEON

## EASTER ECHOES

"Shall rise again!"  
His word shall be  
Enough for thee,  
O mourning heart, so full of pain!  
Yet see!  
The promise sealed  
By loveliest miracles. Each wakening flower  
Of fell or field  
Is fair new proof of resurrection power.

—F. R. HAVERGAL.

## SCHOOLS OF GAMBLING IN R.C. CHURCHES

WHEN our Lord and Saviour found the money changers in the temple He drove them out saying, "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves" (Matt. 21:13). Protestants often apply this sentence to the thriving industry of bingo and other games of chance that are operated on a wholesale scale, in Roman Catholic Churches. Not a few members of that communion also share the feeling of shame that their church, which lays claim to such prodigious virtues and rights, should thus defile herself in the muck and mire of gambling. The recently appointed Archbishop of Montreal has used some very plain speech regarding the evils of games of chance under church auspices. In a pastoral letter last month he wrote, among other things:

The growing popularity of bazaars makes a serious problem for the Christian conscience. The Church is not a financial organization, still less a school of gambling . . . The crowds which gather in the basements (of churches), often at the hour of prayer, do not go there to praise God. In addition, gambling methods destroy the very spirit of charity, for money is given in the feverish attempt to win and not for the purpose of supporting worship or of helping the poor.

It is humiliating to hear the comments which go the rounds on these practices, and still more humiliating to learn of the methods that are employed in these organizations.

### A Burdensome Prohibition

In placing a ban on bingos and other such games of chance, the Archbishop admitted that "this prohibition would be burdensome for some." In so saying, he was not guilty of overstating the truth, for gambling is well established as a means of raising revenues in almost every R.C. church in Quebec and in many others outside that province. A news weekly reports that some "more ambitious (R.C.) pastors raffled off automobiles and refrigerators or held monster bingo games at which crowds of 10,000 or more could gamble for \$1,000 bills under the auspices of church charity."

The ban on gambling, of course, applies only to churches in the archdiocese of Montreal, but the reverend prelate's sentence of condemnation on games of chance can scarcely be limited to the same bounds. Priestly *entrepreneurs* of bingo establishments and schools of gambling hereby are invited to take notice to the Archbishop's words. Men who have any sense of decency or shame would not engage in such practices under the name of religion, even without the condemnation of their ecclesiastical superior.

### Gambling Is Endemic in Quebec Churches!

It is interesting to note that similar bans have been placed upon like practices in Montreal by the present incumbent's predecessors in 1922 and in 1898. Apparently what archbishops say is not forever! It is only a few years since the late Cardinal-archbishop of Quebec laid a similar restriction on the churches in his jurisdiction, but his successor has only a few weeks ago faintly echoed the strong words of his fellow-prelate with a feeble interdiction of all bingos, lotteries or draws "forbidden by civil law". The joker is that civil law in Canada does not absolutely prohibit lotteries conducted for charitable purposes. Through that breach in the statutes the Québec priests have found a way to drive their coaches and fairs

loaded with all the paraphernalia of large-scale gambling. We do not expect that this present prohibition will be effective, though it will serve to label the nefarious trade and its huge profits with the ignominy it well deserves.

### R.C. Churches Show the Way to the Underworld

A judicial inquiry is now being conducted in Montreal into the ramifications of vice in the underworld. The series of newspaper articles which uncovered the abuses, asserted that gambling is the prolific mother of all other vices: drinking, prostitution, and organized robbery are linked with it because it sets the stage for all these other evils by providing the money by which police protection is purchased by the gangsters. This same connection between the gambling houses and schools of crime and vice has been established again and again in many large American cities. The only difference is that Montreal is a strongly Roman Catholic city, surmounted by a cross, acknowledging the rule of the Church. And this very Church has, according to its leading prelate, provided schools for gambling, and it has also led the way, both by the size and by the number of its games of chance, and all this in the name of "Christian" charity.

### The Power of Evil Example

It was not so long ago that our newspapers carried articles reporting the papal condemnation of "service clubs", such as the Kiwanis organization. The other day a publication of such a club fell into our hands, and we were delighted to discover an article condemning the use of games of chance as a means of raising money for charity. That club at least, was morally superior to the priests of Rome that exploit the weakness of their fellowmen for the profit of their church and themselves. Perhaps that is why the pope put the service clubs out of bounds to Roman Catholics. If it is beneath the dignity of great universities to support themselves by such means what shall we say of churches and charities that stoop to do so? As a writer in *The Christian Century* remarked: "I find it impossible even in my weakest moments, when the financial needs of the church are most pressing, to imagine St. John, St. Paul or St. Peter running a bingo party or our Lord sending out His disciples to sell chances. And I shudder at the thought that some young person might say, 'It's all right to gamble. We do it at our church.' How shameful a thing, it is, further, when gambling interests are able to argue, 'What we do is done by the churches, and therefore there should be no objection to it.'"

### We Agree With the R.C. Prelate

We gladly confess that for once we find ourselves in hearty agreement with a distinguished Roman Catholic prelate. If his ban on games of chance does not prove effective, it certainly expresses our moral revulsion whenever we see bingos and such games advertised under the auspices of Roman Catholic Churches or Orange Lodges, for there are a few of the latter who are Romish enough in their finances to follow the priests' evil example.

### Gambling Wrong in Montreal R.C. Churches, Right in Toronto R.C. Churches

It is one of the amazing contrasts found in Romanism that what is forbidden in one diocese is allowed in another! What is wrong in Montreal is right in Windsor or in Toronto! What is the official teaching of the Roman Catholic Church on gambling? Just a year ago,



R.C. Bishop Cowderoy and other priests presented a brief on behalf of the Roman Catholics of England to a Royal Commission on Betting.

According to *The Universe*, the Roman Catholic newspaper of London, England, this august body of R.C. ecclesiastics asserted that "Gambling, compared with other evils such as artificial birth control, infidelity and excessive drinking, is far less likely to lead to the breaking up of home life."

### Rome Condones Gambling

The statement reads:

"We hold that betting is not wrong in itself. Neither is it wrong to play for stakes, even for large stakes, provided the players can easily afford it and the game is not vitiated by circumstances that would make it wrong . . . .

"In the opinion of the Catholic moralist there is nothing essentially wrong in a man earning his livelihood as a gamester or as a bookmaker.

"It is, however, recognized that gambling though not in itself wrong, may be the cause or occasion of wrongdoing.

"It seems to have been the experience of parish priests that gambling, compared with other evils, is far less likely to lead to the breaking up of home life."

On the various types of betting the memorandum comments:

"Little evil seems to flow directly from betting at race courses, although many dishonest people find opportunities for practising their methods at such places . . . ."

### Priests Say Lotteries and Pools Beneficial!

"Lotteries as allowed by the laws of this country and so long as they are honestly conducted, do not appear to constitute any evil.

"Pools have become a national pastime, and we consider that in some ways they are quite beneficial, since in many homes happy evenings are spent by the family remaining together and filling up their coupons."

Among the suggestions made by the R.C. clerics was this:

"We believe that any contemplated legislation should apply to all citizens. By this we mean that betting or gambling should not be legislated for in such a manner that those who are able to obtain credit should be permitted to bet, while the working man should be deprived of the pleasure of a casual bet and a little harmless excitement."

### Anglicans Ape Rome?

Only a short time after the Roman Catholic authorities of England had lent their approval to gambling, an Anglican Church Commission added its feeble amen to a similar proposition to the effect that "Gambling is permissible as an amusement . . ." Is the Established Church attempting to ape Rome in this matter also? We note that a rider was added to the report by the Church Assembly labelling it as a "valuable contribution to discussion . . . not fully representative of the mind and conscience of the Church of England as a whole." For small mercies we are thankful, though this one is exceedingly small. Anglicanism ought to know, through sad experience, that it cannot compete with Romanism; its real strength lies in fidelity to the Bible.

### The Appeal of a Carnal Religion

Any religious organization that dares thus boldly to proclaim the inviolable right of the working man to ruin himself and his family by engaging in games of chance

is bound to be exceedingly popular with certain classes of men who have no sense of morals. And such a church, moreover, stands at least as good a chance of winning huge profits as the religious gambling schools of Montreal, which are so severely castigated by the Archbishop of that place. We venture to suggest a motto for all such religious gamblers to write in large letters over their gaming establishments. "Come to Bethel, and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes after three years" (Amos 4:3). Only paganism, ancient or modern, can show such a callous indifference to righteousness in order to appeal, in the name of religion, to the lowest instincts of human depravity.

We have consulted several Roman Catholic books on "Moral" Theology (so-called) and we discover that the English priests have summed up the teaching of Rome on this subject in a concise manner. One of these R.C. books states the Roman Catholic view:

"Generally speaking, gaming and wagering contracts are not forbidden by the moral law . . ." No wonder that so many gangsters and gamblers, so many under-world "bosses" are Roman Catholics!

How long will the new Archbishop of Montreal be able to hold out in the face of financial pressure from his clergy and despite the teaching of the "Moral" Theologians of his Church? We wish him well in his attempt and hope that he will not too soon develop a politic blindness in one eye.

—W.S.W.

## LIQUOR CAUSES CHILDREN TO BE NEGLECTED

The Report of the Toronto Family Court for the Year 1949 contains the following significant paragraph from the judge who presides over the court dealing with neglected children:

Again I would draw attention to the causes of neglect. There are many, and I mention two in particular at the present time (a) Intemperate use of liquor. I stated in my 1948 report that liquor was a major problem in at least 75 percent of the cases, and I have no reason to change this statement for 1949. (b) Inadequate housing.

Statements of this sort should be placed side by side with the reports of fabulous sums of revenue derived from this accursed traffic. In order to produce government income and distillers and brewers' enormous profits, we mortgage the bodies and the souls of little children and their hapless fathers and mothers.

## THE BIBLE IN NORTHERN FRANCE

From Pastor Maurice Mafille of La Bonne Nouvelle Church, situated in the great industrial centre of Lille, Northern France, comes word of faithful sowing of the good seed. Mr. Mafille writes in a personal letter of recent date:

We too are engaged in the same battle, happy to give out tracts on the market places, and to sell Bibles and New Testaments. Our loud-speaker sounds out the message of the Gospel, and although we expect opposition, while we have the privilege we must not lose the opportunity, for "the night cometh when no man can work." The number of our hearers increases in numbers and in interest, for which we praise God. Pray for our work in the North of France, as we pray for yours in Canada.

## GOD SEEKING SINNERS

ON EVERY page of the Bible, not only in the New Testament but also in the Old, it is written that God is a seeking God, Who has "no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his evil way and live" (Ezek. 33:11). This great master-truth is found even in the Book of Genesis, which records not only the creation of the heavens and the earth and the beginning of human sin and sorrow but also the first promise of coming redemption. There too, we hear the holy voice of offended Deity as it echoes through the Garden seeking for man who, stung by his accusing conscience, flees from the just wrath of the One whom he has disobeyed and wronged. "The Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?" Here in this ancient story from the most primitive times of human history is written the principle that God is love. If it were recorded that the Maker and Creator of our race had sought out our first parents to bestow upon them nothing but the just reward of their disobedience, we should not have been surprised, for our common experience as well as the law of God has taught us that the wages of sin is death. But we read not only of a curse pronounced upon sinful man but of unmerited blessing, the promise of One who should spring from the sin-cursed race and who should win the victory over sin and all its dire consequences. The early fathers called this promise the Protevangelium or First Gospel, and the rest of the divine revelation is the unfolding of the increasing purpose of grace that runs throughout the whole Bible.

No merely human book would dare to imagine that the offended Lawmaker would seek after His erring creatures to restore them and bless them with more blessings than Adam lost. One of the proofs of the inspiration of the Bible is its daring. It runs counter to the voice of guilty conscience which hopes for nothing but condemnation; it contradicts the voice of the Tempter that insidiously suggests that God is not good. Religions that spring from the perverted imaginations of men's minds, all portray the Supreme Being as wrathful if not cruel, as one whose favour must be purchased at the price of human toil and suffering. Only the Word of God assures us that "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rs. 5:8). The good news is so good, that men refuse to believe it. They misunderstand it, thinking it means that God loves those who love Him. Little children are sometimes taught that God loves good boys and girls, and this is the only gospel that many grown-ups know. It is so contrary to a sense of their just deserts that they cannot believe what the Bible plainly declares: "Herein is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us, and gave his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

The Love of God is so stupendous that the pride-hardened hearts of men find it incredible. If, like the man in the parable, the Judge of all the earth had bidden men to take their accounts and cut them in two, leaving them only half to pay, doubtless many would have been willing to close with such an offer. Indeed, that is the very genius of all man-made religions. They flatter the pride of sinful man by telling him that he is good enough to do something to win God's favour, that he need not acknowledge that he is utterly bankrupt and therefore

wholly dependent upon the grace of God in Christ Jesus. And just because this is the underlying principle of every other gospel, which is not a gospel, they all make void the cross of Christ, "for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." (Gal. 2:21).

When the prodigal son came to himself, he determined to go to the father's house and there make a plea that he should be allowed to earn his way as a hired servant. But the father saw him when he was yet a long way off and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. How daring was the stroke of genius, of divine genius, that ventured to say that of the father who in this parable represents none other than God. Such a grand conception of the divine compassions is infinitely distant from the philosophical idea of deity as an unmoved mover who is utterly indifferent to the affairs of men. It is also far removed from the teaching that men must come with a price in their hand to bargain and haggle with divine justice for their eternal salvation. Human inventions that are offered as substitutes of the gospel of grace so as to minister to men's pride are incapable of rising to the assurance of forgiveness; they know nothing of the best robe for the repentant sinner or of shoes for his feet and the ring for his hand together with all the bounties of the Father's table and the joys of the Father's presence. Such signal blessings as these are not for sale, if they come to us at all, they must come "without money and without price". This, and nothing else but this is the burden of the Good News.

Now, ye needy, come and welcome;  
God's free bounty glorify:  
True belief and true repentance—  
Every grace that brings you nigh—  
Without money,  
Come to Jesus Christ and buy.

View Him prostrate in the garden,  
On the ground your Maker lies;  
On the bloody tree behold Him,  
Hear Him cry before He dies,  
"It is finished!"  
Sinner, will not this suffice?

Our Lord announced to the self-righteous Pharisees that He had come to seek and to save that which was lost. He taught that He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. Three times He repeated that there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. And all of these glorious proclamations He sealed with His own precious blood on the cross as the divine guarantee that everyone, no matter how dark his sin or how great his need, may come with confidence to the throne of grace.

—W.S.W.

FOR TORONTO READERS  
NEXT SUNDAY IN  
JARVIS STREET  
REV. H. C. SLADE WILL PREACH

SEE ANNOUNCEMENT IN  
SATURDAY PAPERS