

# The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate

Authorized as Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa

Vol. 30, No. 22

130 Gerrard St. E., TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 20, 1951

Whole Number 1530

## The Structure and Operation of a Real Bible School

By Dr. T. T. Shields

**B**ECAUSE another generation has arisen in Jarvis Street Church which has had no experience of the great school we had before the last war, and before the depression, I am setting out here the principles which I believe must obtain in order to build the kind of school we need.

### I. THE BIBLE SCHOOL IN RELATION TO THE CHURCH

In many instances a Sunday School is an institution entirely apart from the Church. In some cases it is distinctively a rival of the Church. The New Testament knows nothing about any institution other than the Church; therefore any organization within the Church should not only be subject to the Church, but subservient to it, by which I mean the Sunday School should be a servant to the Church. It should contribute to the life of the Church. It should help to build up the Church, not only numerically, but in spiritual quality. It should, indeed, be the right arm of the Church, an integral part of the Church; and the ideal would be that every member of the Church should be in the Bible School; and it should be the aim to bring every member of the Bible School into the Church.

Every member should have something to do. There is no place for unemployment in the Christian Church. There is no necessity for it. There is any amount of work to be done; and it would be impossible to have too many workers. Therefore, every member of the Church should either be teaching, or being taught; should be visiting or being visited. And if the School is thus properly related to the Church, it will be as impossible for any member of the Church to be sick, or in sorrow, or in any kind of need, as for any member of the body to be hurt, to be warm, or cold, or subject to any disability, without the entire body knowing it at once.

The inspiring Principle and Force in the life of the Church and the School must be the Holy Spirit; and its exclusive programme that of the Bible which is the Word of God.

### II. THE BIBLE SCHOOL TEACHER

I put the Teacher first, because the Teacher is of prime importance, even more important than Superintendent, or Assistant-Superintendent, or Secretary. It is conceivable that a Bible School might do some good work without any of these officers; but it is utterly impotent without teachers. Therefore we must have it clearly in mind that the most important members of a Bible School Staff are its teachers.

#### The Duty and Privilege of the Teacher

The Teacher must first of all be a Christian, wholly surrendered to the Lord; and filled with the Holy Ghost. There is no more onerous task in the world than that of the Sunday School Teacher; and it is not in flesh and blood to face the duties, the difficulties, the sacrifices, the strenuous labour necessary in a successful teacher, except as that person has put the Lord, not theoretically, but actually, first in his or her life; is filled with His Spirit, and energized by the Holy Ghost. A carnally-minded professing Christian cannot be an efficient Sunday School teacher. As the word applies to every Christian as a necessity to the Christian life, the saying of our Lord has special application to the Sunday School teacher: "Without me ye can do nothing", which does not mean that "without Me" ye can do only a little: it means exactly what it says, "without Me"—or apart from Me "ye can do nothing". It means just that—absolutely nothing!

It is therefore necessary that the Teacher should be wholly consecrated to the service of the Lord. This does not mean that teaching is an irksome task: it is the most delightful occupation in the world. It is written in the Word that God hath given us all things richly to enjoy. He does not lay His commands upon us to make life burdensome and irksome. On the contrary He says, in that great fifteenth chapter of John, in which He speaks of the necessity of abiding in Him in order to bring forth fruit: "These things have I spoken unto

you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." So then the way of consecrated service is a way of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace. "The joy of the Lord is your strength."

I am persuaded that a true disciple of Christ will get more real soul satisfaction and spiritual joy, and exhilaration in the way of consecrated service, than could be found in the whole round of worldly pleasures.

#### Some Details of a Teacher's Duty

1. First of all, of course, he or she must be saturated in the lesson to be taught. But no person would become an efficient Sunday School teacher who studies the Bible only to become familiar with a particular Sunday School lesson. Just as the frugal and provident housewife fills her pantry, and her cellar, and her refrigerator—if she has one—with abundant supplies of food, so that what she spreads upon the table for a particular meal is only a fraction of what she could provide, so the mind of the true Teacher should be stored with the Word of God, and he or she therefore should be a diligent student of the Bible, studying it all the time. And what other employment to be found on earth will yield greater pleasure, and greater profit than the diligent study of the Word of God!

#### How Shall They Teach Without a Hearer?

2. A Teacher must have someone to teach. He or she has no right to expect someone else to provide him or her with a hearer. "How shall they hear without a (teacher)?" True! But how shall they teach without a hearer? Therefore it is the Teacher's duty, with the utmost determination, patience, and perseverance, to seek out those who need to hear the Word of God, and bring them together for teaching.

A good Teacher will go out and get his or her own class, and not build upon someone else's foundation. But if "given" a class, he or she will do the utmost possible to maintain a full attendance.

How can this be done?

Every scholar in the class should be the subject of daily prayer on the part of the Teacher. Just as the high priest carried the names of the tribes upon the breastplate over his heart, and on the mitre that was on his head, giving all his intelligence, and all his affection to his task, so the teacher should carry his or her scholars, not merely on a roll book, or a card index, but the name of every scholar should be written deeply in the Teacher's heart, so that he or she cannot forget to pray for them constantly. If this is done, the Teacher will not fail in faithful, constant, indeed, continuous visitation of his or her scholars.

The Teacher should have a picture of every home in his mind, and not only an individual scholar, but all the members of that family as well, in his heart. He should make the home of every scholar in his class as so many provinces in his kingdom. He should get to know everybody in the home, and all that may be known about everybody in the home. He should not be content to visit absentees: he should enter the home of every one of his scholars at least once a month, that the scholars may be convinced of his interest and concern for the spiritual welfare of every one of them.

The Teacher who does this faithfully will have few absentees; but he should make the homes, and families of his scholars, his world, his part of the Lord's vine-

## The Gospel Witness

and

## Protestant Advocate

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

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

Editor

T. T. SHIELDS

Associate Editors

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

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

S. S. Lesson and Exchanges

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

Address Correspondence:

THE GOSPEL WITNESS

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2, Canada

Telephone RAndolph 7415

Registered Cable Address: Jarwitsem, Canada

yard, which he should be determined to cultivate to the utmost fruitfulness.

#### The Necessity of Co-operation

3. In order to have the highest efficiency, every Teacher must determine to co-operate with every other Teacher, and with the School as a whole, just as every part of a highly-complex machine—as an airplane engine, or a motor car, is dependent upon every other part of that engine, and if one part of the machine fails, the machine as a whole must fail, as in the human body, if "one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it", so the true Bible School should be a living organism, of which every Teacher and Officer should be a vital, by which we mean of course, a living part, and the whole should be athrob with spiritual energy.

4. We may explain this somewhat by pointing out that when the Teacher has a complete list of all the members of the family, of every scholar, or as quickly as he obtains even one name other than the name of the family member on his list, that name should be passed on to the Secretary, with all particulars, as a prospect. That is, of course, assuming that this additional name is the name of a person who would belong to another Department in the School other than the Department of the particular Teacher with which we are concerned.

By such co-operation every class will help to build up other classes, and every Department will help to build up other Departments. Thus the whole school, working together, will build up the entire organization.

5. We should keep clearly before us that there is no real substitute for the Teacher of a particular class. It is the visitation of the scholar by the person who teaches, and his or her interest in the home from which the scholar comes, that will be most effective. But there is a sense in which a substitute may be better than not to have the work done at all. The important thing is

for the Teacher to secure the co-operation of the entire home. To get only one scholar from a family may mean that Sunday morning's breakfast is late, other members are not interested, and this may make it well nigh impossible even for a scholar who wants to be present, to attend school. But if we can interest the entire family, then every member of the family will help every other member, and so we shall secure the co-operation of the entire family.

6. Now there may be times when, through sickness or other uncontrollable circumstances, visitation by the Teacher at a particular time may be rendered impossible. We suggest that there should be in the teaching staff a certain reciprocity. Just as the farmers help each other in busy seasons, so teachers may help each other, and one may help a particular Teacher who has more than someone else to do; and when conditions are changed the Teacher helped will be ready to help the other.

#### Preaching From Door to Door

The important thing is, however, to see that the family is visited every month by each Teacher represented in the family. It might well be that three or four scholars would belong to as many Departments, in which case a Teacher from each Department would call on that family once a month. But if teachers familiarize themselves with the whole Sunday School roll, and the teaching staff — and we suggest that such a roll should be prepared and kept up to date so far as possible, so that every teacher may know something about every other Teacher, and every other Teacher's class — then when a particular Teacher is unable to visit a particular family, he or she may find that some other teachers are visiting the same family during the month. And if he or she is absolutely unable to call on the particular scholar concerned, she could telephone to another teacher who would be calling there, and say, "While you are calling on Mary I wish you would also ask about Johnnie, and give me all the information." Thus every Teacher would be co-operating with every other Teacher, and securing the co-operation of the home, with all classes that that particular home might represent. In that way a regular attendance would be secured.

#### The Teacher's Aim

7. The next question is, what should the Teacher do when he or she calls? What is the purpose of his calling? It is, of course, to secure the attendance of the scholar at school, and the whole family if possible; but that is only a means to an end. The Teacher should enter the home with a determination to present Christ, and the claims of His salvation, to everybody in that home if possible. And leaving the home he or she should resolve, "I will leave this family without excuse at the judgment day."

In order to be able to do that, the Teacher will need to prepare himself diligently for his calling, by much prayer, that he may go to each place, filled with the Spirit, and thus filled with the blessing of the Gospel of Christ.

8. The Teacher should keep in mind that he has something more to do than to lead the scholar to Christ. Conversion is analogous to birth. The new convert is a mere babe in Christ. It should be the Teacher's concern then to watch over that scholar, carefully to teach such an one the first principles of the Gospel; to feed such an one with the milk of the Word, and little by little to lead

the scholar on to deeper truths, so that the scholars will grow up into Christ in all things. In other words, the Teacher should make plain the great principle of justification by faith, that the soul is saved by faith in Christ. And then he or she should make plain the privilege and duty of every believer to be sanctified through the Spirit by the truth; that is to say, by the application of the principles and precepts of the Gospel in the power of the Holy Ghost.

9. An earnest Teacher will devise all sorts of methods of securing the co-operation of his or her class. For example, even in the Primary Department, they are not all of the same age. A teacher may observe that one or two scholars, or perhaps three in a class, are a little quieter and more sedate than others, better ordered, and who do not talk in church. The wise Primary teacher will assign one of these quiet little ones to look after one who is a little noisy, and have a confidential exchange, and say, "Now you make sure that So and So is kept quiet." Thus the co-operation of all scholars may be secured.

Some years ago one Teacher had a 100 percent class for a whole year. At that time the Pastor offered a prize of a good Bible to the Teacher who should have such a class. This Teacher objected that he had not earned it, that his class had earned it. When I inquired in what way they had earned it, he let out the secret:

Every month he divided his class in two. Let us suppose there were nine scholars. He assigned four scholars to call on the other four, one on each, every Sunday morning to make sure that that other one attended school. Of course he did not send the other one: he brought him. And so he had a 100 percent attendance. What about the ninth? He was assigned to the Teacher. It was his duty to call on the Teacher every Sunday morning to make sure that the Teacher was present, and on time.

The next month the order was reversed, and the four who had been visitors last month were now visited this month. So they visited each other. And he had an enthusiastic class, who would not allow any scholar to stay at home.

#### The Teacher Should Encourage Church Membership

10. Another important suggestion for the Teacher is this: It is advisable that every Teacher should try to get every scholar to do something, to give every scholar some duty, particularly from the Juniors up. That is to say, the Teacher should try to get every scholar to study the lesson at home. The Teacher should try to get every scholar to memorize Scripture. And it is a good idea for the Teacher to secure the help of the scholars in visitation. Sometimes a Teacher might take a scholar, for instance, with her or with him to a new prospect, so that the scholar might add his persuasion to the new prospect: "You come to our class. I am a member and I like it."

11. The Teacher should be persuaded that the proper place for every regenerate soul is in the membership of the Church. Therefore, the Teacher should teach the new converts the duty of baptism, and the duty of church membership, and the duty of attending the Lord's Supper. Indeed, every Teacher should be an assistant Pastor, looking after the lambs of the flock.

#### Every Scholar at the Morning Service of the Church

12. The Teacher should remember that the morning

session of the school closes only with the benediction after the public service of the Church. It is our duty to try to teach the children to go to church; not to go away from church. And therefore, every Teacher should endeavour to persuade every scholar to join in the processional, so that each Teacher may have a 100 percent attendance at Church; and in this connection we suggest that teachers should not too readily listen to excuses for not attending the morning service. We believe that the so-called reasons that are given are usually mere excuses, and if the Teacher exercises good judgment and persuasive powers he or she may secure a full attendance of the class.

#### The Teacher Should Keep Order in Class in the Public Service

13. The Teacher should recognize that it is his or her duty to watch over the class very carefully, particularly the younger classes in the public services of the church. There need be no disorder. There should be no talking. The scholars who talk in Sunday School, and in the public services, are not allowed to talk in day school; and if the teachers are as careful of their scholars as they would be if they were teaching in public school, they will have little difficulty in keeping order in their class in the public services of the church.

#### The Evening Service of the Church

14. Once more, the Teacher should remember that the morning service is not the only service of the church, and he should exercise himself to secure the attendance of the scholars at both services, so far as possible; and persistently to invite the parents to attend the evening service as well as the morning service.

In this way at every evening service we shall have a great company of unconverted people, whose presence will provide us with our great evangelistic opportunity. It is not only important: it is imperative that the Teacher should exercise himself or herself in this respect.

#### The Tuesday Evening Conferences

15. We believe the Tuesday night Conferences, both the Departmental Conferences and the General Conference, are of vital importance in the development of an *esprit de corps* in the school. The Teacher should feel a solemn obligation to attend his or her Departmental Conference, so that all information belonging to the teachers of that Department should be shared by all the teachers, and that together they should commend the work of the Department to God in prayer. Indeed, the most important part of each Departmental Conference should be the time given to prayer. That should never be neglected.

Then the General Conference is also important, because at that Conference reports must be submitted, and one Department must be seen in the light of other Departments. The weak points in the organization need to have attention drawn to them, as well as the strong points, and it is necessary sometimes to exhort and entreat people to greater zeal; hence, the leader of the General Conference needs to have a good oil-can always well-filled, so as to be able to keep the machinery of the school running smoothly.

### III. THE DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY AND SECRETARIAL STAFF

1. First of all, of course, the records of the school must accurately be kept, so that the Superintendent's may be informed from week to week of the standing of his or her Department, so that he may analyze the visitation record, and emphasize those things which need particular attention. Therefore, the keeping of records by the Secretarial Department is indispensable.

2. But we believe there is something quite as important to be done by the Secretarial Staff. The Secretary should keep a visitation record of every Department and every class constantly in view. She should have a form letter, which we suggest later in this document, which she may send from week to week to teachers who need to be reminded of their duty. But, having the record of each class before her, and, of course, having all the classes in each Department by turn, she will see what visitation is being done, and what visitation is being neglected. She will work out the percentages of visits made and visits neglected.

#### Two Classes of Visitation

There should be two classes of visitation: visitation in general, that is, including all the members of the class at least once a month; and special visitation of absentees, and such visitation should always be made in the week following the scholar's absence.

When the Secretary thus has the whole record of the entire school by classes and Departments before her, what then can she do to ensure the full visitation of each class?

#### A Text for a Form Letter

It would be well for the Secretary to have the telephone number of every teacher before her, and it would be well to have that record alphabetically arranged for ready reference. Then there should be a form letter something like this:

JARVIS STREET BAPTIST BIBLE SCHOOL  
DEPARTMENT So AND So

Date .....

Dear So and So:

(Teacher's name should be written in)

Looking over our record I find that the scholars in your class, named below, have not as yet been visited this month. As it is now the middle of the month approximately, I am sending you this list to ask you to please make sure that every scholar on the list below, as yet unvisited, is called upon before the end of the month.

Following the name of each scholar below you will observe a line for the date of the call. Please fill in every date when the call is made, and hand that letter with your signature to your Department Superintendent at a convenient time, either at the Conference, or at some other service; or send it to him or her by mail. But see that the visits are made and report sent in before the end of the month in order that I may have a complete record of the month's visitation in your class, and of course in your Department.

Yours sincerely,

.....  
Sunday School Secretary

BELOW IS THE LIST OF SCHOLARS IN YOUR CLASS WHO HAVE NOT BEEN VISITED THIS MONTH

Name	Address	Date of General Call	Date of Absentee Call

Remarks .....

(Signed) .....  
Teacher

I think it would be better that the Secretary should first send the form letter with the list of names to the Teacher so that he or she may have the record before him. But, giving time for the letter to be delivered by mail, the Secretary should then take the telephone list of her teachers, and call each Teacher by telephone, informing him or her that the letter was sent and hoping that it had been received, and saying that the telephone call is just a reminder, and designed, according to our system, as an additional "push, lest you should forget."

Such labour as this, keeping all the records, and sending prospects from one Department to another Department, and keeping the whole machinery of the organization moving, will involve a very great deal of labour, and I am quite sure that it will be quite beyond the ability of any one person to cover the ground. But we begin with our present newly-appointed Secretary, Miss Helen Shaw, and as soon as she needs additional help I am sure the Bible School Executive will be ready to provide it. Only the work *must be done*, and when work is to be done, it is generally possible to find workers to do it.

IV. THE DEPARTMENTAL SUPERINTENDENT

1. It will be observed that I am moving from the Teacher to the Secretary, and then to the Departmental Superintendent, and, of course, to the General Superintendent last of all. But at the moment I speak of the Departmental Superintendent. He should be, in the truest sense, a Superintendent of everybody, and of everything in his Department. In the assembly of his Department, and in the public service of the Church, he should recognize that it is his duty to superintend that Department, and see that in every respect it functions properly.

As a matter of course the Departmental Superintendent will conduct the exercises of his Department, and he

should be careful not to prolong the devotional exercises unduly, but give the teachers full time to teach the lesson. We have known Superintendents and Departmental Superintendents, who made the Teacher's position almost impossible, because it was nearly time to dismiss the school before the Teacher had a chance to begin to teach.

Brevity in the exercises of the Department is absolutely indispensable to its efficiency.

Wise Leadership

2. The Departmental Superintendent should be the mainstay of every Teacher in his Department. And in his judgment, publicly, every Teacher should always be right. If it should be necessary for the Superintendent to make a suggestion to any Teacher to increase his or her efficiency, it is always better that such suggestions should be made in private conversation, and not in the presence of other teachers. There should be mutual confidence, therefore, between the Superintendent and each Teacher, and he should stand with the Teacher to promote the highest interests of that Teacher's class.

Sometimes the Teacher may have an extremely difficult case, and may need to ask the Departmental Superintendent to make a visit with him, or, even though the case be not difficult, a wise Teacher may discern that a visit from the Departmental Superintendent would greatly reinforce his or her endeavours, and so may call upon the Departmental Superintendent for assistance.

3. The Departmental Superintendent should very carefully scrutinize the record of every Teacher, and aim to make the functioning of each class as efficient as possible. Sometimes a Superintendent may discover that a Teacher is not qualified for his or her task, or whether qualified or not, is not really doing the work. If the Superintendent can bring that Teacher to a higher state of consecration, and industry, that would be the better way, but, failing in this, he should never allow a class to waste away, and sacrifice it to a Teacher's inefficiency.

It should be the Departmental Superintendent's duty, thus to know what is taking place in every class in his Department. This he can know partly by the study of his records, which will always be available to him in the Secretary's office, and, in addition to that, by his personal observation from the platform, and as he moves about among the teachers, observing the manner of teaching, and the order preserved in the class.

If for any reason the Superintendent is convinced that a Teacher is unable to lead his or her class successfully, as kindly as he possibly can, he should find another Teacher for that class.

Intensive Cultivation

4. Another duty of the Departmental Superintendent is to observe carefully the numbers in each class. It is easier to cultivate a small patch of land than a whole farm; and it is easier to give thorough attention to a small class than to a class that is too large. Every Teacher will, of course, aim to secure the largest possible attendance. But when the class becomes too large, it should be the duty of the Departmental Superintendent to divide it, even to cutting it in two.

Then, perforce, he will have to find another Teacher for the new class. Then he will have two Teachers at work where only one was at work before. Both classes,

being somewhat smaller, will soon grow to the allotted size, and then again they may be subdivided and new Teachers appointed.

That is how each class should grow, and each Department should grow, and it is the duty of the Departmental Superintendent so to look after his or her Department that it will grow, and that, growing, each class will become, not less, but even more efficient.

5. The Departmental Superintendent then should carefully observe every Teacher. He should encourage each Teacher to tell him all his troubles. He should make it his business to find out whether that Teacher is really growing in grace, and in knowledge; whether that Teacher is really diligently studying the lesson, and coming to his or her class thoroughly prepared; whether that Teacher is carrying his or her class before the Lord daily in prayer; and in every other way the Superintendent should be the Teacher's counsellor and mainstay; and so they should all work together.

#### Getting the Children to Attend Church

Elsewhere we have called attention to the duty of the Teacher to secure 100 percent attendance of the scholars in the class at school; and then also at the public services of the Church on Sunday morning.

In this matter the Departmental Superintendent can greatly assist the Teacher.

We suggest that every Sunday morning, without fail, varying the form of appeal so as not to become monotonous, the Departmental Superintendent, in closing the work of that Department, before going to the public service of the Church, should urge every scholar to attend. Sometimes he might ask for a show of hands, and set one class against another: "Here is a class who will have 100 percent attendance at Church. Why is that class to have only 50 percent?" So he may exhort the whole Department, and call upon them to co-operate with him, not to let the Department down.

Tell the scholars that reports are submitted, and that he does not want to be ashamed of his Department by having to report so many absentees from morning service.

Then the Superintendent may remind the scholars that by attending the morning service, they are piling up marks which will help to give them a first prize at the end of the year.

So in every conceivable way he may try to secure 100 percent attendance of every class.

6. Once more, it should be the Departmental Superintendent's duty to see that order is kept in his Department in the public service. His duty is not done until the benediction is pronounced at the close of the service. He should seat himself so that he can observe everyone in his Department, and to watch for any Teacher having difficulty with a scholar to control him or her, and to go quietly over and add the weight of his authority to that of the Teacher, and so co-operate in the assembly of the Department, and in the public assembly of the Church.

#### Finding Workers

7. One further duty of the Departmental Superintendent should be noted. He will need always to be on the lookout for new teachers. We cannot have a growing school without a growing teaching staff, and that should be ever-present in the Departmental Superintendent's mind: "Where can I find new teachers?" He may observe some in the Young People's Department. He may

observe some in the Adult Department. And he may observe some others that are in no Department, but who ought to be teaching. But when he has spotted the prospective Teacher, before he speaks to the person concerned, he should have a conference with the Superintendent of that Department, with the General Superintendent, and perhaps in some cases with Mr. Slade, or with the Pastor, because some may have a little fuller information about a particular person than some others. It is better to go cautiously, and to be sure that a proper selection is made.

In order that this may be done, I would suggest that the Departmental Superintendent should carry a record book with him always. He may observe in Church at an evening service, or at some other service, or meet here or there, people whom he thinks would make good teachers. In such cases he would be wise to make a note of it in his book, so that he will have a growing list of prospective teachers before him for whom he can pray, and from whom, presently, new teachers may, prayerfully, be selected.

8. For the operation of these principles it will be recognized that the Departmental Superintendent must keep in close correspondence with the Secretarial Department of the School. He must make use of it when he needs it, and we must have a Secretarial Department that will be able to serve every Department, as that Department may have need.

#### The Departmental Secretary

It will, of course, be the duty of the Departmental Secretary to keep accurate records of the Department, and in this he will receive, we are sure, the hearty co-operation of the Departmental Superintendent, and these two officers will work in close collaboration, so as to secure for the General Secretarial Staff; the fullest possible information of every Teacher in every Department, and of every class in every Department.

### V. THE GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT

1. The General Superintendent, of course, is the Superintendent of the whole School; and just as the General Manager of any mercantile organization, or industrial concern, in order to manage it efficiently, will need to make himself conversant with all the details of the organization over which he presides, so the General Superintendent will need to know everything about every Departmental Superintendent, about every Teacher, and so far as possible, about every class, and about the Secretarial Department.

2. How should the General Superintendent do his work?

Having an organization it is always desirable to make full use of its component parts. Therefore, the General Superintendent's first obligation is to work through the Departmental Superintendents. He should have frequent conferences with each of them separately, so as to know all that is taking place in that Department; and the General Superintendent should not hesitate to make any suggestion, nor the Departmental Superintendent be reluctant to receive any suggestion which may contribute to the greater efficiency of the Department.

The Departmental Superintendent should make full use of the General Superintendent as the General Superintendent should make use of his Departmental deputy.

It is not necessary to define the General Superintendent's duties. When we send a car to be lubricated it is

understood that every part of that vehicle that will take oil, should receive it; that not one part of it should be neglected, so that it may run smoothly, without friction. So the Superintendent should be the "Walking Boss". He should try to visit every Department every Sunday, just to look in for a second or so, to see how things are going, so that all the scholars in each Department, and all the teachers and the Departmental Superintendent, will see him as often as the school assemblies.

3. It is important that all the Superintendents and the teachers, from the General Superintendent down, should recognize that in order to keep the machine moving properly, there should be proper timing, as there is in a motor car. It does not look well for any Department, or for any class, to be late coming in to the public service. We are advertising the School every time we come in to the public service, and we should endeavour to present it to the public, who may be there, as a well-ordered, smoothly-operating, organization.

4. I believe it is desirable that the Superintendent should occasionally call all his Departmental Superintendents together, that they may compare notes, and discover ways and means of helping each other, and also that, periodically, he should call the Executive of the School together in order that the School's finances, and all the interests of the School may be kept constantly under general supervision.

#### VI. THE PASTOR'S RELATION TO THE SCHOOL AND CHURCH

According to the teaching of God's Word, the Pastor is the "Overseer" of the Church; and the Bible School, being part of the Church, he is Overseer of that also. But the wise Pastor will always be busy himself getting other people to work, rather than trying to do all the other people's work himself; so that he will be kept quite busy enough as a general Overseer of all the Church's activities.

But just as the Superintendent works through the Departmental Superintendent down through to the Teacher, so the Pastor will work through the Superintendent in whatever he wants done in the School.

It is very important that the Pastor should be the Pastor of the School; that he should meet the School as often as it assembles. This becomes possible when the School is held in the morning, and the climax of the School's morning exercises is in the morning service of the Church. This teaches scholars to go to Church, and that is an extremely important matter. When the School is held in the afternoon, it is very difficult for the Pastor, who has to preach morning and evening, to attend; and in country places where a Pastor may have three services, it is impossible. But if the School is held in the morning, and then joins in the morning service, it becomes possible for the Pastor and the whole membership to know the School, and for the School to know the Church.

The Sunday School Staff should never have cause to feel that the Pastor is indifferent toward the work of the School. In every possible way he should show his interest.

The Pastor ought to know the Membership of the Church better than anyone else; therefore he ought always to be on the lookout for new teachers. But whenever he has one in mind, if he is wise, he will propose that person's name to the General Superintendent, and

he, in turn, to the Departmental Superintendent concerned, and the request for service may thus be a three-fold one — the Pastor, the Superintendent, and the Departmental Superintendent.

Where it is possible, it is profitable for the Pastor to meet the Sunday School Staff week by week at the Tuesday night Conference, and give them an outline study of the lesson for the following Sunday. This was done by the Pastor in Jarvis Street for nearly twenty years. The same thing is now very ably done by his Associate, Rev. H. C. Slade.

The Sunday School Staff, Officers, and Teachers will readily recognize the Pastor as one who represents the widest experience, and will be glad to seek his counsel, when necessary.

The Pastor should make himself accessible to all members of the Sunday School Staff, and by every means in his power encourage them in the work. But he will never override anyone's authority, but will always work through the officers and teachers, just as is done in an army, and in any well-organized business concern.

#### THE SEMINARY BEGINS ANOTHER YEAR

IT IS with joyful gratitude that we insert the following announcement in this issue of THE GOSPEL WITNESS. More than twenty-five years ago these same pages carried a notice that this school for pastors and missionaries would open its doors for the first time. We had no capital with which to commence the work and we did not know how many students would respond to our announcement. The whole future was unknown to us and we had not tested the possibility of training men and women in this way to go out and do pioneer work. Yet we believed that the need was urgent if the truth of the gospel was to be maintained and preserved for future generations of this land. From the first we experienced the abundant blessing of the Lord. We acknowledge His goodness in sending us the men of His own choosing, in leading us through good report and through evil report, and of providing the wherewithal to continue unto this day. Believing that there is a greater need of this school of the prophets than there ever was before, we humbly look to the Great Head of the church for a continuance of past blessings, praying that for the glory of His name they may grow from more to more in the days to come.

We write this note to remind our friends that next week a fine group of consecrated young people will gather together in our Seminary halls for another year of intensive Bible study with a view to preparing themselves for the work of the ministry. "Brethren, pray for us!" Ours is a great and glorious task, but one that is utterly impossible without the blessing of the Spirit of God.  
—W.S.W.

**TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY**  
1926-1951

**REGISTRATION OF STUDENTS.**

**Monday, September 24, at half past two**

**FIRST LECTURES**

**Tuesday, September 25, at half past eight**

# The Jarvis Street Pulpit

## From Shunem to Philistia and Back

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

"And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done."—II-Kings, 8:4.

### Prayer Before the Sermon

O Lord, we have loved the habitation of Thy house, and the place where Thine honour dwelleth. We bless Thee for the institution of public worship, for the promise of Thy presence wherever Thy saints assemble in Thy name. We rejoice that those who would know where Thou dwellest are ever invited to come and see. We thank Thee for the luxurious life which is the portion of all who dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

Yet would we take wing, and explore the wider reaches of the kingdom of God. In Thy great grace Thou dost set our feet in a large place. Thou dost show us the path of life; and though it turns about through many a shadowed valley, and sometimes winds around the mountain side that is steep and stony, Thou dost provide the heaven-bound pilgrim with shoes of iron and brass, giving him strength even according to his day. But there are mists and fogs about, and we have no power of vision to penetrate the future.

Guide us, O Thou great Jehovah,  
Pilgrims through this barren land;  
We are weak, but Thou art mighty;  
Hold us with Thy powerful hand;  
Bread of heaven,  
Feed us till we want no more.

Save us from all bypaths. Hedge up our way with thorns if need be; but ever lead us in the paths of righteousness, for Thy name's sake. Forbid that Thy multiplied lovingkindnesses should lead us to presumption. Preserve us from the folly of making stumbling-blocks for ourselves of Thy good and perfect gifts. May we never be guilty of the unwisdom of assuming that life consists in the abundance of the things one possesses! May we never forget that the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost! Keep us in the way of Thy will, and give us grace to live wholly for Thy glory. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**L**AST Sunday morning I spoke to you of "a great woman" of Shunem, who recognized Elisha as a prophet of the Lord, and hospitably entertained the truth, constraining him to abide with her, proposing to her husband that they make "a little chamber on the wall", furnished with bed and table and stool and candlestick, that the truth might find a home within her home. Then Elisha, you remember, asked her if he should speak for her to the king, or to the captain of the host, to which she replied: "I dwell among mine own people."

But great changes have taken place since then. Although she had no request to make for herself, the prophet did for her exceeding abundantly above all that she could ask or think. There came into her heart a new joy, and into her home a new life and a new light. Thenceforward the prophet often called, and stayed with them as an honoured member of their family circle. What a picture that is—the happy home at Shunem; the harvest-field where the reapers sing about their work, and where a little child plays among the sheaves! It is a picture without any cloud, or shadow, without any

admixture of sorrow; but a representation of undiluted joy.

But a cynic may say that that is not quite true to life. When he was younger he might have thought such a picture possible. He used to expect to find life a long, unclouded summer day. But instead we have all found what this woman found. The shadows came; death crossed the threshold; the precious life was terminated. Elisha visited this woman just where we have been found—at the meeting of extremes. Her chiefest sorrow grew out of her greatest joy. And when, later, the child who had been miraculously given to her was miraculously restored, she found her greatest joy where she had experienced her greatest sorrow.

But still other changes came. The prophet knew that famine would come upon the land. Cruel war visited the country; and this "great woman" of Shunem by the prophet's counsel emigrated from Shunem to Philistia, and was away from home during the seven years of famine. "And it came to pass at the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and for her land. And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done. And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored a dead body to life, that behold the woman whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and her land. And Gehazi said, My Lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life." And in all the world there was no one so well qualified to speak of the great things Elisha had done as this woman of Shunem now returned from Philistia. "And when the king asked the woman, she told him." Let us look for a few minutes this morning at this further chapter in this interesting life.

### I.

I begin with this observation, that THIS "GREAT WOMAN" OF SHUNEM FOUND THE GUEST OF HER SETTLED HABITATION TO BE THE GUIDE OF HER JOURNEYING YEARS. When first she opened her home to the prophet in Shunem, she was living a quiet pastoral life. She dwelt among her own people. She had no desire whatever to explore the larger world. She even declared that she had no request to make of the king, or of the captain of the host. But she received as cordially as she could, and offered the most generous hospitality to the "man of God" who passed by her dwelling continually. She little knew what she was doing when she made a little chamber on the wall for him, when she made a friend of the "man of God." She could not see into the future.



She did not know how urgently she would require his assistance in the coming years.

And by God's good grace, most of us are given the opportunities of the quiet life of Shunem in order to prepare us for the more stressful and trying later years. Happy are ye if now ye entertain as Guest One Who in those darker days shall prove your Guide. It was given to the prophet to see that famine was coming upon the land he loved, and upon the land this woman loved; and that there would be no sustenance for her there. The Syrian bands came down in one of their victorious invasions, and the country was rent with war; so that the godly family of Shunem had to emigrate. The little house was vacated, and they set out on the long road to Philistia. Very probably during those seven years the prophet often passed by that little house where he had been so royally welcomed. Perhaps he may have longed for the quiet and comfort of the little chamber on the wall. Possibly the Syrian soldiers spent the night beneath that roof. Perhaps some captain of the Syrian host found rest for his body on the very bed upon which the "man of God" had lain. And often as he passed by, this "man of God" remembered the woman who had been kind to him, and, doubtless, often prayed for her.

I have seen this story repeated again and again—the family broken up, the members of the family scattered, the family fortunes reversed, prosperity give place to adversity, and clouds cover the face of the sun until men and women say as Jacob did, "All these things are against me." If now you live a quiet life in Shunem, my friend; if now you are able to say, "I dwell among mine own people—there is scarcely a desire that is not gratified"—I beg you to remember there are many changes in life, and to-morrow you may have to take the road. Do not say, I am not kind to prophesy disturbance, or the breaking up of the nest. I only forewarn you of the possibility, in order to urge upon you the necessity of making the acquaintance of the Man of God, of the Godman—for Elisha was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ—and of seeing to it that you have someone who is able to speak for you to the King, or to the Captain of the host.

All we know about the Shunammite's life in Philistia is that while she did not become wealthy, she was preserved from famine, and was not suffered to want for bread. The Psalmist said: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Through all the trying years this woman was preserved, so that she returned again at last to her own country with her husband, and with the child that God had given to her—and she returned just in time.

We may rejoice that the Lord is pledged to go with us all the way, through whatever experiences we have to pass, if only we have made a little chamber for Him; if only we have received Him as our Guest; if only we know Him for ourselves; He will never leave us nor forsake us.

## II.

Another simple word is this: HER SOUL WAS ENLARGED IN FAMINE, AND HER LIFE ENRICHED BY POVERTY. I know that is paradoxical, but life is full of paradoxes; because the carnal mind always inverts the order of life. This woman dwelt among her own people with no larger view of life than Shunem. Her reply to the prophet was not an unworthy one. She lived an humble

life, and was content with that which God gave her. And yet it was a life that was very circumscribed, she had few interests, and lived a life that centred very largely in herself and her husband; her sympathies were few; her correspondences were limited; her views of life were restricted. She was "a great woman" because she had a capacity for greater things than the quietude of Shunem could possibly afford her. So the nest was broken up and she was driven abroad.

When she came home we find her passionately pleading her own case before the king, or ready to do so. She came "to cry unto the king." That was the very thing that Elisha had suggested to her. He had said: "Wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host?" And she said, "Why should I speak to the king? What should I ask from the treasury of the king? Why should such an humble soul as I visit the palace? I dwell among mine-own people; leave me alone." But the time came when she learned that above all things she needed the privilege of access to the king. Ah, yes, it is possible to be content with Shunem. I have seen many an individual and many a family like that—doing the daily task, thinking of their own personal affairs, concerned about themselves and their families, with scarcely any interest in life outside of that; until God came in and disturbed them, and led them out on to the long road, and gave them a vision of a larger world and of a larger life; and by many a bitter experience taught them their own limitations, until the time came when the greatest privilege of life was to be permitted "to cry unto the King."

Is somebody here disposed to repeat the disciples' prayer: "Lord, teach us to pray." They little know what they ask who pray, "Teach us to cry unto the King", translated into the language of our story. The disciples little dreamed that Pilate's hall was down the road. They little knew that Gethesmane was in the path; that Calvary's cross must be met, and understood, and experienced; that there must be a grave and a resurrection and a pentecost before they could learn to pray. Thus, my friends, you will not learn "to cry unto the King" by reading books, nor by shutting yourself up to any sort of cloistered existence. We shall learn these lessons not in the quietude of Shunem, but on the long and rough road that leads to the land of Philistia. We learn to pray as men learn to swim, by doing the thing, not by talking about it. It is strange that some churches have no prayer-meeting; that churches should be content to say, "I dwell among mine own people. Come and visit us at Shunem. We are the happiest little social club you ever knew. We come together to admire each other, and to tell each other what a lot of nice people we are. We are a lovely little family circle." Of course, no one speaks thus in so many words, but that is their inarticulate confession. When it is so, sometimes God comes into the life of the church, and sends it out on the road to Philistia to teach the church to pray. He has His own way of accomplishing His purposes; but we shall learn this lesson only on the road.

So the "great woman" came back "to cry unto the king", to avail herself of the opportunity which "the man of God" had offered her. She came "to cry unto the king for her house." When "the man of God" spoke to her in Shunem, she said, "I dwell among mine own people." But out yonder she had acquired interests outside of herself, she had learned to think of other people.

Hence she came back to "cry unto the king for her house and for her land", and for the larger interests of life. Have you learned to pray for other people—as well as for yourself, to cry unto the King for somebody else? Until we learn thus the ministry of intercession, we do not pray at all. Poor Job had a hard time, had he not? He lost his family; he lost his property; he was worried by his friends; he went down into the depths; and if any man in all the world's history might have been justified in praying for himself and persuading himself that he needed all the help of God as nobody else did, that man was Job. And yet, the old record tells us that "the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends." Begin to pray for your friends, pray for your house and for your land, and for all the needy of the earth, and in the very exercise your own soul will be enriched.

There is another sense in which she prayed: she wanted to have that house back again. She had had it from the Lord, and now she longed to get back to that little home in Shunem. It had never been so attractive to her as when she was in Philistia. Ah, you English people—I come from that land myself—but if I could have met you a few years ago on some rainy day in that Old Land, I should have heard you grumbling at the weather, and at everything that belonged to it. What a sad tale you would have had to tell! But you had not been in this country six weeks before you began rather to weary the people about you by telling how the birds sing in old England, and about the primroses, and the daisies, and the wonderful country lanes, and the hawthorn hedges, and the glorious green fields, and all the other beauties that are characteristic of that wonderful land, which you never appreciated when you were there. You had to come away to get a perspective view of it, and then it appeared to you a glorious land.

Many of us are too close to our blessings to appreciate them. The little chamber on the wall, and all its accompaniments—it is such a commonplace thing until God threatens to take it away from us, and then we learn its value. But the principle is this: *we never really possess anything until we get it from God the second time.* Abraham was never sure of Isaac until he got him from God the second time. He came to him by God's gift in the beginning, and then he laid him on the altar, gave him up to death. When he received him from the King the second time, he was his own. Thus this woman now came to ask for her house and for her land.

### III.

I touch now upon something to which I think I will return next Sunday morning, if the Lord so orders, because it is enough to occupy us for some time. When the woman returned, she came back wondering, I think, what had happened. While she was yonder in Philistia, she may have wondered what the "man of God" was doing, and whether he was still the mighty man he was when she was there. War had swept the country during her absence; many heroic deeds had been done; famine had been the portion of her people; and many a tragic tale could be told of sacrifices made and endured. Coming back, she may have wondered whether Elisha would still have a place in the public mind.

"After the war"! Do you remember how people talked about what was going to happen "after the war"? Every-

thing was to be changed "after the war." And one might have supposed that even the preachers would have nothing else to do for the rest of their lives than to discuss the war, and the heroism of the war. But now if ministers speak much about the war, they may expect all the ex-soldiers in their congregation to say, "Tell us where we can go to hear something else." As a matter of fact, they do not want to hear about the war. A very quiet sort of man came to see me one night, saying he had decided to enter the ministry. And I said, "Tell me about yourself." He said, "I was in the air force for seven years." "Did you do any flying?" "O yes, flying all the time." "Were you a pilot?" "Yes—not for very long, only about six months." "Only about six months" in the air in France, over the German lines—that was not very long was it? He did not want to talk about it; it was out of his mind. But we were to be occupied with all these things "after the war."

When this woman returned, notwithstanding the experiences through which the country had passed, as she came into the king's presence, she heard the king making this request: "Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done." Elisha was still the centre of national interest, because he was "the man of God", and had brought God near to the people. There is nothing this old world needs to know—and I believe, properly understood, nothing this world wants to know quite so much as the great things which our Elisha hath done. That is what every man in the office, in the shop, and on the street, wherever you meet him—that is what every man is saying in his heart to every Christian, "Tell me the great things that He has done Whom you call your Saviour. I would rather hear about that than about the war, or about the exploits of the most heroic of earth." Tell me all the great things that Jesus hath done." We shall speak about that next Sunday morning. In the meantime, read the Second Book of Kings, beginning with the first chapter. Read of all the great things that Elisha did. Elisha was a type and prophecy of a Greater than Elisha. Think therefore of all the great things which you have seen your Elisha do, and of which you may tell every day; because this woman, as I intimated at the outset, was better qualified to respond to that request than anybody else. She was herself the witness. And as she came in Gehazi said, "My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life." Gehazi stepped back as though he would say, "It is your turn. You tell the king the great things Elisha has done."

So also if you have been saved by God's grace; if you are a partaker of the power of His resurrection; whether you have been to college or not, you have a story to tell. How foolish it would have been if anybody had said to this woman, "Write it down. You cannot write very well: you cannot put it in very good language; but write it down as well as you can, and we will edit it, and present it in due course to the king." O no! The woman was to be herself the witness of the great things which Elisha had done. And so are we. That is to be the programme for the week, my friend, if you are a Christian—to go out and tell the great things which Jesus has done. We ought all to be preachers; we ought all to be witnesses. And no church will accomplish much for the Lord who leaves its testimony wholly to the pulpit. Every Shunammite must tell what she knows:

"Suffer a sinner whose heart overflows,  
Loving his Saviour, to tell what he knows;  
Once more to tell it, would I embrace—  
I'm only a sinner saved by grace!"

Will you go out and tell it, and keep on telling it? Will you tell the same people the same story over and over again? Do you suppose this woman of Shunem ever got tired of telling that her son was God's gift to her? Do you suppose she ever wearied of telling how "the man of God" came and stretched himself upon the child until his soul came into him again? Did she ever weary of telling that it was by the touch of the "man of God" that this son of hers lived again? And we also have a story, my friend, that will occupy us to the end of time, and even eternity will be too short to utter all His praise. Do you believe that? If you do, say so. Do you believe eternity will be too short to utter all His praise? The logic of it is to begin to utter it now. Let us tell the great things our Elisha has done.

"When Jesus has found you, tell others the story,  
That my loving Saviour is your Saviour, too;  
Then pray that your Saviour may bring them to glory,  
And prayer will be answered, 'twas answered for you."

### SOWING AND REAPING

It is not an open question at all whether I shall sow or not to-day; the only question to be decided is: Shall I sow good seed or bad? Every man always is sowing for his own harvest in eternity either tares or wheat. According as a man soweth, so shall he also reap; he that sows the wind of vanity shall reap the whirlwind of wrath. Suppose a man should collect a quantity of small gravel and dye it carefully, so that it should resemble wheat, and sow it in his fields in spring, expecting that he would reap a crop of wheat like his neighbour's in the harvest. The man is mad; he is a fool to think that by his silly trick he can evade the laws of nature, and mock nature's God. Yet equally foolish is the conduct, and far heavier the punishment, of the man who sows wickedness now, and expects to reap safety at last. Sin is not only profitless and disastrous; it is eminently a deceitful work. Men do not of set purpose cast themselves away; sin cheats a sinner out of his soul.

But sowing righteousness is never, and nowhere, lost labour. Every act done by God's grace, and at his bidding, is living and fruitful. It may appear to go out of sight, like seed beneath the furrow; but it will rise again. Sow on, Christians! Sight will not follow the seed far; but when sight fails, sow in faith, and you will reap in joy soon.

—WILLIAM ARNOT

"In an Art Gallery I saw a painting representing a prairie covered with scarlet poppies, and standing among them a blind woman. The evidences of God's presence and activity, like those poppies, stare every one in the face all the time, and they are not seen except by those healed of their blindness miraculously by Jesus. Faith in Jesus is the recovery of a lost sense. 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'

"To see God's kingdom is to be fully persuaded of His presence and activity and sovereignty and love. Happy eyes which see the King exercising His rule."

—REV. JAMES HUNTER, M.A.

## THE GREAT THINGS ELISHA HATH DONE

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

"And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, 'Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done.'

"And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored a dead body to life, that; behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, 'My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life.'—II Kings 8:4-5.

### Prayer Before the Sermon

Once again we assemble in Thy name, O Lord. May the Holy Ghost, as at Pentecost, fill all the place where we are sitting! Every memory of Thy faithfulness, every experience of Thy goodness, every assurance of Thy Word, combine to fill our hearts with gladness as we contemplate Thy changelessness.

Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thine hands: they shall perish: but Thou remainest; and they all wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail.

Our souls are ravished as we meditate upon the character of our Lord Jesus as Thy Book reveals Him. His mercy to the sinner, His compassion for the sick, His tender solicitude for those who labour and are heavy-laden, His deep sympathy for all the troubled and tried; and, transcending all; His love incomparable flowing in Calvary's crimson tide, His life indissoluble by which the sting of death was extracted—these radiations of grace inspire our hearts to worship, and our tongues to praise.

But especially this morning we delight ourselves in the reflection that these qualities of His are eternal, like Himself. Therefore would we celebrate His greatness, and talk of all His wondrous works.

Open our minds, we beseech Thee, and our understandings, to receive the truth. Give us courageous and valiant spirits, that we may witness for Him; and follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.

Comfort, O Lord, the depressed among Thy people. Give Thy grace to those to whom fortune has been unkind, and who must be content once more to begin at the beginning. Be Thou the Architect and Builder of our lives; and keep us ever mindful of the fact that except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it.

This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

WE considered this text last Sunday morning. Two weeks ago we saw that it is our privilege to entertain the truth, to afford hospitality to the word of the Lord. We observed how the Shunammite made a little chamber on the wall, and welcomed the prophet to her home. Last Sunday morning we had another view of the Shunammite. War and famine had intervened. She had emigrated to Philistia, and had spent seven years away from home, and then returned to her own land, wondering, perhaps, what position "the man of God" now held among her people. As she came to the king's house Gehazi was in conversation with the king, and the king was asking him about Elisha: "Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things Elisha hath done." Gehazi endeavoured to respond to the king's request, and to tell him how he had restored a dead body to life; but while he was in the act of describing the miracle, the Shunammite came in, and with her, her son. Gehazi said, "My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life." Very appropriately he stepped aside to allow this great woman to tell some of the great things that Elisha had done.

We shall carry our story forward a little farther this morning; for when Jesus began His ministry in the synagogue at Nazareth, He found the place where it

was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor"; and thereafter He referred both to Elijah and Elisha as illustrating His own ministry. The story of their lives is a partial prefiguration of the record which God hath given us of His Son.

### I.

First of all, we shall find this lesson in the text, THE PERENNIAL ATTRACTION OF MORAL AND SPIRITUAL REALITIES. There are some things of which we soon weary. There are some books which may be read only once. There are stories which will bear but one telling. But there are other things of which we may continue to speak with the assurance that people will be interested in the message we bring. When this woman returned to her own country, notwithstanding all the thrilling events of the war which had intervened; notwithstanding all the experiences of the seven years of famine; she discovered that from the king upon his throne to the humblest of his subjects, there was nothing so interested them as "the great things that Elisha hath done." Not so very long ago it was predicted that the gospel would lose its charm, that the Great War would blot out all that had preceded it; and that for the rest of our lives we should talk of nothing but the war. But the war had scarcely ended when the whole world wearied of talking of it. It remains true to-day that there is nothing which commands the interest of men and women like the story of the great things which our Elisha hath done.

The miracles wrought by both Elijah and Elisha were much more than mere physical wonders. Elijah restored the son of the widow of Zarephath to life; and when he had done so, she declared: "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." Through the physical miracle, she learned the moral and spiritual lesson God designed to teach. "I have written to him the great things of my law; but they were counted as a strange thing." Behind the great things also which Elisha did were the great things of God's law, the great principles of His government, principles of grace which determine our relationship to Him. The same is true of the miracles of the New Testament. Whether you consider the miracles wrought in the days of His flesh, the things which Jesus began to do and to teach; or open the pages of the subsequent history of the Christian Church where by the power of the Holy Ghost the same wonder-working God showed His hand,—it all has the same message. Behind every physical wonder there is the moral and spiritual reality in which men and women are concerned.

It is significant that the one who asked to be told about "the great things that Elisha hath done" was Jeroboam, the son of the notorious Ahab and Jezebel, of whom it was said: "There was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up." Notwithstanding his training, Jeroboam was supremely interested in the great works of Elisha. Nor had there been any person in all Israel who had so commanded the attention of Ahab and Jezebel as had Elijah.

I suggest a problem for your consideration. What is the explanation of a bad man's interest in religion? Why are even bad men interested in religion? I do not

say that bad men are favourable to religion; many are bitterly hostile. But why? If a man will not receive the benefits of religion, why does he not leave it alone? Why oppose Christ? Why talk about Christ? Why recognize Him at all? Why concern one's self about Him? Why should one be interested in "the great things that Elisha hath done" if he will have none of His message? But evermore the message of the Lord is the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death. Hence men cannot leave religion alone, even if they would. They are compelled to consider the great things which God does in the world; for God will not leave Himself without witness; and the day will come when every mouth shall be stopped, and all the world shall become guilty before God. He will be justified when He speaks, and clear when He judges. In spite of all our boasted progress there is still nothing in the world that will command the interest of men in our day like the great things which Jesus has done. Religion is still a subject of the most absorbing interest. Even false religions are an expression of the soul's dissatisfaction with all mundane things, and of the hunger of the soul that was made for God, for something that this world can never supply.

### II.

But we have reason to praise God that WE HAVE IN THIS WORD A RECORD OF MORAL AND SPIRITUAL ACHIEVEMENT WHICH IS COMMENSURATE WITH OUR MORAL INTERESTS. The hunger of every soul may be satisfied at this table. There is nothing that will satisfy the soul like the story of the things which Jesus has done. How satisfying to the intellect, to the heart, to the conscience,—I do not know how you feel when you have wandered through the fogs of evolutionary guesses; but how unsatisfactory that philosophy is, a groping after something, an effort to push the great First Cause back as far as possible—on the other hand how satisfying, I say, to intellect, and heart, and conscience, are the triumphant certainties of Holy Scripture! "In the beginning God created." That is the beginning of the story of the great things which Jesus has done. For if you are to believe the whole story of His exploits, you must go back to the beginning; "for all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made."

One of the wonders of the gospel of the grace of God is *the marvellous provision it exhibits*. God has anticipated our every need. The gospel of God's grace is no after-thought. Redemption is not a work of repair; it is a work of re-creation, foreordained of God from the beginning. I do not cease to wonder at the riches of God's word. A young man goes away from home, who, while he was at home was accustomed to having his clothing looked after and all his needs anticipated. He wonders how he will manage when he gets away. His mother packs his trunk for him, and he leaves for the city. By and by he opens the trunk, and discovers something there that he had never thought he would need—but there it is. After a while he discovers another need, and goes to his trunk and turns it over, and behold, his mother has thought of that! He may, indeed, need some thread and a needle—young men do sometimes—and he wonders where or how he can buy it. But he looks into that wonderful trunk, and even that has been provided. He marvels that his mother has anticipated

his every need. Thus the Lord has supplied our need in His word. It is a trunk packed for the journey; and no matter what you need you will always find it there. It is among the great things which our Elisha has done. He has anticipated your utmost need; and wherever you travel, whatever rank or condition in life may be yours, you will always find the Bible is equal to every emergency.

Let me now remind you of some of the outstanding miracles of Elisha's time. They are suggestive of the wonders of divine grace wrought in our experiences; and of the subject of which you and I ought always to be talking, for about us there are men and women asking us to tell of the great things which our Elisha hath done.

What things have we to tell? It is my ambition that every member of this church should be a preacher, a witness for the Lord Jesus; that we should be holding services all the day, always telling "the great things that Elisha hath done." A preacher is supposed to have some little idea of what he is going to say before he comes to the pulpit; and you ought to have some idea of what you will say to-morrow before you go to your place of business. You ought to have some idea of what you are going to preach to-day, for that is your business. No matter where you work, your business is to tell the great things that your Elisha hath done. What are they? Will you turn them over in your mind; that you may be ready furnished, that the story may be upon your tongue; and that you may have an answer to give to everyone concerning the hope that is in you?

One of the great miracles Elisha wrought was that he met the enemy in Dothan where he and his servant were, and he struck them with blindness and led them into the city of Samaria, Israel's capital, where the Syrians found themselves in the midst of an armed camp. The King of Israel said, "My father, shall I smite them?" But the prophet said, "No, get them a good dinner. Make sure it is a good one." And when their eyes had been opened, he set provision before them, and when they had had a good meal he sent them home to their master. And they went home to their master, spared, forgiven their attempt to destroy the prophet's life. Now, my friend, you and I have been there again and again, in the hand of divine justice. God in justice could have crushed us. He could have visited us with His wrath; but instead He set all the provisions of His grace before us. He forgave us our sins. If you ask me the greatest miracle I know, it is this, so far as I am concerned, the forgiveness of my sins. That is the thing I cannot understand. Nothing but the grace of God could ever have made it possible. Let us realize that great truth, that when justice said, "Shall I smite him?" mercy pleaded in our behalf, gave us the bounties of His grace, and sent us on our way rejoicing.

There is nothing the men and women of our day need to hear more than that. There is not one who has not some consciousness of his past, some sense of blame-worthiness,—not in the deep spiritual sense of conviction of sin; notwithstanding, the story of divine forgiveness will interest the world as nothing else can. It is for you and me to tell that story to-day and to-morrow and all the days, that our Elisha spared us, forgave our sins, washed us in the precious blood, robed us in garments of righteousness, and set before us all the dainties of the King's household that we might be fat and flourishing as the children of God. Go and tell that! Never

mind discussing the weather and all the events of the day's news. Nobody wants to read yesterday's newspaper. Have you not observed that it is out-of-date? It is a story that is past; it does not need to be repeated. But this is never out-of-date, the story of your forgiveness will always be fresh.

There is also that matchless story of the cleansing of Naaman, the "great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper." Elisha came into that life, cleansed him of his leprosy, and made him a whole man. It is a great mercy to be forgiven our sins; it is a greater mercy still to have the sense of cleansing, and to rest in the assurance of it: "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Have you not a story to tell, that whatever prosperity you enjoyed in this world, whatever accomplishments you had to your credit, whatever rank or prestige you may have enjoyed, there was something within and beneath it all that nothing but the power of God could touch? You know how God came and how He cleansed the leper; you can tell that story as among "the great things that Elisha hath done."

Down in the city there are prosperous but very needy men: please do not reserve your gospel for the man who sweeps the street. It is very easy to talk to the man whose hands are soiled and who is clad in rough garments. But remember this is the story of what God did for a man in an exalted position, a man who was next to the king, great with his master and honourable. And doubtless there are very many people in this city, who are ranked as successful men, who are prosperous in business, who live in fine houses, who have at their command all worldly pleasures, who are envied by their neighbours; and yet who know in their own hearts that, beneath all that appearance of prosperity, there is a deadly something that they have never been able to cope with; and they need a message that you can give them, they need the story of the great things that our Elisha can do for the captain of the king's host. I think we have all failed there. We do not carry the gospel as we ought to people who are somewhat difficult of access. You all know how true that is. We can go to the man who is accustomed to receive the commands of others, who is in a somewhat subordinate position. And we ought to go to him; but it is the other man very often whose heart is hungry for the very thing we have. If the Lord by His Spirit should lay it upon your heart during this week to go to some man of high position, dare to go in His name, and tell him "the great things that Elisha hath done"; for remember, it was the king himself who asked this question. The king was anxious to know. And there is that in the gospel of the Lord Jesus which will minister to men and women in the most exalted, as well as in the humblest station of life.

There is also a story of a supernatural birth, and a supernatural resurrection. By the blessing of God a new life came to the house of the Shunammite, but soon that life went out again, and then it was received from God the second-time—born again out of death. That was the message which the Shunammite had to tell. Would you like to be a boy again? Would you like to be a girl again? Would you like to live your life over again? How we have spoiled it! What a record we have written! What a story we should have to relate if we were to tell it from the beginning until now! There is

not one of us who would not like to tear out many of the pages of life's record, and begin all over again. And that is the story of the grace of our Elisha; that He makes it possible for us to begin again, makes it possible for every poor sinner to be born again: "Ye must be born again." It is the most wonderful of all stories to take to a man whose life is wrecked, to tell him that you know of Somebody Who can blot out the record of his life, and by His power enable him to begin life again, to be born from above, begotten of the Spirit of God. That is the story that Gehazi was trying to tell. Just at that time he was speaking of how Elisha had raised a dead body to life, telling how, when all the hopes of life had crumbled, when life was a long record of disappointment, when everything had failed—Elisha came, and behold, the lad lived again by the power of God through him. Not less than that is the story of the gospel of grace. "I will restore to you the years that the locusts hath eaten."

There was still another aspect of Elisha's ministry. It was a record of preservation through war and famine. The life that had been given had been preserved, until at last the woman actually stood in the presence of the king, and at her side the life that had been restored and preserved through all the war and famine years. There are some who wonder that the church of Christ does not make greater progress. The existence of the church of Christ, of a true church, is itself a miracle. What if you were to find some morning in the garden, when the thermometer registers twenty below zero, say in January or February,—what if you were to find a delicate exotic flower flourishing and blooming in a snow-bank? The whole city would come to look upon it and wonder that it had escaped the frost and survived the winter's climate. But that is the wonder of grace. We are born from above. The life that is in the believer is not indigenous to this climate: it comes from heaven; it is a hothouse plant; it belongs to another country altogether; and if you can find a man or woman trusting in Jesus, walking in fellowship with God, a plant which the heavenly Father hath planted, bearing the fruit of the Spirit in this world, it is one of the miracles that our Elisha hath accomplished; and you had better call the whole city to come and look at it. It is a marvel of grace.

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." In a certain book the writer says that the mind of Jesus was filled with the mythical story of angelology and demonology, that Jesus believed in angel and demon possession, which, according to the writer, was not true. Do you believe in angels? I do. Some of us would not be here if it were not for God's angels. What of the story of the horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha? Talking to some of my ministerial friends one day, I said, "I have no difficulty with that miracle. You may deny the horses and chariots of fire as strongly as you like; but I have ridden in one of the chariots myself, and I know they are real." O yes, that is the story we have to tell, not only that He gave life but that He preserves it; and by His good grace we are here to-day to praise His name.

### III.

Finally this simple word: WHO SHALL TELL THIS STORY? What is God's way of publishing "the great

things that Elisha hath done"? Here you have a man asking that somebody should tell him the story; and he is a type and representative of the whole wide world. "Tell me . . . all the great things that Elisha hath done." And Gehazi tried to tell the story to the king. I am a little puzzled about Gehazi. He was the servant of "the man of God." If the story of Naaman's cleansing is in its chronological order, then either Gehazi was himself a leper; for after that he went out from the presence of "the man of God" a leper—either he was himself a leper—and it is scarcely conceivable that he should come into the presence of the king if he was still a leper—or he must, like Naaman himself, have been cleansed of his leprosy. If he was a leper, I do not wonder that Gehazi did not tell his story very well; for if he was uncleansed it meant that he had lived in the presence of Elisha; he had seen Elisha do these wonderful things by the power of God; he had seen him heal the leper and raise the dead; he had seen him make the iron to swim; he had seen him do one thing after another, showing that the power of God was in him; but if he was still a leper, he himself had not been subject to that miraculous power. What a deplorable state to be in, to have the whole world asking for somebody to tell of the great things that God has done, and to have no story to tell ourselves!

But I rather think that Gehazi's leprosy was a temporary affliction like that of Miriam. I think he must have been cleansed of his leprosy; although we have no record of the fact. And if so, then he himself would have been able to say, "I can tell you of how he cleansed Naaman, but I have a greater story than that." He could tell how he cleansed Naaman, but to tell of his own cleansing would force him to confess a story of which he was ashamed. I think there are many people in the church like that. Theoretically, if you speak to them personally, they say, "I suppose I was a sinner like others, but please do not bring that against me. I do not want to tell people I am a sinner saved by grace. I am prepared to discuss this matter in an academic fashion, but you must not ask me for my personal testimony. I would rather tell what Elisha did for somebody else."

Gehazi was trying to tell the story, when in walked the woman, and Gehazi said, "This is the woman, and this is her son. She can tell you better than I can." Of course, she could. *It is the voice of Christian experience that prevails after all.* You may theorize about these things as much as you like; but it is the testimony of the man or the woman who can tell what Jesus has done for him or for her that will prevail in the lives of others. I wish I could stimulate every saved man and woman here this morning to begin thus to witness for Christ. We should study the word. We should try to qualify ourselves for a larger ministry. And if there are young men here who have the ministry of the gospel in view, I suggest to you that the gospel deserves the best; that we ought to do our utmost to train every power of the mind so that it can be exercised at its fullest strength in the work of preaching the gospel. But do not wait until you have been to college before you begin to tell the great things which our Elisha hath done; because possibly when you get to college somebody will tell you that Elisha has not done any great thing. You had better be sure of it before you go, and you had better form the habit of telling what He has

done, and then they cannot stop you. The man who had been blind all his life was more than a match for the doctors of the law. He said, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." And that is the testimony we must give to-day each for himself: to tell "the great things that our Elisha hath done."

Why should we not return to the simplicity of the Bible? I was going to say of the New Testament; but the same truth is in the Old Testament. God never commissioned His church to build up a great institution, an elaborate organization, with all kinds of societies and every facility for entertaining and amusing worldly minds. He gave His church but one commission: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me."—to tell "the great things that Elisha hath done." That is our supreme duty and privilege, everywhere to bear witness to the reality of Jesus Christ. May He help us for His Name's sake to resolve,

"Now will I tell to sinners round  
What a dear Saviour I have found;  
I'll point to Thy redeeming blood,  
And say, 'Behold the Lamb of God!'"

## Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 16 Third Quarter Lesson 14 September 30, 1951

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

### PETER'S CONFESSION

Lesson Text: Matthew 16:13-28.

Golden Text: "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."—Matt. 16:16.

1. Revelation Concerning Christ and His Church: verses 13-20. Read also Mk. 8:27-30; Lk. 9:18-21.

According to the laws of learning, new knowledge should be based upon truths already grasped. Our Lord was the world's greatest Teacher, and before revealing His program to His disciples, He questioned them concerning their knowledge of His person.

The people of that day differed widely from one another in their estimate of Christ's person and mission. Some thought that He was John the Baptist, risen from the dead (Matt. 14:2; Mk. 6:14; Lk. 9:7); others that He was Elijah (Mk. 6:15; Lk. 9:8); others, Jeremiah; others, one of the prophets. So few accepted His own testimony. It would seem that people are disposed to believe anyone or anything, sooner than take the word of God at its face value.

The personal relationship of each individual to Christ is a matter of supreme importance (Rom. 14:10, 12). We may entertain various opinions on a thousand other subjects, but our attitude to Christ is a question of life and death (Matt. 22:42; 27:22). "Whom say ye that I am?"

Peter was spokesman for the disciples, and his confession revealed a saving knowledge of Christ. Jesus of Nazareth is indeed the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matt. 14:33; John 6:69; 20:28). The knowledge of Christ as the Son of God cannot be attained by the natural mind (1 Cor. 2:9-12), but comes as a revelation from God through the Holy Spirit (Lk. 10:22; 1 Cor. 12:3).

After Peter had made his noble confession the Lord blessed him (Matt. 10:32; Lk. 12:8), and unfolded His own purpose concerning the future of His beloved disciple (John 1:42).

In verse 18 there is a play upon words. The Greek word for Peter is Petros, and the word translated "rock" is *petra*. In the Aramaic, which was the spoken language of Palestine, the words Petros and *petra* are represented by the same word, Cephias. In this passage our Lord, the Builder, may be referring to the primacy of Peter as a human instrument in the building of His church. Peter was the first of the foundation stones in the living Temple (Eph. 2:20-22; Rev. 21:14), as by faith and labour under the power of the Holy Spirit he was used to a greater extent than the other apostles in the formation of the spiritual building. (Gal. 2:9; 2 Pet. 2:4-6).

The same metaphor of a building is used in other passages to describe the Divine origin of the church (1 Cor. 3:11). Since Christ is the foundation Rock upon whom Peter and every other believer rests, and upon whom the Church as a whole is built, many are of the opinion that in this passage also our Lord was referring solely to Himself.

Or, it may be that the primary truth referred to is the confession of Peter concerning Christ the Son of God. Every truly born-again person will make such a confession (Rom. 10:9, 10), and of such the Church is composed.

In any case, the promise was addressed to Peter personally, and there is no suggestion that it was to be handed down to any real or supposed successors of Peter, as the Papists declare, nor is there a hint that Peter was infallible (note v. 23), or that Peter was the Bishop of Rome. He claimed no superiority over his fellow-apostles: he was a leader, not an over-lord (1 Pet. 5:1-3).

The Lord tenderly speaks of the church as "My church". It is His own on the ground that He is its Founder, Architect, Builder, Owner and Head (Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:22, 23; 2:19-22). The church, then, belongs to no denomination, no local board, no pastor, no people. The church is under the control of Christ; the saints are His, the work is His, the workers and the pastors. To Him must the workers look for direction, guidance, power and reward.

The Lord's church will never cease to exist; the gates of Hades (the unseen world) shall not be able to swallow it up; for death has no longer dominion over Christ (Rom. 6:9; Rev. 1:18). Nor can the bars of death keep the people of God from rising again (1 Cor. 15:12-22; 1 Thess. 4:14). It may mean that the power of Hades will not be strong enough to overcome the church, which will ultimately be victorious (1 Cor. 15:57, 58).

Peter was given "the keys of the gate without, but not of the door within." In those early days he was the chosen vessel to give the Gospel in a large way to the Jews (Acts 2-4) and to the Gentiles (Acts 10, 11). He was not given authority, in his own name to admit or exclude anyone from the church or the kingdom (Isa. 22:22; Acts 11:17, 18; Rev. 3:7), but he and the other disciples were to declare the Divine conditions of forgiveness of sins (Matt. 18:18; John 20:23).

II. Revelation Concerning Christ and His Cross: verses 21-28. Read also Mk. 8:31-38; Lk. 9:22-27.

It was difficult for the disciples to grasp the spiritual nature of the mission of the Messiah. Lest they should continue to look for an immediate kingdom of power and magnificence, our Lord again spoke to them of the humiliation which would precede His exaltation (Matt. 17:22, 23; 20:18, 19; Mk. 10:32-35; Lk. 18:31-34). Notwithstanding the revelation given to Peter concerning the Christ, he could not understand that the Messiah was also the suffering Servant of Jehovah. Christ must go to Jerusalem, not to assume the political leadership of the nation, but to face opposition and death at the hands of so-called religious men.

Peter would not listen to the Master's instruction concerning the cross. He resolved to oppose such a program by every possible means, and in his characteristic emphatic way declared, "It shall not be." In other words, he would say to the Saviour, "Pity thyself," whereas the Master's word would be "Deny thyself" (Mk. 8:34). The cross was an offence to him, as it is to every one who is worldly in outlook (1 Cor. 1:23; Gal. 5:11, 24; 6:14).

In seeking to turn the Saviour from the path of suffering, Peter actually allowed himself to be the mouth-piece of Satan the Adversary, who put forth every effort throughout the ages to oppose the redemptive work of the Son of God. How quickly Peter turned aside from the place of blessing! At one moment he was inspired by the Holy Spirit to confess Christ as the Son of God, while at the next moment he was actuated by Satan, proving himself to be an offence to Christ, a stumbling-block to the work of God through his fleshly ambition. The cross as an instrument of death was indispensable for our salvation, and the principles of the cross are also essential for discipleship.

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Sept. 24—Joshua's Confession .....	Josh. 24:14-22
Sept. 25—Nebuchadnezzar's Confession .....	Dan. 4:34-37
Sept. 26—David's Confession .....	2 Sam. 7:18-26
Sept. 27—Elijah's Confession .....	1 Kings 18:36-46
Sept. 28—John's Confession .....	John 1:29-34
Sept. 29—Paul's Confession .....	Acts 27:14-25
Sept. 30—Job's Confession .....	Job 19:23-27

### ESTABLISHMENT IN CHRIST

**E**VERY man that has cultivated fruit knows that no tree can bear very rich the first year. The first year a tree bears, the fruit is of the lowest quality; the second year it is a little better; the third year it is still better; the fourth year it is better yet; and it continues to improve every year until the tenth; and then you begin to know what is the best thing that tree can do. Trees have to go through a maturing process of ten years' duration, before they can bear fruit of the highest flavours.

So it is with Christians and Christian graces. You cannot bear high spiritual fruit until the spirit of Christ has dwelt with you, so as to form the very wood and fibre of your life. It is not until you have borne the fruits of Christian life and conduct year after year, that you can bring them forth in their highest state of development.

Besides, there are some things that no mere flush touches, just as low degrees of heat do not affect the roots of some plants. Some plants—for instance, the chick-weed—feel the influence of spring in March. They shake hands with the frost, and say, "How do you do?" to the snow. Others do not feel anything till the next month comes along. As a sleeper, when called, knows that something disturbs him, and begins to turn himself; so the roots of these plants, when April invites them to come forth, know that something is rousing them, and commence to bestir themselves. It is not until June makes its appearance that they begin to lift up their heads; and they are not above the ground before the middle of June. July and August develop the stalk and branches and buds; and September gives us the flower that would not show itself till the whole summer had passed.

So it is in respect to the fruits of the Spirit. Some come quick and early, at the first touches of divine grace; and some not until, through a long summer of experience, the rays of the Sun of righteousness have penetrated the deepest parts of the soul. Then you can gather the most beautiful fruits of Christian life.—BEECHER.

### A PRAYER

Let the lowliest task be mine,  
Grateful, so the work be Thine;  
Let me find the humblest place  
In the shadow, of Thy grace:  
Blest to me were any spot  
Where temptation whispers not.  
If there be some weaker one,  
Give me strength to help him on;  
If a blinder soul there be,  
Let me guide him nearer Thee.  
Make my mortal dreams come true  
With the work I fain would do;  
Clothe with life the weak intent,  
Let me be the thing I meant;  
Let me find in Thy employ  
Peace that dearer is than joy;  
Out of self to love be led  
And to heaven acclimated,  
Until all things sweet and good  
Seem my natural habitude.

—WHITTIER

**NEXT SUNDAY IN JARVIS STREET**

**DR. SHIELDS**

**11 a.m. and 7 p.m.**

**SEE ANNOUNCEMENT IN SATURDAY PAPERS**

## Valuable Reference Books Free!

This paper is a printed missionary, and carries no advertisements. The regular issues contain 16 pages. The subscription price is \$3.00 for 52 issues. WITH EVERY NEW SUBSCRIPTION we will give one of the four following books as a premium:

1. **Blakeney's Manual of Romish Controversy, by Dr. R. P. Blakeney, 316 pages.**
2. **Popery In Its Social Aspects, by Dr. R. P. Blakeney, 326 pages.**
3. **The Prodigal and His Brother, or The Adventures of a Modern Young Man, by Dr. T. T. Shields, 132 pages.**
4. **The Priest, The Woman and The Confessional, by Father Chiniquy, 144 pages.**

All but "The Prodigal and His Brother" were out of print and unobtainable and were republished by "THE GOSPEL WITNESS".

You may choose any one of the four as a premium. If you would like any or all of the other books, you may have them at one dollar each.

You may order the paper and one of the books sent you for a month's trial without sending any money. If you are not satisfied return the book or send us \$1.00 and we will charge you nothing for the paper for the month.

### ORDER FORM

- (a) Please send to the undersigned for one month's trial "THE GOSPEL WITNESS" and Premium No. ....
- (b) Please send "THE GOSPEL WITNESS" and Premium No. .... to the undersigned for which find \$3.00 enclosed.
- (c) And also books (or book) numbered ..... for which find \$..... enclosed.

**NAME** .....

**ADDRESS** .....