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"THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE"

THE prophetic word of our caption the New Testament tells us was fulfilled in the experience of Christ. How bitterly was He hated by the religious leaders, who stirred up the multitude until they howled about the cross like a pack of wild beasts of prey, thirsting for blood!

There are people who are hated because they are hateful, and in being hated they reap only what they have sown. But what a stupendous wonder that such an one as Christ should be hated!—He went about doing good. He did nothing but good. He fed the hungry multitudes; He healed all manner of diseases. And in His preaching He uttered such gracious words as never man had uttered before. He was, indeed, the very Incarnation of the love of God. Notwithstanding, He was so hated as no other man was ever hated.

What can be the reason for this? In respect to the religious leaders, their hatred was born of jealousy and envy. It is said of Pilate that "he knew that for envy they had delivered him" up. Nothing is more hellishly deadly than jealousy. It is, in fact, a kind of insanity: if yielded to, it often becomes a homicidal mania. The religious leaders were full of hatred because the multitudes, the common people, were on the side of Jesus. After the resurrection of Lazarus, when the Pharisees were told what Jesus had done, it is said: "Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not."

They envied Him His powers, and consequent popularity. That multitudes of sick folk had been made whole was nothing to them. That the dead had been raised to life, only increased their hatred. They did not deny the reality of His miracles — they could not; nor could they question His beneficence; nor the good deeds which ever marked His pathway. They thought only of their place, their position, their prominence, and perhaps their emoluments. And so "from that day forth they took council together for to put him to death."

Jesus was hated because He was good, not because He

was evil. He was hated because He told the truth, not because of any untruthfulness. He was hated because He was strong, not because He was weak. He was hated because he was a Benefactor of all mankind, not because He received anything for Himself. He was hated really because He was the "express image of (the Father's) person", and men did not like to retain God in their knowledge.

What was, and is still, true of Christ will be experienced by any church that becomes, by God's grace, the custodian and exemplar of His truth. So, indeed, did the Lord predict: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done amongst them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause."

Preaching that pleases the fancies of carnal men, that knows no higher standards of life than carnal standards, will be popular with carnally-minded men. But those who keep close to the Saviour will be hated as He was hated. They will often wonder why they are so much disliked, why so often they are evil spoken of. The answer is that carnal men have no appetite for spiritual food, and no discernment, and, therefore, no appreciation of the glories of the life that is hid with Christ in God.

If, therefore, we are much hated, our first chief obligation is to see and make absolutely sure that we have given no cause to anyone to hate us. If we are sure of that, we may comfort ourselves by the reflection that they hated Christ before they hated us. And for our re-assurance, let us "consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

TWO LETTERS FROM *THE CANADIAN BAPTIST*

IN the two letters from *The Canadian Baptist* which we publish below we are glad to have proof of what we have always believed, that in what we call The Old Convention of Ontario and Quebec, among the Churches of the Maritimes, and the Baptist Churches of the West, there is, because there must be, "a remnant according to the election of grace". Obviously there are still a few real Baptists left in Canada.

We quite agree with "Western Layman" that it is possible to magnify the Denomination at the expense of the local church. The passion for greatness is not new: it was apparent among individuals in our Lord's day, including the disciples who disputed as to which of them should be the greatest. If we are not mistaken, it was Mr. Moody who said that the passion for pre-eminence had probably wrought more damage in the Christian church than all the immoralities and doctrinal aberrations of all the centuries, or words to that effect. What the world needs to-day is quality, not quantity. In this connection we venture to tell a story, which has never before been published:

About a Church in Los Angeles

Years ago, perhaps about nineteen hundred and twenty-four, the Editor was on the Pacific Coast, attending a Convention in Seattle. We were requested to preach in the Church of the Open Door at Los Angeles, for two Sundays, and the week between. This we consented to do.

Shortly after our arrival in Los Angeles we were visited by a member of the official Board of the church. The Church of the Open Door had then — we do not know what they have now — "stewards" for the Methodists, "deacons" for the Baptists, and "elders" for the Presbyterians. The official who called was a Methodist, and a steward of the church. He proceeded to tell us of all the advantages of the Church of the Open Door, and what a tremendous opportunity it presented to preach the gospel. Immediately we responded in words to this effect: "I hope you have not been thinking of me in connection with the vacant pastorate of this church." (Dr. R. A. Torrey had retired shortly before). He said, "We certainly are, and it was for that we invited you." "Then," I said, "I wish you would get someone else to preach to-morrow for I am married to my own church, and I have no personal interest in the pastorate of any church in the world, outside of Jarvis Street. I expect to go to heaven from there." He insisted that there should be no change for the Sunday following, because the services had been announced.

Several services were held during the week. The auditorium was a large one, seating about four thousand two hundred people.

The second Saturday I was invited to a dinner, which I was told had been arranged so that all the officials of the church could meet me. We had dinner, and then they proceeded, as the friend of a week ago had done, to speak of the pastorate of the Church of the Open Door. We repeated what we had said the week before, with emphasis; but added, "Even were I free to consider such overtures from you or any other church, I could not think of becoming Pastor of this church." They inquired why. I took the calendar for the day in my hand, and said, "You have here a picture of a church built on a book, but you are not built on a book." They said, "Why do you say that?" "Because you practise in the name of the Lord at least one thing for which there is no New Testament warrant. And

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

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in the second place, that which is strictly and repeatedly enjoined, you treat with indifference, and teach that it does not matter much." They said, "You refer to the matter of baptism?" I said, "Yes." They said, "Tell us about it. We do not understand much about it."

Then I ventured to expound the New Testament doctrine of Baptism; and in doing so, I said, "Obedience to the word of the Lord will never prove a barrier to progress. I have no brief for the lady whom you call 'Sister Aimie', more widely known as Aimie Semple McPherson, but one thing can be said for her. On Thursday night last she baptized forty-five, and she said it was the smallest number of baptisms she had had in three and one half years. The fact is, she baptized more people in the scriptural way than all other churches in Los Angeles put together baptized in any way; and that surely proves that scriptural baptism is no hindrance to progress and popularity."

Then I added that if I were even free to consider their proposal, I should make such demands upon them as I feared they would not be ready to comply with. They said, "What would they be?" I said, "You would have to put a baptistery in the upper auditorium. (They had one only in the lower auditorium). They said, "That could easily be arranged. What else?" I said, "Every one of you would have to get into it." Then they made the astounding statement, "We think there would be no objection to that. If you would become our Pastor, you could baptize every one of us, who is not yet baptized."

Here was a church of which the great Dr. R. A. Torrey had been Pastor, and they knew no more about the scriptural doctrine of baptism than a company of Hottentots, except such as had been baptized, and who knew the significance of it. Not because Dr. Torrey did not know but because he had been silent on the subject.

What folly, to suppose that Baptist churches would increase by pursuing a course of disobedience! Where there is no progress among such churches, the reason for decline is not baptism, but something else: something that is far deeper and far more serious.

FIRST

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Dear Mr. Editor:

We have read with keen disappointment some of the defeatist attitudes expressed in letters appearing recently in "The Canadian Baptist".

It would appear that for years we have held an improper position in requiring baptism by immersion as a pre-requisite to regenerate church membership. It has been our conviction that the New Testament is explicit in its teaching with respect to this ordinance, clearly defining it as an outward expression of an inward experience.

Our Lord's example in submitting Himself to this symbol and in His subsequent teaching has forever established the value of this public witness for a sincere Christian. The Apostle Paul, and the Apostolic writings emphasize the necessity and the value of this position. Since those days countless thousands have sealed this covenant with their own lives because they were persuaded that they ought to obey God rather than men.

It is our conviction that ministers who advocate that we dispense with this ordinance as a requisite for church membership are concerned more with numbers than with conscience, and are quick to apologize rather than to defend the faith "once delivered unto the saints."

Our day with its careless church relationships and lack of conviction on spiritual matters needs a renewed emphasis on this basic Scriptural teaching. We believe that where a ministry emphasizes the "new birth" in Jesus Christ and practices believer's baptism, with dignity and meaning, people ask for no substitute.

Further we feel that where the individual refuses to submit to this beautiful and meaningful ordinance it is due to lack of conviction. Convenience should never be subservient to conviction in our spiritual witness.

Yours for more and better Baptists.

(REV.) FRED WARD, Kingsville.

(REV.) A. C. BINGHAM, Wheatley.

(REV.) LEONARD A. O'NEIL, Leamington.

SECOND

FROM THE WEST

Dear Editor:

As an interested reader of your paper (and especially of the "Letters to the Editor") I would like to pass along a few thoughts that have come from this reading.

Are not some of the difficulties of Baptists caused by the attempt to combine two almost contradictory ideas—(A), The local church, a self-governing entity, and (B), a denomination which can take its place with the other great church bodies?

Is there not a possibility that there is a parallel between us and the Israelites who said: "We will have a king over us that we also may be like all the nations"? (1 Samuel 8: 19-20). Was it not the glory of Israel that God had chosen them to be different?

We Baptists must be one of the great denominations or else lose "prestige". But our churches have no place in their doctrine for that submission to an external authority which is a necessity for a successful denomination.

Because we are a great denomination we must have standards for ordination which may cancel the right of a local church to ordain the pastor whom they believe has been given to them by God. In the West if enough pressure is exerted the "Standard" may be set aside for particular cases. Quite right from a Baptist point of view, but hardly fair to the individual or denomination that has been at pains to maintain the "Standards". Again, as one of the great denominations, we must have buildings which are comparable with the best of other churches and an order of service to match, regardless of the cost or suitability to our real needs.

Could it be that the root of our trouble is that 90 percent of our church members, including ministers, are Baptists by birth and upbringing and not by that conviction which brought Baptist churches into existence?

—Western Layman.

Saskatchewan.

A LOVELY DREAM

THIS Editor is not a dreamer. He has, of course, many interesting day dreams, as any one with any imagination must have. But his night dreams are usually upside down, and have no sense at all. What happened to change the usual quality of his dream we do not know. Last Thursday, January 8th, was the first positively nasty winter's day we have had. It was blowing and snowing, and making life miserable for everybody. But even that was not serious, for it was all over some time during the night.

But when we went to sleep, this ugly thing we call "Winter", looked as if it were getting into its stride preparing to make itself a regular nuisance. We dropped off to sleep, and immediately we were in Florida in a lovely orange grove, with the sun touching with a beautiful sheen the leaves of the orange trees. The golden fruit was hanging temptingly down; and there was a caressing breeze that seemed almost to whisper words of welcome.

What a contrast to that ugly winter night in Toronto, here in sunny Florida, far from frost and snow! Alas, the dream did not last long! We were soon awakened, and the wind was blowing, and the trees moaning, and we were still in Toronto.

We would not have distant readers think that Toronto is a bad place in which to live. By Friday morning it was all over, and we have had delightful weather all through what are supposed to be the winter months, with virtually no snow, and hardly any frost, no hard frost; and to-day, January 13th, the thermometer is between forty and fifty degrees above zero. The sun is shining brilliantly, and the weather inexpressibly delightful.

But we are not deceived. It is not quite the middle of January. January may yet be savage, and February ferocious, and March just "horrid". It may not be; we hope it will not be.

This Editor would be reluctant to acknowledge the charge of cowardice; but there is one thing he is positively afraid of, and that is the ugly month of March. It was on the sixth of March, nineteen hundred and ten he and Jarvis Street Church first became mutually acquainted. There are not wanting some who would say that even that was a black March day, although we remember it was warm as in the summer time, with not a bit of snow, and a heavy thunderstorm. But there have been other March days. In nineteen hundred and thirty-seven the Editor was carried home from his office on a stretcher with a heart attack. That was the last day of March. On the fourth of March, nineteen hundred and thirty-eight our church building was burned. On another March day, years before, running for a street car we fell and fractured the left wrist. On still another March day we fell in the cemetery, and fractured the humerus, the upper arm, which was in a cast for two months.

But that is ancient history. Notwithstanding, we propose to try to make that Florida dream come true. Leaving Toronto about the fourth of March, we want to go somewhere below the snow and frost line; and all the way down to Florida, if it is not too warm down there by that time. We hope to be back very early in April.

This is one of the Editor's day dreams, which he hopes will come true.

AMONG THE CHURCHES

Rev. G. A. Adams, B.Th., Becomes Pastor of Toronto Church

ON SUNDAY, January 4th, Rev. G. A. Adams began his ministry in Toronto as Pastor of Central Baptist Church. Central Baptist Church was organized as a Regular Baptist Church in 1937 under the leadership of Rev. Sidney Lawrence, M.A. It has a fine building located on Ossington Avenue near Hallam Street in the west end of the city. Mr. Lawrence has been the only pastor of Central Church since its inception and at an induction service held on Monday evening, December 29th, when a crowd gathered which packed the church building to its capacity, Mr. Lawrence by a few fitting remarks metaphorically handed over the mantle of leadership to Mr. Adams. Dr. Shields, with his usual masterly ability, preached the induction sermon.

Although still a young man, Rev. Geoffrey Adams is not a novice. He was converted during the late world war through the influence of his close friend, Rev. Bert Oatley-Willis, while serving in the Royal Navy on His Majesty's aircraft carrier, *INDOMITABLE*. Since that time he has completed a four-year course in theology at Toronto Baptist Seminary, graduating with the degree of B.Th. Together with his studies, first at Toronto Baptist Seminary and then at Toronto University where he is taking further studies, he has been pastor of Bethany Baptist Church, Harriston, for three and a half years. When Mr. Adams went to Harriston the people of Bethany Church were in a very precarious situation with relation to their church building. Under his wise and careful leadership the building was re-possessed and, in due course, made ready for services. His fine record at Harriston along with the rich experience received while there, highly commend him to the work of the pastorate of Central Church.

We wish to assure Mr. Adams that he comes to his new work in Toronto with the prayers and good wishes of all the churches and friends of our Conservative Baptist Association. We confidently predict for him in Central Church a great future of happy fellowship and fruitful ministry.

Services Held in New Church Building at Portage la Prairie

Another milestone was reached by the valiant pastor and people of Bible Baptist Church, Portage la Prairie, when on Sunday, December 14th, the pastor, Rev. Elton Britton, preached his first sermon in the basement of their new church building. Mr. Britton reports on the progress of the work as follows: "The people in Portage la Prairie have experienced two highlights recently. First there was the visit of Dr. Shields and Rev. H. C. Slade to our city. Many had met Mr. Slade on a previous visit but had never heard or met Dr. Shields. The brief fellowship was sweet and the stirring gospel message by Dr. Shields made heaven seem very near. The second highlight took place Sunday, December 14th, when we held our first service in the lower auditorium of our new church building. A goodly number attended all services and God's presence was manifest in our midst. Of course our building is not completed but our men are busy night after night and our basement is near completion. From now on, as we visit among the people of our city and community, we expect to see the Sunday School and Church service attendances greatly increase. Recently

we had the joy of seeing one young lady profess faith in Christ. This rejoiced our hearts greatly."

Blessing at Mitchell Square

For the past several years the pulpit of Mitchell Square Baptist Church near Orillia has been occupied by students of Toronto Baptist Seminary. The ministries of these young men, who have in turn served as student-pastors of the church, have been not only acceptable but abundantly productive. The present pastor is Student Samuel Tulloch. Mr. Tulloch will soon earn for himself the high title of "Visiting Sam". Since he began his ministry in Mitchell Square early last summer, practically the whole countryside has been visited and through his lips literally hundreds have heard the good news of salvation faithfully proclaimed. Before returning to Toronto Baptist Seminary for further studies in October, Mr. Tulloch had the joy of leading no less than seven believers through the waters of baptism. Three weeks ago two more obeyed their Lord in this ordinance. Mr. Tulloch writes to say that all of these new converts are growing in grace and have expressed themselves as desiring to assist the pastor in reaching other souls of their community for the Master.

DYING VIEW OF CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY

One feels sometimes in prospect of death like the venerable Bede, who, when he had nearly translated the Gospel of St. John, said to the young man who was writing from his dictation, "Write fast, write fast, for I am dying. How far are you now? How many verses remain? "So many." "Quicker, quicker," said he, "write more quickly, quickly, for I shall be dying." When at length he said, "I have come to the last verse", the good old man folded his arms, sang the Doxology, and fell asleep in Jesus. Quickly, brother, quickly, you will never get through the chapter if you do not work and write quickly. Quickly, quickly, your time of dying is so near. Quickly, and then when you have done, if you have worked quickly for Christ, though it is not of debt but of grace, you will be able to say at last, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace", and with a Doxology on your quivering lip you will go to sing the Doxology in sweeter strains above.

—C. H. SPURGEON

BOOKS AND BOOKLETS

By DR. T. T. SHIELDS

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"Does Killed in Action Mean Gone to Heaven?"05
"The Christian Attitude Toward Amusements"05
"The God of All Comfort"05

The Gospel Witness

130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto 2 Canada

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

"TWO IMMUTABLE THINGS"

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, January 11th, 1953
(Electrically Recorded)

"For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,

"Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

"And so; after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

"For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

"That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

"Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."—Heb. 6:13-20.

Prayer Before the Sermon

We remember, O Lord, that in the days of Thy flesh Thou wert ever thronged by needy men and women. They came to Thee with their physical ailments, with their domestic problems; they even came when they were hungry. And of Thy fulness Thou didst satisfy them all, and none were turned empty away. We too are but mendicants, poor beggars, every one. We have nothing to bring Thee. We come with open hands outstretched, seeking mercy of Thee; petitioning Thee to supply our needs. We do not know how to pray. How can we, when we have been accustomed to such straitness, to such limitations, in our own lives? We do not know how to ask large things of Thee. Impoverished in our own spirits, and straitened in our own meagre conceptions, we do not know how to approach the mercy seat.

We thank Thee for the principle of abounding grace, for the grace that meets us where we are most urgently in need, for the grace that has taken account of our incapacities, and given to us the Holy Spirit, Who knoweth what is the mind of God. And full often, O Lord, as He ministers to us we are made aware of a larger world, of the great storehouses of which of ourselves we had never dreamed, of the great possibilities stretching out before the view of the redeemed soul. O that we may see some of these things this evening! We would, as we have been admonished in Thy Word this evening, leave behind us, or at least not linger unduly with them, these first principles, the beginnings of things. May we not always be babes, who must needs be given milk. Give us the strength of a maturer manhood that will permit us to rejoice in the strong meat of the Word. We know, O Lord, that Thou art able to help us in a thousand ways beyond our expectations or imaginings. Thou hast planned such great things for us; Thou hast laid up in Thy treasures such a bountiful store for all Thy children. Forbid that we should live below our privileges, that we should always grovel here below, fond of our earthly toys, so that our souls can neither fly, nor go to reach immortal joys. This is because our spiritual vision is beclouded, this is because we are uninstructed in respect to Thine unsearchable riches of grace. We would fain, we fear, sometimes content ourselves with the feast of the Father's house, having but little desire for the best robe, and the ring on our hand. Help us to remember, O Lord, that we are the children of One Who is infinitely rich, and that it is Thy good pleasure that we should live as children of the King, and that we should grow up into Him in all things, in preparation for the day when we shall be the companions of angels, and yet superior to them. The Lord give us to understand the high destiny of those who believe. Give us, first to appreciate, and then to appropriate, that vast wealth which will fit us for all the duties of our princely state, which will enable us unabashed to walk the streets of gold among the angels.

O Lord, we have come to hear Thy Word this evening. We would not be familiar with holy things. Save us from the presumption of supposing that our little minds can understand the Word of the Infinite. Grant us the Spirit of the Infinite, the Spirit of the Eternal. O Thou Divine Author, come to us this evening, and expound the word of the truth of the gospel, so that when we leave this place we shall be riding upon our high places, mounting up even with wings as eagles. Lord lead us into a large place, lead us of Thy Spirit that we may this evening literally revel in the luxuries of infinite grace. We would leave behind us the beggarly elements of this world. We would fain forget our poverty and limitations, for as Thou hast ordained to blot out our sins from Thy remembrance, so we pray, that Thou wilt cast a veil over the past, and unveil the future, so that we may move forward, traversing the path of the just, which is as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

THERE are not wanting those who give the name of gospel, or good news, to a message which invites men, not to an experience of grace, but to an experiment with God. Salvation is supposedly conditioned upon something that is within our competence to do, some works of righteousness which we may do. And as long as we continue in the doing of it all is well, but if we should fail, then our salvation goes by the board. Mr. Slade read to you this evening a passage which is used sometimes by those who would teach that salvation is not much more than a mere experiment: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance." I say to my friends who preach that in and out, up and down, gospel, that whatever else this Scripture teaches it teaches this, that if once any one should fall away from their possession, then renewal would be an impossibility. The Scripture not infrequently speaks thus for our admonition. It would be quite true to say that if this planet were to slip from its orbit, and begin a hurtling journey through infinite space, there is no power that could restore it to its orbit again. I think that would probably be true. But you see, following upon this serious and solemn admonition,

there is this word of reassurance, for such falling away as is here described involves an utter repudiation of Jesus Christ and His work. It does not mean the man or woman overtaken in a fault, who through weakness lapses from some high standard of righteousness — it does not mean that. Those who thus fall away "crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." When I read of some of the teachings of certain theological professors, who really mock at the reality of Christ and His work, I think perhaps this must have application to such, for they certainly do crucify the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame.

But writing to these Hebrews the writer, Paul — if it was Paul; we do not know whether it was — by inspiration of the Holy Ghost says, "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." "We speak for your admonition, that you may walk carefully before God, but we are persuaded that the things which accompany salvation will be your portion." Then he goes on to give us, I think, one of the greatest words to be found in the New Testament. I am almost afraid to attempt the exposition of it, but I shall essay the task, as you pray I trust, and as I pray, that God Who wrote the Word by His Spirit may interpret it to our understandings, and open our understanding that we may receive it in the love of it.

You know that all the children of faith are the children of Abraham. And so we are carried back to Abraham to whom, the New Testament says, the gospel was preached, just as fully as to us, so far as its implications and assurances were concerned, though the full content of it, and the wealth and largeness of it perhaps were not seen by Abraham. But he did rejoice to see Christ's day; he saw it and was glad. And when God made that initial promise to Abraham He confirmed it by an oath. What a condescension, that the great God should confirm His simple statement by an oath! And "because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself." Surely that should guarantee the security of the children of faith. Then he goes on to explain that among men "men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife." We recognize that in courts of law, even in capital cases, when a life may hang upon the accuracy of the testimony. The witness is sworn to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and on the basis of the testimony thus presented a jury of twelve good men and true are expected to arrive at a verdict as to whether the prisoner in the dock is worthy to live or to die. And to violate an oath is to commit perjury, and to be guilty of what, in the estimation of human law, is a great crime. But however, even among men, says the Holy Ghost, an oath settles everything. That is an end of all gainsaying; you cannot go beyond it. A man swears that what he has said is true, and nothing but the truth, and there is no use arguing about it. You may cross-examine him to see whether he has told the truth, but after all it is the oath that puts an end to all gainsaying.

Now here is the wonderful word: "God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel . . ." God is at effort to make it abundantly evident that His counsel, His word, is final and unchangeable, and He is willing, He desires more abundantly to show you and me that we have no excuse whatever for our unbelief. And He furnishes us with a basis of faith. And so He confirms it by an oath, and

gives us "two immutable things," not one but two, in each of which it is impossible for God to lie. And that constitutes our strong consolation, "who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." And what is that hope? "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus." Let us examine that great text a little, to see what it will say to us.

Surely we should recognize the importance of our spiritual security. If we fail here we fail everywhere; there is no second chance. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." We must know and be sure here and now. There is no second ship if we miss this one. It is now or never for all of us, and therefore we must be sure.

I.

Let us look at THE REASON FOR THE DIVINE OATH. God desires us to know the impossibility of there being any change in His contract, in His Word, in the immutability of His counsel. He will not alter, as He says, the thing that has gone forth out of His lips. Having spoken the word, His word must abide forever. But for our comfort and assurance we must know that, and because of its importance God is at pains to show us the immutability of His counsel. That is to say, we are to believe in the dependability, in the utter and final truthfulness of the inspired Word of God. "Very often men will not go to such trouble as that. A man of honour, a man who is accustomed to being believed when he speaks, says, "Now, So and So, there is my word." But the man says, "But sir . . ." "Well I am not going to argue the point. I have given you my word, and if you do not believe it the responsibility is yours; I am not going any farther than that." "Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay." You cannot offer a greater insult to any man of honour, if he gives you his word, than to ask for proof of its dependability, can you? I know that in business they demand it, for the simple reason that there is too much in what the Psalmist said in his haste: "All men are liars." And so we are well advised to find confirmation of the word of men. And yet there are men, I have met hundreds of them, who are just as much bound by a promise as if it were sworn to a thousand times. The man says, "It is my word." And you cannot pay a greater compliment to any man than to say, "He is a man of his word." You know that, do you not? A man whose word cannot be relied upon, — you do not want to have much business with him. Surely, dear friends, when God speaks that ought to have been enough. The immutability of His counsel, inasmuch as it was the word of God, should have been self-evident. God is bound to keep His word. But the Lord condescends. Perhaps it is because we are such liars ourselves. We are. "I am not." Yes you are. We are full of deceit — not deliberate outrageous liars, but just a little. "Is Mr. So and So in?" "No. I am sorry." Yes he is, and you are lying about it. Somebody comes to the door, and her ladyship does not open the door, and gives the impression that she is not home. But she is. We move in a realm of falsity and untruthfulness and scheming. Perhaps God, in the infinitude of His grace, condescends to us who are ourselves so unreliable, and who live with a people who are unreliable. You remember when Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up, he said, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a

people of unclean lips." How can people so conditioned project their faith, and believe absolutely in something that is entirely foreign to their experience — the immutability of the Divine counsel? But He sees that if we are to have any joy in the Christian life that must be settled. We must know something of the immutability of His counsel, and so He gives us that.

And then, *for the believer's benefit it is given*. If a man comes seeking favours he wants you to believe what he says. I have them every day. He is out of work, but has just got a job, and is going to it tomorrow. But he will not get paid till the middle of the week, or the end of the week, and all he wants is car fare, or a meal, or something else. And they expect you to believe it. I do not believe a word of it. But they want you to believe them when they come asking favours. But God is not asking any favour of you. He does not ask you to do anything for Him; He knows you cannot. And this exhibition of the immutability of His counsel is for the advantage of whom? — of the heirs of promise. He wants the heirs of promise to believe what He says, so that there will not be any doubt about it at all. It is to show to the heirs of His promise the immutability of His counsel that He has taken certain steps. It is like a double endorsement of Heaven's cheque, is it not? Here is One bestowing a favour, but He is "willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel."

And so *He goes to the extent of confirming what He has said with an oath*. He swears to the truth of the promise of salvation in Christ. What an act of condescension! He might easily have said, "Believe it or not; it is your loss if you do not." But He has spoken for that purpose; He has spoken for our benefit and eternal salvation, and He is supremely anxious and desirous that we should understand His Word and believe it. Nothing pleases God so much as just believing Him. "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and without faith it is impossible to please any man.

I remember a certain preacher years ago who was a little man, physically. His name was Frost, but no relation to Queen's Park. He was an outspoken little chap, and in the village where he was minister there was something wrong — I forget what it was — and this diminutive preacher ventured to challenge the powers that be, and denounce them for permitting this evil. Monday morning he went down to the village, and he met a man half drunk, staggering along. He came up to the preacher, and he said, "You're a liar," and before he stopped to think the preacher had him on his back. He leaned over, and said, "I am sorry, I didn't intend to hurt you. But the man doesn't live who can call me a liar without being called to account. Let me help you up." You could hardly blame him, could you? But not to believe God, the Scripture says, calls Him a liar. And so we lay our protest at the very foundation of an orderly universe, where an immutable counsel is indispensable for its continuance, and dare to insult the Majesty of Heaven by refusing to believe what God says. But He has pity on our folly, and therefore, has confirmed His promises with an oath.

II.

Now, "by two immutable things." WHAT ARE THE TWO IMMUTABLE THINGS? The first, of course, is *the Divine counsel itself*, the Word of God itself. That is the one immutable thing that God has given us, and that ought

to be, as I have said, sufficient. But He gives us something additional — "by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie"—in either of them, in both of them, especially since in this God would have to violate His own nature. The apostle Paul gave us his reason for believing he was saved in this word: I live "in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Paul leaned upon that. He said, "God cannot lie, it is contrary to His nature." May I say this: if God could lie, if God were not immutable, if He were not as changeless as the laws which radiate from Him, this whole universe, held together by a million interacting laws, would crumble and disintegrate. You remember it is said of the Lord Jesus that "all things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist," or hold together. It is just as the spokes of a wheel, just as the keystone of an arch. Everything depends upon the immutability of His counsel.

But to place it beyond the realm of peradventure He has confirmed it by an oath that He may give us two immutable things. First — His unsupported word; secondly — the promise oath-bound. Two immutable things. Here surely is a two-fold cable, each immutable thing wound about the other, in each of which it is impossible for God to lie. The word and the oath are essentially the same. God cannot lie.

This is what is called our "*strong consolation*". I should think it is, do you not? It is not what you have done, not what somebody else has done, not what the priest or the preacher may do for you, or the church — nothing of that sort. You cannot have any strong consolation in that. But here is something God has done. He has sealed it by His promise, and bound His promise by an oath. "Rest on that," He says. That is a strong consolation, is it not? to us "who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Who of us, dear friends, does not need a refuge? Who of us does not need a city of refuge? That is the figure. We "have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us"—this oath-bound promise of God Who cannot lie, involving the two immutables. What could be stronger than that?

III.

Let me say this before I finish, and speak to you a moment about THE HOPE THAT IS THUS SECURED TO US. What a figure that is! "A strong consolation — this is what we have — who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul." You know what an anchor is, do you not? It is dropped into the depths, and lays hold upon the soil, or upon the rock, and then the ship rocks a little and the anchor goes deeper and deeper, until by and by the mooring line is taut, and the ship is anchored against the storm. Ah yes, "an anchor of the soul". But when the anchor is dropped everything depends on what is down there under the surf. If it is shifting sand it may be the anchor will not hold very well. And sometimes after they have dropped the anchor, the drift of the tide, and the pressure of the wind, may cause the anchor to slip. But where is this anchor cast? "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul . . . which entereth

into that within the veil." What is within the veil? God. Divine holiness. O yes, entering within that veil all uncertainties are left behind. And so our anchor is cast within the veil, and is held by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie. And all the storms that may break upon us cannot draw that anchor; our anchor will hold.

But there is something better than that. I think it is not a two-fold cord, but this is the three-fold cord that is not easily broken. "Within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus." I have read of a ship coming within sight of land, but some distance from it. The winds are howling, and the waves are rolling mountains high. If only they could get a mooring line over there to that shore, to hold that ship until the storm subsides. But there is no arm on that ship strong enough to throw that mooring line. Then some brave man, maybe the captain, a strong swimmer, takes a lesser line, wraps it about his waist, and fastens it securely. He comes to the bulwark of his ship, and then plunges into the boiling cauldron below, and with strong strokes strikes out. Sometimes he is out of sight, and they wonder whether he will make it. Watching through their glasses at last they see that solitary figure going up the beach with the line still about his waist. It is secured to something yonder, and they pull in the stronger cable, and the ship is held, anchored to something on shore. My dear friends, the Lord Jesus is that strong swimmer, the Captain of our salvation. He took that double line, if I may so say, and carried it with Him within the veil, received of the Father, honoured of angels, His work complete.

Who was He? "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus." My dear friends, He has just gone ahead, and His presence there is the guarantee that we shall be there some day. "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Can you suggest any greater possible security than that? If that does not guarantee eternal life, then I do not know what can. There is no power in hell that can change that. Let me read it again:

"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:

"That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

"Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

Let us pray.

O Lord, we would honour Thee. We would dare to say that we are as sure of Heaven as if we had been there a thousand years.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing Thy praise
Than when we first begun.

May Thy Word this evening minister comfort to believing hearts. May the heirs of salvation be made just a little happier because they have been here tonight, and if there is any poor bankrupt soul longing for deliverance, wishing that he or she could be sure, help them to see that there is eternal salvation in Christ, for Thy Name's sake, Amen.

And now let us sing:

"Will your anchor hold in the storms of life?
When the clouds unfold their wings of strife;
When the strong tides lift and the cables strain,
Will your anchor drift or firm remain?"

*"We have an anchor that keeps the soul
Stedfast and sure while the billows roll;
Fastened to the Rock which cannot move,
Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love."*

"It will surely hold in the straits of fear,
When the breakers tell that the reef is near;
Though the tempest rave and the wild winds blow,
Not an angry wave shall our bark o'erflow.

"It will surely hold in the floods of death,
When the waters cold chill our latest breath;
On the rising tide it can never fail
While our hopes abide within the veil.

"When our eyes behold, through the gathering might,
The city of gold, our harbour bright,
We shall anchor fast by the heavenly shore,
With the storms all past for evermore.

*"We have an anchor that keeps the soul
Stedfast and sure while the billows roll;
Fastened to the Rock that cannot move,
Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love."*

ASLEEP IN GETHSEMANE

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

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto
Sunday Morning, November 23rd, 1952

(Electrically Recorded)

"Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

"And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

"Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

"And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

"And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?"

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

"He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

"And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

"And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

"Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

"Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me."—Matt. 26:36-46.

Prayer Before the Sermon

O Lord, we would remember that Thy Book is ever a sealed Book to us all unless and until Thou dost enlighten our minds, and give us understanding that we may understand the Scriptures. We would not be among those who are content with first principles only; we would, as Thou shalt help us, go on toward perfection, when we shall see Thee, as we have been singing this morning, face to face.

We pray that Thou wilt give us understanding of Thy Word this morning. Our minds are so occupied with the things we see and touch and handle. Of necessity we are in the world, and we cannot escape the responsibilities of life, nor can we avoid or evade the burdens; and sometimes it is difficult for us to divest ourselves of mental preoccupations, and come with open minds to the Word of truth. Help us, we pray Thee, to do so this morning. Grant us in a very real way the presence and illuminating ministry of

the Holy Ghost, so that what we may learn of Thy Word this morning will have some sanctifying effect upon our spirits, and make us to be better men and women in the days that are to come.

We pray for the children, that early they may turn to Thee; and that Thou wilt be pleased to bless the word that has been taught them, the seed that has been sown in their hearts. May it germinate and bring forth that which is ordained in their lives.

Be mindful of all—those who are tried and troubled, the sick, the permanently afflicted, those who wait for the home call, and can perhaps expect nothing better in this life. Draw near to them all, the young and the old, the sick and the well, the wise and the unlettered, the weak and the strong. Put Thine arms of grace about us, and draw us closer to Thyself, for Jesus' sake, Amen.

I SUPPOSE we are all more or less familiar with the letter of this text, but I fear that very few of us, if any—I think there are none—have entered into the profound significance of it.

There is a man in the United States who is just now facing a tremendous task. It would be difficult to think of any man in the world who is facing greater responsibilities than President-elect Eisenhower. Surely a man would be little short of a fool who would envy him his position—to have to offer leadership, not only to a great nation, but now under the circumstances, to a troubled world, a large part of which is at war. The task is almost sufficient to stagger the imagination, and one must needs feel the profoundest sympathy for any man chosen to undertake so great a work. And yet, that which faces the President-elect of the United States, and the responsibilities which may face all the statesmen of the world combined, is as nothing at all compared with the task which was enterprised by our Lord Jesus Christ. From all eternity He had anticipated the day when that work must be done, and He came into a ruined world to redeem it.

There was this about His mission that was peculiar—He was to accomplish it alone. He was to have no help whatsoever in fulfilling the mission appointed. Prophetically it had been said that He came from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah. He spoke in righteousness, travelling in the greatness of his strength, and was mighty to save. And when it was asked, "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?" He answered, "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me . . . and I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me."

And now in this text He is approaching the crisis hour, the hour of which all the prophets had spoken, and toward which, before the dawn of creation, He had steadfastly gazed.

He came to a place called Gethsemane, and He had His disciples with Him. We are told that He ordained twelve "that they might be with Him"; for as we read this morning, He was made in the likeness of men, and was found in fashion as a man. He came to be our High Priest, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, Very God of very God, yet He was the one and only pattern Man. And I suppose that on that human side He needed and appreciated some human sympathy. It was said in the beginning, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." Nor was it good for the Bridegroom of our souls to be alone. He had called together these disciples, and they came with Him to Gethsemane, and reaching there, as

He came and brought them to the rim of the shadow that would encompass Him, and as He moved forward into the darkness of the region of the shadow of death, He said to His disciples, "Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder." He had to be alone. Yet He took three with Him in His further walk into the garden.

We Must Be Like Jesus

My dear friends, we must be like Him in some respects. We must follow in His steps. We too must have our Gethsemane; we too must go to the cross. Christ was crucified for us, but we must be crucified with Him. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." And so there is a sense in which all true believers must traverse the path the Master has trod, and enter into the experiences which were His, but which, in a deeper and profounder sense, were uniquely His. Yes, there comes a time to the Christian when we must reduce our companionships, and diminish our correspondences, and say to those who are dearest to us, and to the interests which are dearest, and perhaps seem to be paramount, "Sit ye here, while I go yonder and pray." That is true of all who would enter into the sufferings of Christ, and have fellowship with Him in His suffering, and be made conformable to His death.

Takes With Him, Peter, James and John

Then He took Peter, and James and John, the sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. He had said nothing to the larger number of His disciples, but to them He opened His heart, as He was not wont to do, for He did not complain of Himself, or the burdens He bore. But to them on this occasion He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me." And He went a little farther—He always does. Oh, I trust we try to follow Him. Follow Him as closely as you can, but you will always find that He goes a little farther. Then He prayed that prayer, into which we cannot enter. I do not understand it, nor do you. He fell on His face, the God-man, the Prince of Glory, the One before whose brightness all the angels veil their faces—He fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." What was that cup? "For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red;"—the cup of the wine of His indignation which is poured out without mixture. It was an awful cup, was it not?—just to look at it, just to anticipate it, just to contemplate it! And even He shrank from it. I wonder what it meant? "If it be possible"—was it for us He thus prayed? Did He mean to say, "O Lord if there be any other way find it for me. If it is not possible except I drink it; then Thy will be done." In our little way, even perhaps when we were children, and we had some bitter ill-tasting draught put into our hands, and we held the cup—we looked at it, and we put it down as though we would seek a little respite from the horrid taste of it. Did Jesus do something like that? Did He take that awful cup into which all the pains and horrors of hell were distilled, and then, almost shrinking from it, hold it at a distance, as He said, "If it be possible, if there be any other way—nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

There Was No Other Way

Let us learn, dear friends, that the uniqueness, the eternal necessity for the death of incarnate Deity for

the world's redemption was at that point forever settled. Never expect that the ingenuity of men will find an easier way than God Himself could find. And if there was no other way than that which Jesus took, there is no other way that anyone else may take. Gethsemane and the cross are eternal necessities, rooted in the nature of God Himself. There is no other way.

But we cannot enter into it. That was something not only human—"My soul is exceeding sorrowful . . ." You remember that it is said, "He poured out his soul unto death." Yes; everything that was in the God-man, His whole soul, all that comprised His personality, was necessary to that sacrifice. He poured out His soul. Oh, the nails, the spear, the crown of thorns,—these were as nothing compared to that soul-agony into which He was now entering ere He had taken the cup. And He said to His disciples, His most trusted disciples, with whom He was most intimate: "Tarry ye here, and watch with me", almost as if He had said, "Do not leave me alone in this dark hour." And He went a little farther, but then He came back again, and what did He find? He findeth them asleep!

Have you, in your measure, ever entered into that agonizing disappointment, when there has been laid upon you some gigantic task, something that would tax the energies of the strongest, and you have confided in, and depended upon, some whom you thought were one with you, and in the hour of your excruciating agony, when all the world seemed to be upon you, you have found them asleep, fast asleep?

And He said to them, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" I think it was as though He said, "I have been watching from before the worlds were made; I have been steadily moving toward this awful crisis through all the millennia of human history, and it has never been absent from me. I have called you to my side to be with me just at the crisis. What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" Oh, what miserable wretches we are, how weak, how utterly unworthy of Him, Who is our Saviour! He could watch for us through all eternity; we cannot watch with Him one hour! Then to them He said, "If not for me, watch and pray for yourselves, lest ye enter into temptation." And how tenderly compassionate He was in making allowance for their weakness, when He said, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." He forgave them their somnolence, as He forgives us. But what I ask is this: *how can we possibly forgive ourselves for what we are, though He may forgive?*

Christ's Second Prayer

He went away again and prayed the second time, and said the same thing. And even after that tender rebuke He came to them again and He found them asleep, for their eyes were heavy. "While men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares". What a sleepy, lazy, good for nothing lot we are, when measured by the standard of our Lord! Asleep again! This time He did not wake them up: He left them and went away again and prayed, saying the same words; and perhaps He soliloquized, "I must do without them". Have you ever prayed like that? You have got to the end of everything, until you had only one prayer, and you had to repeat it over and over again, and say the same words. "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me". Oh, I wish we could understand Gethsemane! Even before He came to the cross He sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. And some who have searched the records,

medical experts and others, tell us there have been others who, in moments of great stress, and agony of soul, have sweat great drops of blood. But there is no record of anyone's ever surviving such agony save Jesus Himself. Oh, if Jesus had been only a man Gethsemane would have killed Him, and there had been no cross. It was the union of humanity with Deity that enabled Him to speak with righteousness, mighty to save. Hence, He could go all the way to the cross. He left them, and went on, and prayed the same words.

Here Is Divine Sovereignty

I hear some people conditioning the ongoings of God upon human caprice. You must do so and so, and so and so, and so and so, or else everything will stop. Don't you believe it. Sleep on if you will, sleep on and He will leave you, and go on and pray, and go on to the cross. And in respect to every other enterprise of His He will never stop until He cries, "It is finished"; whether you help Him or not. I wish we could keep step with Him, don't you? Yes, and when we do we shall have a revival. And when we are revived we shall keep step with Him.

He came to His disciples at last, and said, "Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." The hour for which all the ages had been waiting, and toward which the whole universe was looking, the hour appointed for the supreme achievement of Deity in the redemption of an erring world—the hour struck, and those for whom it struck were fast asleep! "Sleep on now, and take your rest". I find a great prayer in my heart these days, "Lord don't let me sleep; don't let me be unconscious of, or indifferent to, Thine occasions passing by. Give me a little share in what Thou hast planned."

But God has not forsaken His world. I believe there is a sense in which Gethsemane and the cross are not limited to a point of time. There is a sense in which Jesus Christ always lived in Gethsemane. He endured eternal agonies which culminated at the cross.

My dear friends, I have a deepening conviction that God would have us watch with Him. He must have some great plan for this world. I believe He will break in upon its darkness; I believe He will bring His springtime to His church. Oh, let us ask God to make us spiritually alert, sensitive to all the winds that blow, and all the tides that flow, responsive to every breath that comes from Heaven, so that we may be His men and His women in the crisis hours of the world's history.

I do not know whether I have made you understand what is in my mind this morning. I am only depressed when I feel that we are scarcely half awake, insensible to the tremendous tides that are flowing, and deaf to the voice that is calling, "Tarry ye here, and watch with me". Let us pray.

O Lord, we thank Thee for calling us into fellowship with Thyself. We thank Thee for putting this honour upon us which the angels envy and covet. Surely Thou hast something for us to do. Make us all faithful to our charge, whatever it may be, for Jesus' sake, Amen.

If our future blessedness shall consist in being where He is and beholding His glory, what better preparation can there be for it than a constant previous contemplation of that glory as revealed in the gospel, that by a view of it we may be gradually transformed into the same glory?—JOHN OWEN.

THE GREAT CONTENTION

Chapter Nine in the History of the Battle for the Bible Among
Baptists of Ontario and Quebec

By Dr. T. T. Shields

OUGHT THIS HISTORY TO BE WRITTEN?

SOME have raised that question. They think the controversy of the past is over, and they ask, "Why open old sores?" But the controversy of the past is not over. Modernism is still on the march, and more aggressive than ever. If we had one reason for opposing the teaching of McMaster University thirty years ago, we have a hundred reasons for doing so to-day. When this controversy first began the pressure of the momentum of McMaster's heresies was not fully felt, because in many cases churches were being carried forward by an Evangelical momentum generated by decades of Evangelical teaching. The Evangelical momentum has largely died down, and the Modernistic momentum is on the increase.

The personnel of the ministry of what we have come to call "The Old Convention" has almost entirely changed. Many of the older men have passed on; and in many cases churches are manned by graduates from Toronto Bible College, and Evangelical importations from Britain and the United States. Very few of the present generation of ministers know anything about the battles of thirty years ago.

When we were in the midst of this conflict McMaster University made no attempt whatever to answer our charges, but sent its professors all over the Convention constituencies with this single message, that "Dr. Shields was a liar", and that nothing of his message was to be received or to be believed.

We think it certain there are ministers in the Ontario and Quebec Convention, and others in the Maritime Provinces, and some in the Provinces of the West, who are perfectly loyal to Evangelical principles, and to such principles as have been held and enunciated by Regular Baptists. They ought to be informed of the true issues. Then, too, in the nearly thirty intervening years, churches and ministers have seen something of the ripened fruit of Modernism, and they want none of it.

We print elsewhere in this issue two letters from a recent issue of *The Canadian Baptist*, showing that both in the East and in the West there are men who are genuine Baptists. It is for their information we write. There is a scripture which says, "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." It does not say that he will not have enemies, for surely he will have many. But it does say that if his ways are pleasing to God, in due time even his enemies will see that he is right, and will be at peace with him.

We have had several indications that some, who were once bitter enemies, have come to see the folly of the course pursued. Our friend, the late Dr. A. J. Vining was one. He came to Jarvis Street to see me, to apologize for the part he had taken, and to acknowledge that on his part, and the part of others, the course-taken had been a colossal blunder. I could have wished that Dr. Vining could have made his acknowledgment publicly; but as he did not, I was unable to make it for him during his lifetime.

Another man was the late Dr. George T. Webb. When The World Baptist Alliance held its last meeting in Toronto, I saw an announcement in the paper that Dr. Webb had remarked to a newspaper reporter that Dr. Shields had died several years ago, but had been walking about to save funeral expenses. I went out one day to the Exhibition grounds, and happened to meet Dr. Webb. I called to him, and approached him, and said, "Come, my friend, shake hands with a fairly lively corpse"; and we did shake hands.

A couple of summers ago Dr. Webb called my office and asked for an appointment. The appointment was made, and I met him here in Jarvis St. office. He said something to this effect: "I am only a poor preacher, and I have not much, but here is a five dollar bill, and it would please me much if you would accept it toward your work. You are doing a great job, and you have been fighting the battle for all of us." Dr. Webb was not an outspoken champion of orthodoxy, but I am sure he never was a Modernist. He was carried along for a while by the tide.

On another occasion, two or three years ago one Summer evening the Chairman of one of the Boards of The Ontario and Quebec Convention was in my evening service. It was in the new building, and on that occasion the building was packed to capacity, people sitting in the aisles. The service was not dismissed until after nine o'clock, and it was in August. This Board Chairman was sitting near the front. After the benediction I greeted him. He said, "This is wonderful! In August! with nothing but the word of God to attract." And then he added, "You know you have no right to be on the outside. You ought to be in with us." I said, "I thought that myself for several years, until you put me out, and put this church out." He looked around at the congregation just beginning to move, and he said, "Is it too late? Cannot something be done to bring you back?" I said to him, "Your Convention cheered to the echo a man who mocked at the precious blood, and who declared he would put the dictum of Science before the authority of the Word of God. You gave the Lord of Glory successive invitations as heartily extended as you knew how to extend them, to leave you. What more can you expect?" He was not antagonistic, but he said, "I may tell you He has certainly left us."

If I were to say more in that direction I should identify the Board over which he presided, and that would divulge his identity, which I could not do without his permission. He did add this, "You were a true prophet. You told us that we should not feel the full force of Modernism for twenty years, until the Evangelical momentum had died down, and the momentum of Modernism took its place, and that is very generally apparent to-day."

I am in receipt of correspondence from all over the Dominion, and many hundreds have subscribed for the paper containing these accounts, and are reading them

with avidity; and some of them cordially thank me for publishing them. That is why these historical records are being given to the public.

Last Week's Chapter

We concluded last week's chapter with excerpts from the teaching of George Burman Foster, who at one time was Professor in McMaster, and until, and up to the time of, his departure, was lauded as a great teacher. He was there with his evil influence long enough to project himself into other personalities, and in due course they came forward to perpetuate the dissemination of Foster's poison. Incidentally we may here remark, on the authority of Ernest Gordon, in *The Leaven of the Sadducees*, page one hundred and eighty-eight, that Professor Foster was "excluded from the Chicago Baptist Ministers' Association for his anti-Christianity".

There were others whose names have not figured largely in this history, but some of them ought to be mentioned.

Professor George Burman Foster, while teaching in this Baptist Seminary, that is, or was, a combination of the Baptist Union Seminary of Morgan Park with Chicago University, was Pastor of the Unitarian Church at Madison, Wisc.

Professor Haydon was also a graduate of McMaster University. We met him once, and we saw him play in a murderous game of lacrosse. He was put off the field by the umpire for a foul. He retired from the game, and I saw him with blood streaming down his face. But Professor Haydon believed virtually nothing. He succeeded Professor George Burman Foster at Madison, that is in a Unitarian Church, while lecturing on Comparative Religion in the Seminary. At the Annual Meeting of the Western Conference (Unitarian) nineteen hundred and twenty-two, "Professor Haydon began his address by stating that he was a member of the Hyde Park Baptist Church, Pastor of the Madison Unitarian Church, and devoting his life to teaching the Non-Christian Religions of the future." Professor Haydon was a Humanist, a product of Fosterism in McMaster University.

Dr. George Cross left McMaster University to go to Newton Centre; and later became Professor of Systematic Theology at Rochester Theological Seminary, New York.

I find this paragraph in Ernest Gordon's book, *The Leaven of the Sadducees*, page one hundred and eighty-nine. Thus the product of McMaster University became a divisive force in Rochester Theological Seminary. Dr. Cross does really illustrate what our friend, Dr. T. B. McDormand called "The Tragedy of Schism" for the result of his going to Rochester was the resignation of some members of the Committee, and the withdrawal of others.

This is the paragraph from *The Leaven of the Sadducees*:

"Rochester Theological Seminary was built up into a powerful and useful institution by Dr. Augustus H. Strong, backed by a group of laymen, Messrs. Trevor, Milbank, Hoyt, and the elder Rockefeller. For many years it provided the Baptist churches with loyal pastors and missionaries. But a change has come over its teaching. In his unpublished autobiography, Dr. Strong lays this at the door of Prof. George Cross. 'The result of the election of Dr. Cross', he says, 'has been the resignation of some members of the Committee and the withdrawal of others from active service. I regard that election as the greatest calamity that has come to the Seminary. It was the entrance of an agnostic, skeptical, and anti-Christian element into its teaching, the results of which will be only evil. The election of

Dr. Cross was followed by that of Professors Robins, Parsons, and Nixon, who sympathized with these views. These men, with Prof. Moehmann, soon gave evidence in their utterances that a veritable revolution had taken place in the attitude of the Seminary toward the fundamentals of the Christian faith."

PROFESSOR ERNEST W. PARSONS

Professor Ernest W. Parsons was a graduate of McMaster University. He was settled as Pastor of the Port Arthur Church, in 1901. He is listed in the Year Book as being still Pastor in Port Arthur in 1907. And he is listed in the Year Book as residing in Toronto in 1908; but not as being the pastor of any Toronto Church. Whether or not he was then doing graduate work at McMaster University, we cannot say. We shall later print what was said by the great Augustus Strong, the author of the monumental text book on Systematic Theology, and who was professor at Rochester Seminary. It is enough to publish what Professor Parsons says in "The Religion of the New Testament" without any special comment. Dr. McCaul has said enough in his introduction to his analysis.

"The Religion of the New Testament"

By Ernest W. Parsons

A perusal of Parsons' book leaves the impression that it is an echo of Foster. The latter seems fully to have deserved the reputation he had a generation ago of being the arch-heretic of Chicago University for whom even most liberals at that time felt obliged to apologize.

DOUGLAS MACINTOSH, a McMaster graduate, took his doctorate in Chicago and came as a teacher to Brandon in 1908 bearing the reputation of having been the most brilliant student in philosophy that had appeared up to that time in the list of graduates. He was my teacher in the last year of my course at Brandon. His right to his reputation seemed confirmed when he was called from Brandon to the chair of systematic theology in Yale. DR. MCDIARMID (the Principal) was very proud of him and of the distinction that had come to Brandon College. He alluded to MACINTOSH's soundness as an answer to the question: "Could any good thing come out of Chicago University?" He seemed to all of us a most serious-minded man of deep piety.

At the time of his death about two years ago the New York Times devoted two full columns to his obituary and spoke of him as probably the greatest theologian of his generation. Yet with all his apparent devotion to Christian truth I find that a third book of FOSTER'S, "Christianity in Its Modern Expression", is one that contains FOSTER'S unpublished notes used in his lectures and the editor is DOUGLAS MACINTOSH. In the preface MACINTOSH says among other things: "Former students will recognize here especially many of the brilliant and memorable sayings of this inspiring and thought-provoking teacher. PROF. FOSTER was a remarkably sympathetic interpreter of points of view other than his own. With him radical criticism was instrumental; the conservation of genuine religious values was the end. He was interested in the removing of those things which were shaken, that the things which were not shaken might be seen to remain. He could take more daring excursions into the realms of doubt than would have been spiritually safe for a less deeply religious man."

MACINTOSH published FOSTER'S dictated class lectures and comments in 1921. PARSONS published his book on *The Religion of the New Testament* in 1939. PARSONS was, I believe, a graduate of McMaster. In any case ac-

ording to the Rochester year book which I received a few days ago (December 18, 1952), PARSONS has been a visiting lecturer at McMaster several times in the last few years. Following are a few quotations from his book. They might be multiplied but most of them would be repeating FOSTER:

"Did Jesus of Nazareth ever live? . . . What we really have is the portrait, or portraits, that they painted; we do not have his face. It is an apocalyptic picture painted in glowing oriental colors — a creation of Jewish longing, perhaps? Portraits sometimes are ideal productions of the artistic imagination to which no original corresponds. Such are some of these Jesus-portraits; possibly they all are."

The foregoing is from FOSTER: *Finality of the Christian Religion* page 325-6.

(The comments printed in 10 point type such as this between the 8 point paragraphs of quotations from Professor Parsons, are written by Dr. Robert McCaul, who also selected the quotations. Ed. G. W.)

The following from PARSONS: *Rel. of the N.T.*:

"Careful examination of the constituent parts of the Gospels show that they have passed through the double alembic of oral transmission and of practical interest. THE COLOR OF SITUATIONS NOT EXISTENT IN JESUS' DAY AND NOT IN HIS PURVIEW HAS STAINED THE TRADITION until it is one of the most delicate processes of N.T. study; in fact at times almost an impossible one to disengage that which is genuinely from Jesus from that which later adoring faith or insistent practical need thought he must have said and done . . . Moreover a comparative study of the first three Gospels with the fourth gospel increases our difficulty. If we are seeking to discover the religion of Jesus, what Jesus is it with whom we have to do? The Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels? The Jesus of the Fourth Gospel? or the Jesus who finds various interpretations in these Gospels? For one cannot have them all."

While he distinctly implies that it is hopeless to look for any real portrait of Jesus in the Gospel records, he concedes that there may be here and there some faint reproduction of what Jesus may have said:

"The parable of the talents . . . this parable has been worked over in the interest of a later time but there is nothing improbable in an historical kernel representing Jesus' thought."

In picturing the religious environment of Jesus PARSONS says that he inherited the "Hebrew thought of God",

"to be sure there are blemishes in the picture. Universality was limited by the idea of a special national covenant relationship . . . his high and lofty character was flecked by the thought of his jealousy for his prerogatives . . . how greatly it contributed to his (Jesus) thought of Deity we shall see in our later discussion. (9)

Referring to confused Jewish thought about demons he says:

"This varied, shifting, contradictory phase of Jewish thought was inherited by Jesus of Nazareth and played an important part in much of his religious thinking." (12)

The author informs us that the church has been mistaken in concluding that the burden of Jesus' message was a call to repentance. Rather it was to announce the nearness of the Kingdom, so near indeed that He expected it to come in His own lifetime and in this, of course, he was simply totally mistaken and the agony in the garden was, in part attributable to his disappointment in this His mistaken anticipation:

"It is sometimes said that the central thought in his message was repentance and the spiritual quality of the kingdom. Such was not the case. The central thought was the imminence of the kingdom . . . The imminent coming of the

kingdom is the underlying conviction of Jesus in his brief public career."

"During the meal he expresses his consuming desire to celebrate the impending passover and declares that when he does eat it the kingdom of God will be already present . . . we should long since have seen that Jesus was not contemplating any long abstinence from food or drink but that his soul was swept with the conviction of the utter imminence of the kingdom."

"Jesus expected the sudden inbreaking of the kingdom to take place at the passover at which he subsequently met his death."

"Is it possible that part of the agony in the garden of Gethsemane was due to unexpected but necessary changes in his view of the coming of the kingdom and his own relationship to it? It is clear, however, that until the last, Jesus expected the kingdom to be realized in his lifetime and in the lifetime of his immediate associates."

"The inevitable confusion which a national eschatology and an individual eschatology made in Jewish thought is at times apparent in the thought of Jesus."

PARSONS thinks, however, that the words "before I suffer" may not indicate that Jesus expected the coming of the kingdom before his crucifixion, for the likelihood is that these words are a later addition . . .

"Enough has been said to show that Jesus held steadily to the view of a speedily coming kingdom."

PARSONS finds no hint in the synoptic gospels of "any transactional element in a redemptive scheme". If one or two passages seem to have that color it is due to a reading back of Pauline thought and is "not a true representation of the thought of Jesus".

The author seeks to prove that whereas Paul unable to shake off the old Jewish idea of the necessity of animal sacrifices in connection with the remission of sins, carries this over into Christianity, influenced also doubtless by a similar idea in the mystery religions which pervaded his day and introduces into the Christian scheme the idea of atonement and expiation which was foreign to the thought of Jesus. This is what he means by there being no "transactional element in the message of Jesus. The idea is not only distinctly Pauline but definitely contradictory to the teaching of Jesus. Here at least the author seems for once to be quite sure what the teaching of Jesus was notwithstanding the various "alembics" through which it must have reached him. So we are not only to choose between the Synoptic Gospels and John as to what portrait we will have of Jesus but we must also choose between Jesus and Paul whether we are to have a gospel without or with the idea of an atonement:

"When one asks, if one does ask, the question as to how Paul could have conceived a scheme so different from that which characterized the thought and message of John and Jesus, which was that of simple and repentant turning to God for forgiving acceptance, the answer is found along several lines . . . Paul came from the scribal and Pharasaic strain of Jewish religion where legal and ritual observance was the sine qua non and where God was conceived in judicial and commercial terms. The lex talionis was an integral part of that system . . . in general Paul has recourse to the Jewish sacrificial system as the means of explaining the significance of the death of Jesus . . . as a matter of fact Paul has no single interpretation of the death of Jesus . . . attacks it from several angles not one of which is free from serious logical objections."

Referring to the parable of the Prodigal Son:

"There is not even the remotest suggestion of transaction . . . One cannot avoid asking why . . . if a vicarious transaction were necessary to reconciliation, Jesus should have left it out here . . . the only alternative is to say that no transactional element was in the mind of Jesus." (33)

"The only power to admit to the kingdom and to fellowship was a correct attitude."

According to the author of "The Religion of Jesus" it was Paul rather than Jesus who was responsible for introducing the atonement idea into what the church has observed as the Lord's Supper. It was Paul that made a memorial meal out of what Jesus intended to be a common meal:

"A comparison of these passages will show that the practice of the early Christian communities was not that of a memorial meal nor the observance of a redemptive symbol, but the gathering to eat a meal in common."

PARSONS holds that what was at first instituted by Jesus as a common meal was changed by Paul:

"Paul instructs them by giving them a formula and making the common meal a memorial of the Lord's death."

"It is true that he says he received this tradition from the Lord, but one will hesitate in pressing this so far as to have this a personal communication of the earthly Jesus to Paul. If it is to be considered a post-conversion communication one asks why the disciples, for example, Peter or John, with whom Paul had contacts, had not informed him of so important a matter."

Summarizing the teaching of Jesus the author says:

"There is no thought of a sacrificial transaction here. In fact it is conspicuous by its absence."

The author is consistent enough in denying to such a one as the Jesus he sets forth in his book any thought of dying a substitutionary death for the sins of the world for he affirms that Jesus made no such claims for Himself.

"NO SPECIFIC WORD THEN COMES FROM JESUS AS TO HIS ORIGIN." (42)

"It would seem to be very doubtful that Jesus ever referred to himself as the Messiah."

"But the entire section regarding the appearance of Jesus before the Sanhedrin is of doubtful historical worth." (Because at this appearance he referred to himself as the Son of God.—R. McC.)

"What he might have done in the way of leaping over racial barriers had his ministry been long continued it is idle to speculate . . . His framework remained Jewish . . . the probability is (if Jesus had been faced with the question as to the universality of his mission) he would have gone at least as far as the great prophets went in their best moments." (19)

It is difficult to escape the impression that Parsons' Jesus saw no need of such substitutionary atonement since we find the author observing

"That man had within him the potentiality to live in filial harmony with God, of this Jesus was as deeply convinced."

While our author makes clear that Paul and not Jesus is responsible for introducing the transactional redemptive idea into Christianity, he is equally emphatic in showing that Paul did not for a moment ascribe Deity to Jesus:

"The phrase 'Son of God' is not in any case used by Paul as denoting similarity or identity of person or nature . . . PAUL REMAINED TO THE END TOO DEEPLY ROOTED IN JEWISH MONOTHEISM EVER TO IDENTIFY JESUS WITH GOD OR TO MAKE HIM OF THE SAME NATURE. THE PHRASE IS ALWAYS USED BY PAUL IN A MORAL OR FUNCTIONAL SENSE."

The author of Acts quotes Paul (Acts 22:30) as saying: "I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia. Our author in "The Religion of Jesus", by way of throwing a crumb of comfort to such as believe the New Testament, gives us a reliable account:

Referring to Paul, PARSONS says: "The probabilities are that he was born at Tarsus."

Our next instalment will deal principally with excerpts from books written by Professor George Cross. Dr. Cross resigned from the Faculty of McMaster University after eight years' service, during the year 1909-10, to accept the Chair of Systematic Theology in Newton Theological Institution.

Professor I. G. Mathews was appointed Lecturer in Hebrew in the year 1904, and continued until 1919. Prof. Cross and Prof. Mathews therefore were contemporary colleagues on the McMaster Faculty from 1904 until 1910, and Professor Mathews remained after Dr. Cross went to Newton Theological Institution, nine years in McMaster University.

(To Be Continued)

CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY

Oh! I would that some Christians would pay a little attention to their legs, instead of paying it all to their heads. When children's heads grow too fast it is a sign of disease, and they get the rickets, or water on the brain. So, there are some very sound brethren, who seem to me to have got some kind of disease, and when they try to walk, they straightway make a tumble of it, because they have paid so much attention to perplexing doctrinal views, instead of looking, as they ought to have done, to the practical part of Christianity. By all means let us have doctrine, but by all means let us have precept too. By all means let us have inward experience, but by all means let us also have outward "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." "We walk." This is more than some can say. They can affirm—"We talk; we think; we experience; we feel"; but true Christians can say, with the apostle Paul, "We walk." Oh that we may ever be able to say it too! Here, then, is the activity of the Christian life.

—C. H. SPURGEON

A SIX-MONTHS' STORY CONTINUED IN THIS ISSUE

The story of **THE GREAT CONTENTION FOR THE FAITH** by Bible-believing Baptists of Canada, which began in the front-page article of Nov. 20, will continue in instalments week by week for probably four to six months.

We earnestly solicit the co-operation of all our readers in making this story as widely known as possible. In order to give currency to it we will send **THE GOSPEL WITNESS** containing this story week by week for the full time of its continuance — not less than six months — for \$1.00. Send in your subscription immediately, and all subscriptions will begin with the first instalment in the issue of Thursday, November 20th.

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Bible School Lesson Outline

Vol. 17 First Quarter Lesson 5 February 1, 1953

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

THE NEW BIRTH

Lesson Text: John 3:1-21.

Golden Text: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John 3:16.

I. The Necessity of the New Birth: verses 1-3.

Nicodemus, a leading man among the Jews and a teacher, evidently belonged to the Sanhedrin Council (John 7:50, 51). He was an educated man, earnest and religious, interested in Christ, but timid in approaching Him. He is always referred to in Scripture as the one who came to Jesus by night (John 7:50; 19:39). It may be that he was not prepared as yet to make an open confession of his interest in Christ, or he may have chosen the night as the most appropriate time for extended conversation with the Saviour, when they might be free from interruption. At any rate, he went to Christ, and for that he is to be commended. Although he went at first by night, he later took his place openly among the believers (John 19:39).

Nicodemus acknowledged Christ to be a Rabbi, a great teacher, and a prophet from God. We can imagine that he was expecting to discuss with this teacher such religious matters as the Messianic Kingdom and the national hope of Israel. Christ interrupted the train of his thoughts with a startling statement, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." He cannot comprehend, enjoy or have a part in that kingdom. Nicodemus considered himself a leader in Israel, and hence an officer in that kingdom, but Christ pointed out that he was incapable of understanding even the basic principles of the kingdom. The natural man, man in his unregenerate state, cannot understand the things of the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:14); he is blind (2 Cor. 4:4), dead in trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1-3), with understanding darkened (Eph. 4:18, 19), full of evil thoughts (Gen. 6:5; Jer. 17:9) and unable to please God (Rom. 8:8). A new birth, a new life from above, is necessary. The Greek word for "again" in verses 3 and 7 also means "from above".

To Nicodemus such a spiritual birth seemed as impossible as a second natural birth. So it is, apart from God Who is the Author of all life—physical, mental, moral and spiritual (John 1:4; 17:2; Acts 17:28).

II. The Manner of the New Birth: verses 4-21.

After stating the necessity of the new birth, our Lord emphasized the manner of the new birth. The Holy Spirit is the agent, and the Word of God is the instrument (Tit. 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:23). Water is a symbol of the Word of God, because of its cleansing properties (Psa. 119:9; John 15:3).

The subjects of a spiritual kingdom must enter that kingdom by spiritual birth, since flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 15:50). According to the law of generation, like begets like; flesh produces flesh, and the Spirit alone can produce spirit.

Our Lord illustrated the principles of the new birth by reference to the wind, a comparison which was peculiarly apt, since the Greek word for "spirit" also means "wind". Both are sovereign in their activity (Rom. 9:15, 18), mysterious and unseen, yet powerful.

Nicodemus again asked, "How can these things be?" Being a teacher in Israel, he should have known something about the doctrine of the new birth, for it is taught in such passages as Ezekiel 36:25-27. Our Lord said it would be useless to explain to him "the heavenly things" of the new birth, which might include the God-ward aspects of salvation—predestination, election and the sovereign will of God.

It is God's part to create and bestow new life; it is man's part to receive Christ, to believe upon Him. Christ is the Mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5); He is the One Whose death made new life possible. Believing upon Him, we shall be pardoned, justified and given a new Divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4). To know Him is life eternal (John 17:3).

The incident of the brazen serpent in the wilderness well illustrates the way of salvation (Numb. 21:4-9). The poison

affected all the people, just as sin is universal; all are lost (Rom. 3:23). The malady was fatal; sin brings forth death (Rom. 6:23; Jas. 1:15). God alone can provide a remedy. The brazen serpent is a symbol of the judgment which fell upon the Son of God, and the uplifting of the serpent pictures the uplifting of Christ on the cross (John 12:32). Healing came to those who looked up to the serpent in faith, believing the word of God, spoken through Moses. Similarly, salvation is bestowed upon all who look to Christ (Isa. 45:22); their faith is counted to them for righteousness (Rom. 4:5). Those who refused to accept the way of life which was offered to them died; to reject Christ, is to perish (John 8:24).

Christ came not to condemn, but to save. Men are already under condemnation, but Christ came to show them their guilt and to lead them to God. People are lost because they are sinners, and also because they spurn the remedy provided in Christ (Heb. 2:3). The true Light is now shining, and those who remain in darkness are without excuse. They think that they can conceal their evil deeds. The holiness of Christ exposes sin in all its ugliness, just as the sunlight reveals insects which have been hiding under the cover of rocks. The good will not fear the light of Christ.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Jan. 26—The New Birth Tit. 3:1-7.
 Jan. 27—The New Man Col. 3:1-17.
 Jan. 28—The New Nature 2 Pet. 1:1-11.
 Jan. 29—The New Power Rom. 8:1-13.
 Jan. 30—The New Destiny Eph. 1:1-14.
 Jan. 31—Life for a Look! Numb. 21:5-9.
 Feb. 1—Look unto Me! Isa. 45:18-25.

SUGGESTED HYMNS

A ruler once came to Jesus by night. There is life for a look. The gospel of Thy grace. Father, I stretch my hands to Thee. Jesus, I will trust Thee. I looked to Jesus in my sin.

ABIDING WITH JESUS

WE ARE too much like the bird we read of in the old Saxon story. When the first missionary was preaching in the royal hall, he told of the peace which the gospel brings to sinners, and the rest which souls find in Jesus. After his sermon an ancient chieftain spake his mind, and compared himself and his countrymen in their unrest to the bird which just then, attracted by the light, flew into the bright hall through the open window, flitted through the warmth and light, and passed out again into the darkness and cold by a window on the other side of the banqueting hall. The simile might well apply to our transient fellowship; we have brief communings, and then away we pass into worldliness and indifference. Oh, would it not be blessed if we could abide with Jesus for ever, building our nest in his palace! How heavenly our life if we could walk with him, as Enoch did, in our business, in our families, in all places and at all hours! If instead of now and then climbing the sunny peak of fellowship, and standing near to heaven, and conversing with the Son of God, we could for ever dwell in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, how much more noble a life to lead! Imitate Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, in her abiding unmovingly near her beloved ones—abide with Jesus evermore.

—C. H. SPURGEON

CHURCH GROUP FINED \$300, BINGO SEQUEL

Hamilton, Dec. 30—(CP)—A church group, through its representative, Nick Cupick, yesterday was fined \$300 on a charge of disposing of goods by game or lottery. Cupick had previously pleaded guilty.

Testimony showed that the bingo, which offered a car and \$500 with other prizes, grossed about \$9,000 and netted about \$1,500. Proceeds went to the Church of Holy Resurrection.

GRACE

That little word "grace" is like a small window that opens out on to a great landscape, for it gathers up into one encyclopedical expression the whole infinite variety of beneficences and bestowments which come showering down upon it. That one gift is, as the Apostle puts it in one of his eloquent epithets, "the manifold grace of God", which word in the original is even more rich and picturesque, because it means the "many-variegated grace", like some rich piece of embroidery glowing with all manner of dyes and gold. So the one gift comes to us manifold, rich in its adaption to and its exquisite fitness for, the needs of the moment. God's gift comes to us with like variety, the "matter of a day in its day".

Am I struggling? He extends a hand to steady me. Am I fighting? He is my sword and shield, "my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower". Am I anxious? He comes into my heart and brings with Him a great peace, and all waves cease to toss, and smooth themselves into a level plain. There is One by my side who will neither change nor fail nor die. Whatever any man needs, at the moment that he needs it, that one great Gift shall supply the "matter of a day in its day".

—ALEXANDER MACLAREN.

In fact, if a man have any purpose reaching beyond the hour and day, meant to be found extant *next* day, what good can it ever be to promulgate lies? The lies are found out; ruinous penalty is exacted from them. No man will believe the liar next time even when he speaks truth, when it is of the last importance that he be believed. The old cry of wolf!—A Lie is *no*-thing; you cannot of nothing make something; you make nothing at last, and lose your labour into the bargain.

—THOMAS CARLYLE.

AS WHITE AS SNOW!

Consider how the Tyrian scarlet was dyed; not superficially dipped, but thoroughly drenched in the liquor that coloured it, as thy soul in custom of sinning. Then was it taken out for a time and dried, put in again, soaked and sodden the second time in the vat; called therefore twice-dyed; as thou complainest thou hast been by relapsing into the same sin. Yea, the colour so incorporated into the cloth, not drawn over, but diving into the very heart of the wool, that rub a scarlet rag on what is white, and it will bestow a reddish tincture upon it; as, perchance, thy sinful practice and precedent have also infected those who were formerly good, by thy badness. Yet such scarlet sins, so solemnly and substantially coloured are easily washed white in the blood of our Saviour.—THOMAS FULLER.

ACQUAINTANCESHIP WITH CHRIST

Witnesses about other things exaggerate, but witnesses concerning Jesus Christ always fall short. Painters have frequently won repute by making portraits fairer than the originals, but none can ever paint Jesus with a pencil that shall give too much of lustre to his noble face. He is so glorious that even angels who have seen him all their lives, and bowed before him where his splendour is best revealed, could not tell to man nor to one another the thousandth part of his excellences. If you want to know him you must see him for yourself. You must make him your personal acquaintance; you must press by faith into the inner circle, and cry with the spouse, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for thy love is better than wine."

—C. H. SPURGEON

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